



## US Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management  
Coeur d'Alene District  
Coeur d'Alene Field Office, Idaho

March 2005



## Coeur d'Alene Resource Management Plan Scoping Summary Report



# SUMMARY

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The US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Coeur d'Alene Field Office (CdA FO). The RMP will replace the 1981 Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan. Public involvement is a vital component of the National Environmental Policy Act planning process for vesting the public in the decision-making process and allowing for full environmental disclosure. Public involvement for the CdA RMP is being conducted in the following three phases:

- Public scoping prior to NEPA analysis to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the RMP/environmental impact statement (EIS);
- Public outreach (via newsletters, news releases, newspaper advertisements, public collaboration, and the resource advisory council); and
- Public review and comment on the Draft RMP/EIS, which includes analyzing possible environmental impacts and identifying the preferred alternative.

This Scoping Summary Report documents the results of public scoping, internal team planning, and other collaborative efforts and identifies planning issues to be addressed in the RMP. This report concludes the issue identification step of the planning process to be used in the alternatives formulation phase of RMP planning.

## **PUBLIC SCOPING ACTIVITIES**

The scoping process for the CdA RMP began on September 3, 2004, with the publication of a notice of intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*. The purpose of the NOI was to inform the public of the BLM's intent to develop an RMP for those BLM-managed lands within the CdA FO planning area (Appendix A). The NOI also solicited public comments.

A newsletter was sent to interested parties on September 30, 2004, to inform them of the CdA FO planning effort, the location of five scoping meetings, and the opportunity to comment. The newsletter was mailed to over 200 individuals on the distribution list. Newspaper advertisements and news releases also were published to notify the public of the project, to announce the three public open houses, to request public comments, and to provide contact information. A news release was issued to 11 media points in mid-October 2004. A display advertisement was published in the *Nickel's Worth* during the week following October 7, 2004; the *Spokesman Review* on October 8, 10, and 17, 2004; and the *Coeur d'Alene Press* on October 8, 10, and 17, 2004. Furthermore, the following radio stations aired the advertisement: Bonners Ferry, KBFI-AM-1450; Osburn, KWAL-AM-620; Oldtown, KMJY-AM-700; and Coeur d'Alene, KVNI-AM-9278.

In September 2004, a CdA RMP/EIS Web site was launched to serve as a clearinghouse of project information while the planning effort is underway. A link is available for Web site visitors to submit comments about the project. The Web site is available at [www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com).

Public scoping meetings were held in Bonners Ferry, St. Maries, Sandpoint, Coeur d'Alene, and Wallace, Idaho, on October 13, 14, 20, 21, and 25, 2004, respectively. These events provided an opportunity for the public to receive information, ask questions, and provide input. Fact sheets about the project, milestones of the planning process highlighting public involvement opportunities, and a map of the planning area were available, as was a list of the preliminary planning themes and criteria by which these themes will be evaluated. In addition to BLM representatives, 41 people attended the meetings.

## **PUBLIC SCOPING RESULTS**

Comments were submitted in letters and comment forms submitted by postal mail or facsimile, electronic comment forms submitted from the Web site, and electronic mail messages. Official comments consist only of those submitted in written form. All written submissions postmarked through November 15, 2004, are included in this analysis. Many of the submissions contained multiple comments on different topics. A total of 207 comments were made in the 41 written submissions received. All information received through written scoping comments will be evaluated, verified, and incorporated into the RMP and EIS, as appropriate.

All written submissions were read and evaluated to determine their content. Most submissions had several comments pointing to several resource issues; thus, it was necessary to develop a method to systematically track and statistically describe all individual comments received. This was accomplished through a system in which individual comments within a longer letter or comment form were first logged and categorized by the issues and concerns of the letter. Individual comments were then entered into a database to assist with the analytical review. The database is structured to organize comments by resource issue category, by geographical location from which the comment was submitted, and by affiliation of the commenter. These identifiers can be

queried and tallied to provide quantitative information on larger issues and areas of concern as well as regions or groups providing the most feedback.

The majority (46 percent) of written submissions were from individuals, followed by recreational organizations (24 percent). Most comment letters received from sources within the CdA RMP planning area came from Kootenai County (42 percent), with sources within the state of Washington providing the second largest number (27 percent). Kootenai County also provided the majority (30 percent) of comment issues extrapolated from the comment letters. The vast majority of comments focused on issues related to Transportation, Access, and Recreation (37 percent).

Although not officially accepted as scoping comments, verbal comments received during the scoping meetings and through consultations and discussions with individuals, organizations, and agencies were compared and considered in the scoping evaluation. Results were similar to scoping comment submissions, indicating that access and recreation were primary topics of concern and question, as were weeds management, land tenure, commercial use of the lands, habitat, watershed protection and restoration, wildland fire and fuels reduction, and wildland-urban interface (WUI) programs.

## **ISSUE SUMMARY**

In March 2004, the BLM developed a Preparation Plan to commence the planning process and to summarize the purpose and need of the RMP. This document also highlighted preliminary planning criteria and preliminary planning issues anticipated by the BLM interdisciplinary team. These preliminary issues fell into eight preliminary themes. Most comments received during the public scoping period fell into these eight preliminary themes, and one additional theme, Water Resources, was added. Five preliminary planning criteria were developed by the BLM. Many comments supported the methods provided by these principles to evaluate the issues, while a few opposed certain criteria, primarily those regarding special designation areas.

All comments received throughout the scoping period were compiled and distilled to identify prominent issue statements. Sources included the BLM's Preparation Plan preliminary issues; meetings with individuals, organizations, agencies, and tribal representatives; the results of a simultaneous US Forest Service scoping period; and written comments received during the formal public scoping period. These issue statements, along with subsequently identified issues, planning criteria, and other information (e.g., Analysis of the Management Situation; Minerals Occurrence and Development Potential Report), will be used by the BLM and cooperators to help formulate a reasonable range of alternative management strategies that will be analyzed during the planning process. While not all comments and concerns are relative to the developed issue statements, appropriate comments will be addressed by the RMP and will be considered in the effects analysis. The six issue statements are as follows.

Issue 1: What opportunities will BLM provide for motorized and nonmotorized recreation, while protecting natural and cultural resources?

Issue 2: How will the BLM manage vegetation treatments and provide forest products, while providing wildlife habitat and protecting water quality, native plant communities, old growth forest, and cultural resources?

Issue 3: How will BLM adjust land ownership to provide public benefits and improve access?

Issue 4: How will the BLM manage invasive plant species?

Issue 5: How will the BLM reduce the risk of harm or damage from fire to the public and their property?

Issue 6: What strategies and priorities will BLM use to protect healthy or restore damaged watersheds and riparian areas?

## **FUTURE STEPS**

Although the BLM welcomes public input at any time during the project, the next official public comment period will begin upon publication of the Draft RMP/EIS, which is anticipated in early 2006. The draft document will be widely distributed to elected officials, regulatory agencies, and members of the public, and it will be available on the project Web site ([www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com)). The availability of the draft document will be announced in the *Federal Register*, and a 90-day public comment period will follow. Public meetings will be held during the 90-day period.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, the BLM will prepare a Proposed RMP/Final EIS which will address comments received during the comment period on the Draft RMP/EIS. The proposed document will be published and the availability of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be announced in the *Federal Register*. A 30-day public protest period will follow.

At the conclusion of the public protest period, the BLM will resolve all protests and will publish an Approved RMP and Record of Decision. The availability of these documents will be announced in the *Federal Register*.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
4WD	Four-Wheel Drive (Vehicle)
ACEC	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
AMS	Analysis of Management Situation
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CdA	Coeur d'Alene
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FO	Field Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
ISDA	Idaho State Department of Agriculture
KVRI	Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SMA	Special Management Area
TCP	Traditional Cultural Property
T&E	threatened and endangered
US EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	US Forest Service
WSA	Wilderness Study Area
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface

# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION

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The US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) and accompanying environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Coeur d'Alene Field Office (CdA FO).

### 1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Public Law 91-190) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, federal agencies are required to consider the environmental impacts of their proposed actions prior to taking action. Actions that are subject to NEPA include those involving federal funding, those requiring federal permits, those involving federal facilities and equipment, and those that affect federal employees. The actions that would be proposed by the BLM as part of the RMP being developed for the CdA FO are subject to the requirements of NEPA. Pursuant to NEPA, the BLM will prepare an EIS on the CdA RMP.

Public involvement is a vital component of NEPA, vesting the public in the decision-making process and allowing for full environmental disclosure. Guidance for implementing public involvement is codified in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1506, Part 6 [40 CFR 1506.6], thereby ensuring that federal agencies make a diligent effort to involve the public in preparing NEPA documents.

#### ***Objectives of Scoping***

- ◆ Invite agencies and public to participate
- ◆ Identify a preliminary list of environmental and socioeconomic issues to address in the NEPA document
- ◆ Identify and eliminate issues determined to be insignificant
- ◆ Frame the scope of the project

Public involvement for the CdA RMP is being conducted in the following three phases:

- Public scoping prior to NEPA analysis to obtain public input on issues and proposed alternatives;

- Public outreach (via newsletters, news releases, newspaper advertisements, public collaboration, and the resource advisory council); and
- Public review and comment on the Draft RMP/EIS, which includes analyzing possible environmental impacts and identifying the preferred alternative.

This report documents the results of the first two phases of the public involvement process.

Scoping is generally separated into internal and external scoping. Internal scoping is conducted within an agency or several cooperating agencies to determine a beginning set of issues and concerns. Internal scoping meetings were held with an interdisciplinary team of BLM staff members in 2003 to identify the preliminary planning issues and the methods, procedures, and data that were to be used in the compilation of the RMP/EIS. All of the issues identified in the internal scoping process were relevant to BLM management in the CdA FO since implementation of the Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan in 1981.

External scoping is a public process designed to reach out beyond the decision makers and attempts to clarify the issues that are high in the public conscience. The public process is designed to determine and frame the scope of pertinent issues and alternatives to be addressed in a NEPA document. External scoping also helps ensure that real problems are identified early and that they are properly studied; that issues of no concern do not consume time and effort; and that the proposed action and alternatives are balanced, able to be implemented, and thorough.

In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.2(d), the BLM must document the results of scoping. BLM Land Use Planning guidance (H-1601-1) recommends the preparation of a Scoping Report to capture public input in one document. This report must summarize the individual comments received during the formal scoping period of the planning process. It must also describe the issues and management concerns from public scoping meetings, internal scoping meetings, and those included in the preparation plan, as well as discuss how these comments will be incorporated into the RMP. The H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook provides a BLM-recommended format for the document. This Scoping Summary Report has included these recommendations as well as information specific to the CdA FO (RMP planning area).

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

An RMP is a land use plan that describes broad, multiple-use guidance for managing public lands administered by the BLM. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs the BLM to develop such land use plans to provide for appropriate uses of public land. Decisions in land use plans guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. These land use plan decisions establish goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resource management and the measures needed to achieve them. These measures are expressed as actions and

allowable uses (i.e., lands that are open or available for certain uses, including any applicable restrictions, and lands that are closed to certain uses).

The BLM developed and approved a land use plan for this area in 1981. At that time, the BLM used a different planning process and called their land use plans Management Framework Plans. Although the Management Framework Plan for the CdA FO has been amended, some of the existing plan is outdated. Laws, regulations, policies, and issues regarding management of these public lands have changed during the life of the existing plan. The BLM is developing a new RMP to ensure that it is in compliance with current mandates and that it addresses current issues. If there are decisions in the 1981 Management Framework Plan that are still valid, the BLM may bring them forward into the RMP. When completed, the RMP will replace the existing land use plan.

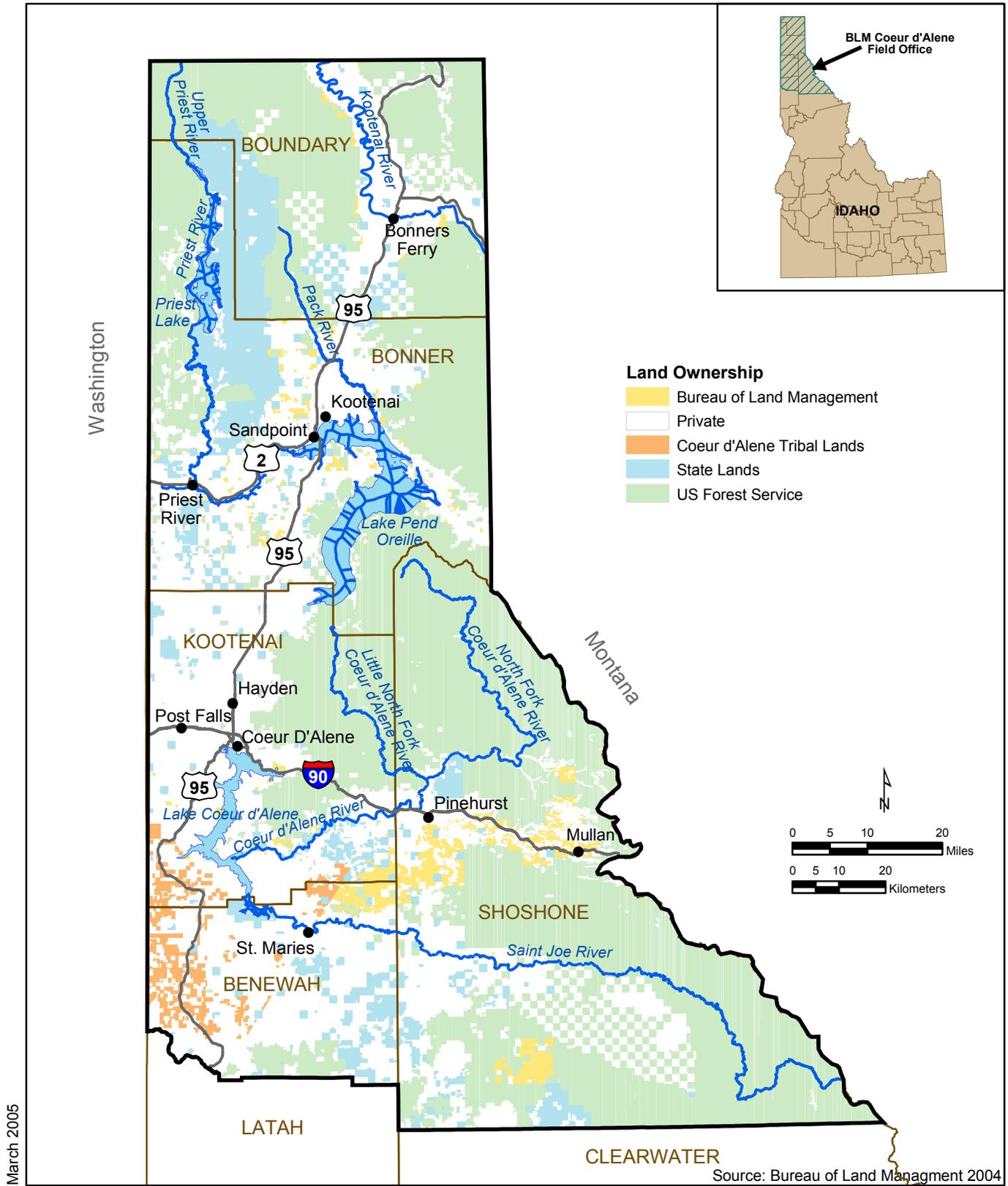
To support the RMP preparation, the BLM will prepare an EIS to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all environmental issues and impacts. NEPA requires the BLM to consider a range of alternatives in its planning process and to analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of proposed RMP decisions. The alternatives and the impact analysis are documented in the EIS. The EIS process also provides opportunities for participation by the public, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Tribal governments in the RMP development. The RMP and EIS will be combined into one document.

### **1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA**

The planning area encompasses all lands, regardless of ownership, within Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone counties in northern Idaho (see Figure 1-1). However, RMP decisions will only apply to the 96,732 acres of public land administered by the BLM within these counties (12,139 acres in Bonner County, 4,484 acres in Boundary County, 13,541 acres in Benewah County, 10,609 acres in Kootenai County, and 55,959 acres in Shoshone County). This is approximately two percent of the land within the planning area. These BLM lands consist of numerous tracts ranging in size from less than 1 acre to over 10,000 acres. BLM-administered lands are mixed among private, State of Idaho, and Coeur d'Alene Tribal lands, and US Forest Service-administered lands, each of which may be affected by the subject RMP decisions. The planning area, which is the CdA FO boundary, is located entirely in the northern part of the Idaho Panhandle. The CdA RMP planning area is bordered on the west by the Washington state line, on the north by the Canadian border, on the east by the Montana state line, and on the south by Latah and Clearwater counties, Idaho. Approximately 180 acres of the BLM-administered land are within the boundary of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe Reservation.

### **1.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPING PROCESS**

The BLM follows the public involvement requirements according to the CEQ regulations set forth in 40 CFR 1501.7, which states, "there should be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed during the planning



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Source: Bureau of Land Management 2004

**Project Planning Area**  
Coeur d'Alene Field Office, Idaho

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- Cities
- Major Roads
- Major Streams
- ▭ Coeur d'Alene RMP Planning Area
- ▭ Counties

Figure 1-1

process.” The BLM solicits comments from relevant agencies and the public, organizes and analyzes all of the comments received, and then, based on the comments, identifies issues that will be addressed during the planning process. These issues are the scope of analysis for the RMP and are used to develop the project alternatives.

#### **1.4.1 Notice of Intent**

The formal public scoping process for the CdA RMP/EIS began on September 3, 2004, with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*. A copy of the NOI is included in Appendix A. The NOI initiated the public scoping process and served to notify the public of the BLM’s intent to develop a plan for the CdA FO. Under CEQ regulations, the public comment period must continue for at least 30 days; however, the BLM extended this public comment period until November 15, 2004, which provided 73 days for comment submittal. Although the formal comment period has ended, the BLM will continue to consider all comments received.

#### **1.4.2 Initial Newsletter**

The first newsletter for the CdA RMP project was mailed on September 30, 2004, to over 200 individuals from the public, agencies, and organizations. The newsletter introduced the BLM and the RMP planning process; provided the preliminary issue themes, planning criteria, and project milestones timeline; and suggested methods for public involvement. The newsletter also provided the dates and venues for the five scoping meetings. The newsletter was also posted on the project Web site for public review and can be accessed at [www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com). Future newsletters will be published at major project milestones and mailed to individuals and organizations on the project mailing list. Participants may request to receive newsletters through e-mail.

#### **1.4.3 News Release and Newspaper Advertisement**

Advertisements were published in the following newspapers to notify the public of the project, to announce the five public open houses, to request public comments, and to provide contact information:

- *Coeur d’Alene Press* (Coeur d’Alene): October 8, 10, and 17, 2004
- *Spokesman Review* (Coeur d’Alene, Idaho and Spokane, Washington): October 8, 10, and 18, 2004
- *Nickel’s Worth* (Coeur d’Alene): week of October 7, 2004
- *St. Maries Gazette* (St. Maries): October 17, 2004 (*to be confirmed for final*)

A news release was issued in mid-October 2004 to the *Spokesman Review* (including their eastern Washington and northern Idaho editions) and the *Coeur d’Alene Press* (including their affiliate northern Idaho papers), as well as the following four radio stations:

- Bonners Ferry, KBFI-AM-1450
- Osburn, KWAL-AM-620

- Oldtown, KMJY-AM-700
- Coeur d'Alene, KVNI-AM-9278

The news release and public notice can be found on the project Web site at [www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com).

#### 1.4.4 Project Web Site

In September 2004, a CdA RMP/EIS Web site was launched to serve as a clearinghouse of project information during the planning process. The Web site provides background information about the project, a public involvement timeline and calendar, maps and photos of the planning area, and copies of public information documents, such as the NOI and newsletter. A link is also available for Web site visitors to submit comments about the project. The Web site is available at [www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com).

#### 1.4.5 Scoping Meetings

The BLM hosted five public scoping meetings to further provide the public with opportunities to become involved, to learn about the project and planning process, and to offer comments. As described in Section 1.4.3, the scoping meetings were advertised in local media. Additionally, agency staff and the public who have participated in past BLM activities and have been included in past BLM distribution lists received the newsletter advertising the upcoming meetings. The newsletter was mailed to just over 200 individuals and organizations.

Open houses were held in five locations within the project planning area in mid- to late -October (Table 1-1).

**Table 1-1**  
**Scoping Meeting Schedule and Attendance**

Venue	Location	Date	Time	Attendance
Boundary County Library	Bonnars Ferry, Idaho	October 13, 2004	7:00–9:00 p.m.	1
Heyburn Elementary School Cafeteria	St. Maries, Idaho	October 14, 2004	7:00–9:00 p.m.	2
Sandpoint Community Hall	Sandpoint, Idaho	October 20, 2004	7:00–9:00 p.m.	9
Shilo Inn	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	October 21, 2004	7:00–9:00 p.m.	19
Best Western Wallace Inn	Wallace, Idaho	October 25, 2004	7:00–9:00 p.m.	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>41</b>

The BLM provided staff with knowledge of the specific area where each meeting was being held in order to answer questions and provide relevant expertise. These meetings consisted of an open house, and if appropriate given the number of attendees at the night's event, an informal meeting including presentations by the CdA Field Manager, Eric Thomson, and the CdA RMP Project Manager, Scott Pavey. These presentations were then followed by oral comments or questions by members of the public who wished to voice their concerns or individual issues.

These events provided an opportunity for the public to receive information, ask questions, and provide input. The less formal public meeting format, consisting of both an open house and informal comment period, was chosen to encourage broader participation, to allow attendees to learn about the project at their own pace, to enable people to ask questions of BLM representatives in an informal, one-on-one setting, and to give the public an opportunity to share their ideas with the BLM and other members of the public. The public was encouraged to submit written comments by November 15, 2004, to ensure their concerns were considered in the planning process in the manner in which they intended.

Fact sheets about the project, milestones of the planning process highlighting public involvement opportunities, and a map of the planning area were available, as was a list of the preliminary planning issue themes and planning criteria by which these themes will be evaluated. Facilities with access for the handicapped and located in informal settings, including a community center, library, school, and hotels, were chosen as venues to encourage broad participation. In addition to BLM representatives, 41 people attended the open houses.

The main concerns heard from the public at the open houses included the following:

- Land transfers (e.g., how land swaps work; how transfers may open/close access to certain areas; the history of BLM land ownership; how to convey land to the BLM for preservation use);
- The scattered land ownership patterns of northern Idaho, resulting in limited access to adjacent plots of land, as well as inefficient use and management of the land;
- Whether former grazing allotments can be reactivated;
- Water resources management (how the BLM supports the State of Idaho to manage and protect water resources; measures taken by the BLM to limit/prevent pollution from entering Idaho watersheds);
- Past, present, and future trends in timber production, grazing, mining, and recreation, and their effects on the economy;
- Special designations (what special designation areas do the BLM currently manage and what areas are being considered for areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC)/Wild and Scenic River designations and what restrictions will be employed);
- Bark beetle infestation (where it exists within the BLM RMP planning area and how it is managed/controlled);
- Collaboration with the US Forest Service (USFS) in their simultaneous Forest Plan scoping efforts (how the BLM differs from the USFS and how they can/will work together);

- Availability and access to cross-country and roadless travel across BLM lands;
- The potential for the Rails-to-Trails program and how the BLM may employ this type of restoration;
- Off-highway vehicle (OHV), all-terrain vehicle (ATV), four-wheel drive vehicle (4WD), snowmobile, and other vehicular recreation management and access (e.g., potential use of former timber roads, other roads to close/remain open; reevaluation of the restrictions of certain vehicle types in some areas; types of decisions the BLM will make regarding roads and access by these vehicles);
- Impacts of fire suppression methods on natural resources and access to the lands;
- Weed management program (supportive comments and need for explanation of the program); and
- Dependence on land access for commercial and recreational uses for economic stability.

#### **1.4.6 Meetings with Collaborating Individuals and Agencies**

In addition to public scoping and agency and tribal consultation, the BLM has spoken with individuals from the public and met with several local representatives and organizations.

On September 9, 2004, Brian Hawthorne contacted the CdA RMP Project Manager, Scott Pavey. Mr. Hawthorne is a member of the Blue Ribbon Coalition and called to discuss the RMP. His concerns were primarily regarding OHV use in the planning area and travel management. Mr. Pavey informed him that these concerns would be included in the RMP.

On October 13, 2004, Eric Thomson, the CdA Field Manager, and Scott Pavey of the CdA FO gave a presentation to the Bonner County Commissioners, Marcia Phillips and Jerry Clemons. Commissioner Phillips offered two issue-related questions: (1) Could public land on Gold Mountain be used as a communication site for county emergency communications? and (2) Is there a potential for the BLM to provide additional recreational access to Lake Pend Oreille? Mr. Thomson discussed the types of action and processes necessary to get a right-of-way for a communication site and access across BLM lands. He further mentioned a previous working relationship between the BLM and Bonner County Commissioners on land acquisitions and exchanges, but these discussions ceased several years ago. Commissioner Phillips voiced her concerns regarding Sandpoint's municipal watershed. Mr. Thomson informed Ms. Phillips there is BLM-managed land within the watershed and mentioned some of the protection efforts that may be incorporated into the RMP. The BLM manages 21 percent of the watershed in this area, which can have implications on forest health and fuels management, commercial use and access, and recreational use and access. Commissioner Clemons inquired about the BLM's fuel reduction and wildland-urban interface (WUI) efforts and

programs. Mr. Thomson offered that the BLM has worked on—and is continuing to work on—stewardship and healthy forest projects at a number of locations throughout northern Idaho, and that new laws and policies have helped streamline the process and funding needs.

On October 18, 2004, the BLM gave a presentation to the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) at the University of Idaho Extension Office in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Following presentations given by Eric Thomson and Scott Pavey, Darrell Kerby, the Mayor of Bonners Ferry, and Mr. Gary Aitken, the Chairman of the KVRI and Chairman of the Tribal Council for the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, inquired about the 3-year timeline of the project. Mr. Thomson explained that this time period was guidance from the BLM Washington office. Mr. Aitken asked whether stewardship projects, such as the Twin Peaks project, would be addressed in the RMP. Mr. Thomson responded that such site-specific projects would be incorporated into broader RMP decisions. Mr. Aitken was also interested in land tenure and exchanges. Mr. Thomson responded that this issue will be discussed and is, in fact, one of the key issues to be evaluated.

#### **1.4.7 Community Economic Profile Workshop**

The BLM sponsored a Community Economic Profile Workshop on January 26, 2005, in Bonner County. The purpose of this workshop was to assist northern Idaho communities to develop economic vision and goals, and then generated ideas for how BLM management of public lands could help achieve these goals. All public, agency, and tribal members were invited. An announcement was posted on the project Web site and a notice was published in relevant newspapers. A report summarizing the outcomes of the workshop is published on the BLM RMP Web site ([www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com)) and is discussed in a separate socioeconomic report prepared by the BLM.

#### **1.4.8 Mailing List**

The BLM compiled a list of individuals, agencies, and organizations who have participated in past BLM events and/or requested to be on the list. This database included just over 200 listings, and a copy of the initial newsletter was mailed to each listing (discussed in Section 1.4.2, Newsletter). This distribution list was updated following the scoping process based on requests from individuals wishing to be added to or removed from the database. All individuals who participated in the scoping meetings or submitted a comment were also added to the database unless they opted out of receiving future distributions. The database has increased to just over 250 entries. Requests to be added to the official CdA RMP distribution list will continue to be accepted throughout the planning process. Individuals can also request to receive distributions via e-mail.

### **1.5 COOPERATING AGENCIES/INVITEES**

As defined by the Council on Environmental Quality, Section 1508.5, a cooperating agency is any federal agency other than the lead agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative) for legislation or other major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The BLM has extended this definition to

consider local, state, federal, and tribal governments. There are no formally designated cooperating agencies for the CdA RMP planning process; however, several agencies have expressed interest in developing a “Collaborative Partnership.” These agencies will “work with the BLM, sharing knowledge and resources, to achieve desired outcomes for public lands and communities within statutory and regulatory frameworks” (H-1601-1). In January 2005, the BLM met with several interested state agencies to finalize partnering opportunities based on the level of vested interest these organizations have in the RMP planning process.

The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in the preparation of NEPA analyses include disclosing relevant information early in the analytical process; applying available technical expertise and staff support; avoiding duplication with other federal, state, tribal, and local procedures; and establishing a mechanism for addressing intergovernmental issues.

To initiate the collaborative planning process, early in the scoping period, the BLM invited the following to participate in the planning process:

- Boards of commissioners from the five counties in the planning area;
- Four Native American tribes with treaty, trust, or historical ties to the planning area;
- The governor and six state agencies;
  - Idaho Fish and Game Department
  - Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
  - Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
  - Idaho Department of Lands
  - Idaho Department of Commerce, Tourism Division
  - Idaho Department of Agriculture
- The supervisor for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests; and
- The US Environmental Protection Agency.

Additionally, the BLM mailed letters inviting the following federal, state, local, and tribal organizations to the five scoping meetings held October 13 through October 25, 2004. The initial newsletter accompanied each letter.

- Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
- Coeur d’Alene Tribe
- Kalispel Tribe of Indians
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
- Benewah County Board of Commissioners
- Shoshone County Board of Commissioners
- Kootenai County Board of Commissioners

- Bonner County Board of Commissioners
- Boundary County Board of Commissioners
- Coeur d'Alene Area Chamber of Commerce
- Kellogg Chamber of Commerce
- Priest River Chamber of Commerce
- Saint Maries Chamber of Commerce
- Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce
- Spokane Chamber of Commerce
- Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce

### 1.5.1 Idaho Panhandle National Forest Scoping Collaboration

The USFS manages approximately 5 million acres of land in the CdA FO planning area. This agency is also in the process of revising their land use plan. Considering the significantly larger land administration responsibilities, the USFS Plan includes many different issues and covers a broader area than the BLM document. Many issues, however, coincide with BLM efforts. For this reason, the agencies have been in close collaboration. Jodi Kramer, Public Affairs for the USFS, attended the BLM's Planning Concepts Training held in Coeur d'Alene on September 14–16, 2004, at the beginning of the BLM RMP planning process. She has provided information and results from their extended scoping process, which began on April 30, 2002, and ended on May 30, 2003. Due to delays in the process, comments were received through October 17, 2003. Some of the overlapping concerns disclosed by the public regarding National Forest lands that could also apply to BLM-administered lands within the planning area include the following:

- ✎ Noxious weed control measures should be applied equally to all visitors, and the document should make a fair evaluation of all sources and uses that contribute to the noxious weed program.
- ✎ In bull trout areas, suggestions were made for permitting helicopter logging only, placing 300-foot buffers around riparian areas, restricting OHVs and snowmobiles to ridges only, and not allowing water crossings or trails on slopes of watersheds.
- ✎ Habitat protection measures should be implemented to maintain viable and diverse animal populations, and not just focus on particular managed species.
- ✎ Habitat connectivity should be an important component for habitat protection in key wildlife areas.
- ✎ Travel plan should assess the need for individual road closures and address user conflicts.

The BLM and USFS will continue to collaborate throughout their planning processes in order to effectively involve the public and promote interagency planning efforts and mitigations.

## 1.6 COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION WITH TRIBES

Indian Trust Resources are legal interests in assets held in trust by the federal government for federally recognized Indian tribes or nations or for individual Indians. Tribal treaties are negotiated contracts executed with the United States and are on essentially the same legal footing as treaties with foreign nations. Since the BLM manages portions of the ceded lands that are within the traditional use areas of the tribes, the BLM has a trust responsibility to provide the conditions necessary for Indian tribal members to satisfy their treaty rights and consider the potential impacts of BLM plans, projects, programs, or activities. Members of the tribes may exercise their hunting, fishing, and gathering rights on federal lands outside the boundaries of the reservation. Tribal members may also access and use places or resources that are important for religious or cultural reasons. Effective consultation and coordination with the tribes is necessary to identify any management issues with trust resources, treaty rights, or traditional or religious uses.

To initiate tribal consultation for the CdA RMP planning process, the BLM mailed out three initial letters to each of the four tribes within the planning area (Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes):

- On August 17, 2004, the BLM mailed out letters to each of the four tribes within the CdA FO planning area notifying them that the RMP development process had been initiated and inviting them to participate.
- Each of these tribes was later invited to the BLM Planning Concepts Training held in September 2004 via a letter mailed out August 27, 2004.
- The tribes were also provided invitations, dated October 4, 2004, to the five public meetings held October 13 through October 25, 2004, with an enclosed copy of the initial newsletter.

On November 30, 2004, David Sisson, the cultural resources and tribal specialist for the BLM CdA FO, met with the Coeur d'Alene Tribal staff including Quanah Matheson, Cultural Director, Jill Wagner, Archeologist, and John Hartman, GIS Specialist. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is vested in the management and water quality of the lake and its resources, as they own the southern third of the waterbody. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Matheson submitted a letter to the BLM commenting on the RMP. Mr. Sisson discussed the letter and attempted to clarify the issues, which would allow the BLM to address allocations and conflicts better within the RMP process. Some of the issues raised included:

- Management of a known Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) and possible buffer zone that includes rock cairns as it pertains to potential direct effects or visual effects from activities.
- Confidentiality of archeological sites or TCPs.
- The BLM land exchange program.
- Request for future consultations to commence with a letter to the tribe asking for any information regarding archeological sites or TCPs that may be affected. Mr. Sisson agreed, clarifying that these letters generally require a 30-day turn around.
- Impacts to botanical resources that may be important to the Tribe.
- Potential effects to Native American uses of BLM lands within the traditional use areas.

# SECTION 2

## COMMENT SUMMARY

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### 2.1 METHOD OF COMMENT COLLECTION AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

This Scoping Summary Report presents the results of a content analysis completed on the comments received. Content analysis is a process that identifies specific, separate statements within each submitted letter, e-mail, facsimile, and Web site submittal. These statements were then used to help frame the public issues into issue statements (see Section 3). In some cases, individual statements identified items, possible points of conflict, or misunderstandings and confusions that the BLM should clarify.

All written scoping comments documented in this Scoping Summary Report were received or postmarked by the November 15, 2004 deadline. Therefore, no comments were dismissed from this evaluation. The BLM will continue to accept scoping comments throughout the planning process. Official comments consist only of those submitted in written form. No verbal testimony was collected as official comments during scoping, and all individuals were encouraged to submit comments in writing. A total of 41 submissions were received in the following manner:

- 36.6 percent by postal mail;
- 36.6 percent through the link at the project Web site;
- 17.1 percent by e-mail; and
- 9.8 percent by facsimile.

These 41 submissions included 207 individual comments. The comment forms provided instructions on requesting confidentiality and on requesting that individual names or addresses be withheld from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

To ensure that public comments were properly registered and that none were overlooked, a three-phase management and tracking system was adopted. First, comments were logged, and issues and concerns within the submission were

categorized into one of the planning issue themes. Since not all comments were on planning issues, the comments were evaluated to identify issues that will be addressed during the planning process. Second, individual comments were entered into a database to assist with the analytical review. The database is structured to organize comments by planning issue category, by geographical location of the commenter, and by affiliation of the commenter. These various identifiers were finally queried and tallied to provide quantitative information on issue themes, as well as regions or groups providing the most feedback.

## 2.2 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

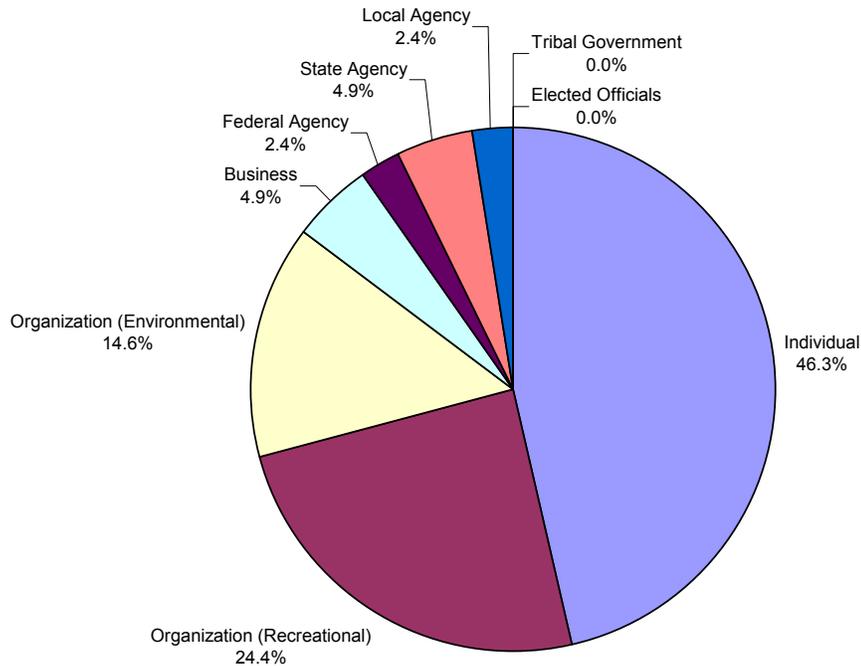
### 2.2.1 Comments by Affiliation

Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1 show the number and proportion of individual comments received by each type of affiliation. The number of individual comments (207) exceeds the number of written submissions received (41) because many written submissions included multiple comments. Many of these comments pertained to more than one resource issue theme and were therefore considered as separate comments on each issue.

Members of the general public who did not disclose a particular affiliation provided 46.3 percent of the comments received during the CdA RMP scoping period. Recreational organizations provided 24.4 percent of the comments received, while environmental organizations provided 14.6 percent of the comments received. Both of these groups submitted comments on environmental stewardship, as well as on recreational access. Local, state, and federal governmental agencies, combined, provided only 9.8 percent of the comments received. Local businesses provided 4.9 percent of the comments received. No comments were received from elected officials or tribal governments or organizations.

**Table 2-1**  
**Number of Written Submissions per Affiliation**

<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Number of Written Submissions</b>
Individual	19
Organization (Recreational)	10
Organization (Environmental)	6
Business	2
Federal Agency	1
State Agency	2
Local Agency	1
Tribal Government	0
Elected Officials	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

**Figure 2-1 Proportion of Written Submissions per Affiliation**

### 2.2.2 Comments by Geographical Area

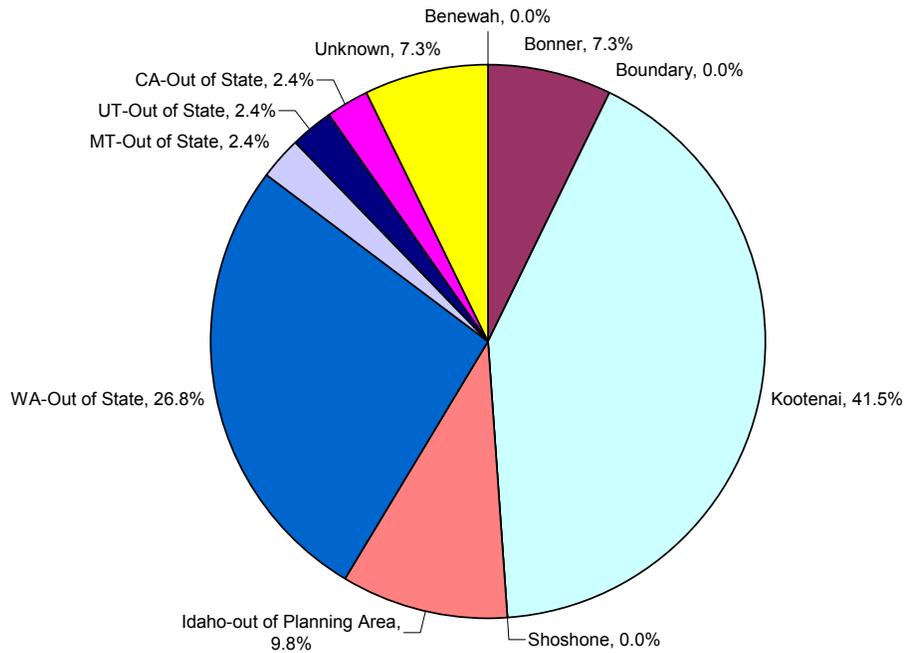
Table 2-2 and figures 2-2 and 2-3 show the number and proportion of individual comment letters and comments received from each geographical area, respectively. The number of individual comments totals more than the number of written submissions received because many written submissions included multiple individual comments. Of the counties within the planning area, people with addresses in Kootenai County provided the largest number of comment letters (41.5 percent). Residents from the state of Washington provided the second largest number of submissions (26.8 percent). No comments were received from Benewah, Boundary, or Shoshone counties.

Of the comment letters received, the largest number of comments extrapolated from the submissions were received from Kootenai County (30.0 percent), followed by counties within the state of Idaho, outside of the CdA FO planning area (20.3 percent) and the state of Washington (19.3 percent). Nearly 50 percent of the comments received came from addresses outside the planning area. Comments received by e-mail, facsimile, or Web site submittal without an address provided were categorized as unknown and comprise 7.3 percent of the comment letters and 5.8 percent of the individual comments received.

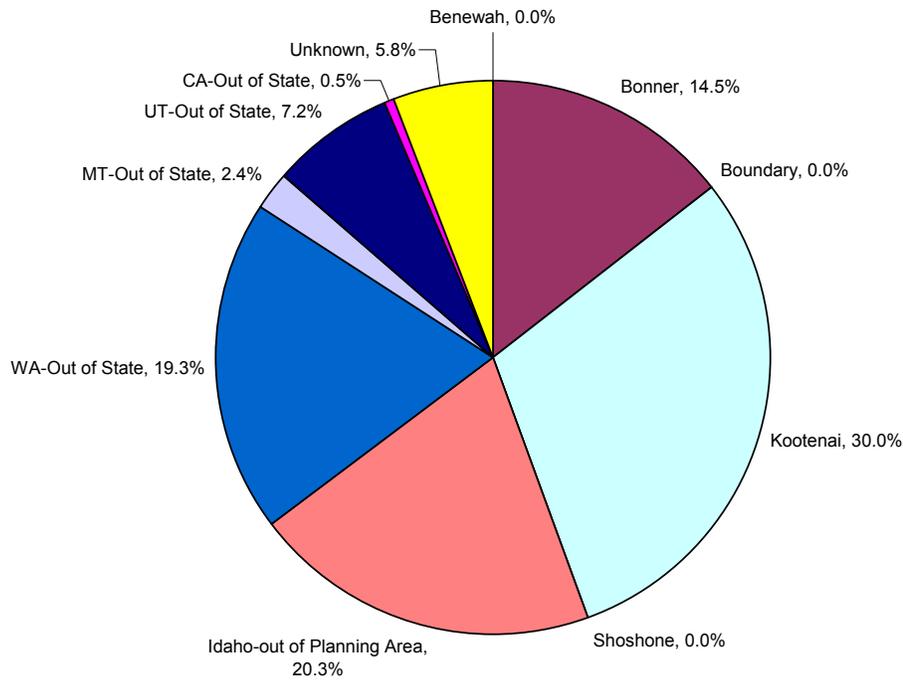
**Table 2-2  
Number of Individual Comments per Geographical Area**

Geographical Area	Number of Comment Letters	Number of Individual Comments
Benewah County	0	0
Bonner County	3	30
Boundary County	0	0
Kootenai County	17	62
Shoshone County	0	0
State of Idaho-Outside of Planning Area	4	42
State of Washington	11	40
State of Montana	1	5
State of Utah	1	15
State of California	1	1
Unknown	3	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>18,207</b>

**Figure 2-2 Proportion of Individual Comment Letters per Geographical Area**



**Figure 2-3 Proportion of Individual Comments per Geographical Area**



### 2.2.3 Comments by Planning Issue Theme

Table 2-3 and Figure 2-4 show the number and proportion of individual comments on each planning issue theme. Section 3 provides comments separated by planning issue statement and correlates which issue theme(s) is relevant to each comment.

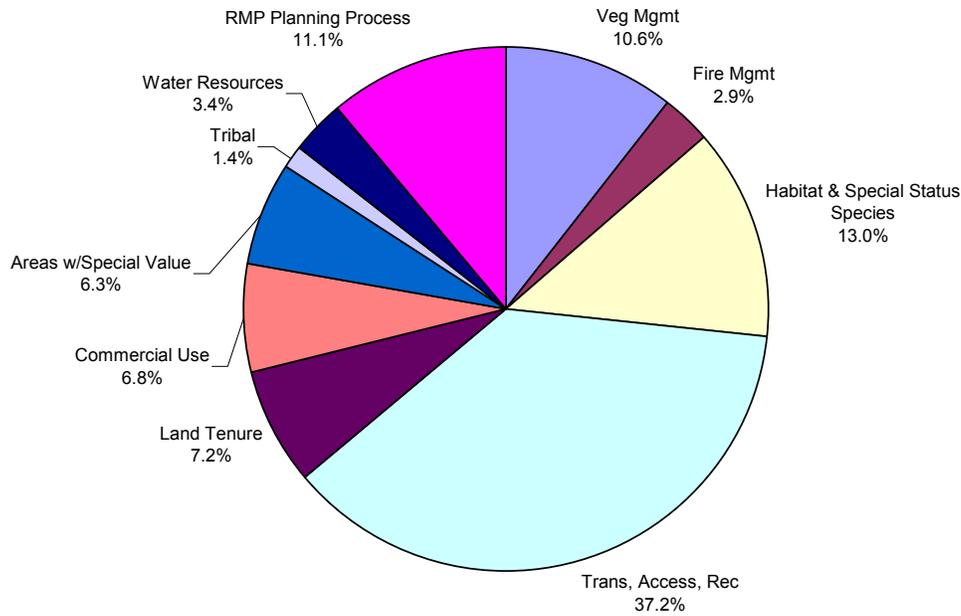
The majority of comments tended to focus on issues related to Transportation, Access, and Recreation (37.2 percent). Habitat Management was the second largest concern (13.0 percent).

Similar to the official scoping results as summarized in Section 1.4.5, Scoping Meetings, verbal comments and questions posed at the October 2004 CdA RMP scoping meetings tended to be on many of the same issue themes and concerns as the written comments. Access and Recreation was a primary topic of concern and question during the meetings, as were weed management and land tenure. Commercial use of the lands and habitat management and restoration were also key issues. Fourteen of the forty-one scoping meeting attendees submitted written comments during the scoping period (34.1 percent).

**Table 2-3  
Number of Individual Comments per Planning Theme**

Planning Theme	Number of Individual Comments
Vegetation Management	22
Fire Management	6
Habitat Management for Wildlife and Special Status Species	27
Transportation, Public Access, and Recreation	77
Land Tenure Adjustments	15
Availability and Management of Public Lands for Commercial Uses	14
Special Values Area Management	13
Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities	3
Management of Watersheds and Water Resources	7
RMP Process Issues	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>

**Figure 2-4 Proportion of Individual Comments per Planning Theme**



Likewise, during BLM consultation with groups and individuals, including a member of the Blue Ribbon Coalition, Bonner County Commissioners, and KVRI (see Section 1.4.6, Meetings with Collaborating Individuals and Agencies, for further discussion), as well as collaboration with the USFS (see Section 1.5.1, Idaho Panhandle National Forest Scoping Collaboration), similar issues were discussed, primarily OHV use and travel management, commercial uses of the lands, recreational access, watershed protection and restoration, fuel reduction and WUI programs, and land tenure and exchanges.

# SECTION 3

## ISSUE SUMMARY

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Issue identification is the first step of the BLM planning process. As defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), planning issues are concerns or controversies about existing and potential land and resource allocations, levels of resource use, production, and related management practices. Issues include concerns, needs, and resource use, development, and protection opportunities for consideration in the preparation of the RMP. These issues may stem from new information or changed circumstances and from the need to reassess the appropriate mix of allowable uses.

### 3.1 THE CHRONOLOGY OF ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

In March 2004, the BLM prepared a Preparation Plan for the CdA RMP. This plan, used by the interdisciplinary team to commence the planning process, summarized the purpose and need for the RMP and highlighted the planning issue themes anticipated by the BLM based on input from staff who have worked with the public on the public lands. The BLM identified the following eight preliminary issue themes based on the lands and resources managed within the CdA RMP planning area:

- ☛ Vegetation management
- ☛ Fire management
- ☛ Management of habitat for wildlife and special status species
- ☛ Management of transportation, public access, and recreational opportunities
- ☛ Land tenure adjustments
- ☛ Availability and management of public lands for commercial uses
- ☛ Management of Areas with Special Value
- ☛ Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities

These preliminary issue themes were expected to encompass most public issues and concerns and would serve as a starting point to spark public consideration; they were

not meant to be all-inclusive. Specific planning questions, or preliminary planning issues, were developed for each of these preliminary themes. These “BLM Anticipated Planning Issues” are included in Section 3.3.

The BLM then issued the NOI to prepare the RMP, which initiated the 73-day public scoping period and solicited written comments from the public (further discussed in Section 1.4, Description of the Scoping Process). Scoping is a collaborative public involvement process to identify and refine planning issues to be addressed in the planning process. During the initial phases of the CdA RMP planning process, the BLM met with interested individuals, groups, tribes, and agencies, as further discussed in Section 1.4.7, Meetings with Collaborating Individuals and Agencies, and Section 1.6, Collaboration and Consultation with Tribes. The BLM collaborated with the USFS regarding their concurrent land management plan and reviewed the results of their scoping. The BLM hosted five public scoping meetings and solicited written comments from the public during the official RMP scoping period to hear their concerns and suggestions regarding the planning area.

The results of the scoping period revealed that the aforementioned eight preliminary issue themes identified by the BLM accurately portrayed the concerns of the public, agencies, and tribes within the CdA RMP planning area. Additionally, one issue theme was identified by the public that was not included in the BLM’s preliminary list. This issue, Water Resources, was suggested by several community members, primarily in the Coeur d’Alene region and in the states of Washington and Utah. The main concerns expressed by the public regarding water resources were impacts to water resources and water quality and watershed restoration.

Further, as discussed in Section 1.6, Collaboration and Consultation with Tribes, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe maintains a keen interest in the BLM’s management of public lands surrounding watersheds, specifically of Lake Coeur d’Alene, of which they own the southern third. The BLM manages land within municipal watersheds for Sandpoint, St. Maries, Wallace, Bonners Ferry, and Mullan. BLM management decisions including forest health and fuel management, commercial use and access, and recreational use and access could have an impact on these or other watersheds.

The concern about water resources was originally considered by the BLM as a component of two separate preliminary issue themes, Vegetation Management and Management of Habitat for Wildlife and Special Status Species. However, based on public comments, the BLM understands that management of various resources could affect watersheds in the planning area and the quality of these watersheds should be considered in all actions, regardless of ownership. As such, Water Resources has been added to the Planning Issue Theme focus for the CdA RMP/EIS, bringing the number of planning themes to nine.

Information compiled into the Preparation Plan; gathered from collaboration meetings; adopted from USFS scoping results and concurrent project plans; and heard and

accepted during the public scoping process were compiled and evaluated to supplement and refine the preliminary issue themes and to develop the planning issue statements.

### **3.2 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE RMP**

The planning issue statements will be used to develop alternative management strategies that will be analyzed during the planning process. Select public comments received during the scoping process that will be considered in the RMP are discussed in Section 3.3. This section is not all inclusive, but it captures comments relative to the main issue statements that will be used to drive alternative formulation. Other comments not directly related to these statements will be considered in the impact evaluation and RMP planning process.

Conversely, comments that may be beyond the scope of the RMP purpose and goals are not listed in Section 3.3. These comments were not considered in the formulation of the issue statements and will not be used to develop alternative management strategies in the planning process. Comments or issues that will not be addressed in the CdA RMP are further discussed in Section 3.5, Issues Raised that Will Not Be Addressed.

The following planning issues, along with subsequently identified issues, planning criteria, and other information (e.g., results of the Analysis of the Management Situation [AMS] and Minerals Occurrence and Development Potential Report), will be used by the BLM and cooperators to help formulate a reasonable range of alternatives for the RMP:

Issue 1: What opportunities will BLM provide for motorized and nonmotorized recreation, while protecting natural and cultural resources?

Issue 2: How will the BLM manage vegetation treatments and provide forest products, while providing wildlife habitat and protecting water quality, native plant communities, old growth forest, and cultural resources?

Issue 3: How will BLM adjust land ownership to provide public benefits and improve access?

Issue 4: How will the BLM manage invasive plant species?

Issue 5: How will the BLM reduce the risk of harm or damage from fire to the public and their property?

Issue 6: What strategies and priorities will BLM use to protect healthy or restore damaged watersheds and riparian areas?

It is important to note that while many concerns are included in the nine planning themes, not all concerns and comments are included in the planning issue statements. These other concerns and comments – which may include comments provided in Section 3.3, other relevant comments received during the scoping period not listed in

Section 3.3, and management concerns identified during personal meetings with BLM staff or from the Preparation Plan that are not explicitly included in issue statements – will still be addressed by the RMP and considered in the effects analysis, but these concerns will not have overriding influence on the development of alternatives. In addition, as the planning process proceeds, there may be additional adjustments or additions to the planning issues as the BLM continues to review information, meet with the interdisciplinary team, and talk with the public.

### **3.3 COMMENTS RECEIVED BY PLANNING ISSUE STATEMENT**

As previously mentioned, the number of individual comments exceeded the number of written submissions received because many written submissions included multiple individual comments. Many of these individual comments pertained to more than one resource issue and were therefore considered as separate comments for each issue. Furthermore, all comments are not listed in the following sections. Most comments were relevant to the purpose of the RMP and will therefore be considered in the planning process and impact analysis; however, some comments were either provided in a fragmented format not conducive to the document design or were duplications of provided comments. Other comments not listed in this section may be resolved either through policy or administrative actions, are already being addressed independently of the RMP effort, or were determined to be beyond the scope of the RMP effort and will therefore not be addressed in this RMP or considered in the impact analysis. These issues are discussed in Section 3.5, Issues That Will Not Be Addressed.

#### **3.3.1 Issue 1. What opportunities will BLM provide for motorized and nonmotorized recreation, while protecting natural and cultural resources?**

BLM received more scoping comments on recreation and public access than any other topic. This issue highlights a concern that many have about the damage that recreational activities often cause to other resources (riparian areas, wildlife habitat, water quality, cultural sites, etc.). It also refers to the public concern about access to their public lands and conflicts that occur among differing types of recreational uses.

Many commentors requested that BLM maintain or improve public access for recreational use on public lands, while others expressed concern that many types of recreational use can cause damage to other resources. Motorized and nonmotorized uses can damage wildlife habitat and can adversely affect water quality by damaging riparian plant communities and causing soil erosion. Recreational use can also damage important cultural resources, including those of spiritual or traditional value to Native Americans. Some commentors suggested that BLM limit types of access or use in sensitive areas. However, such restrictions may conflict with the public demand for more recreational access. To address these concerns, some have suggested that BLM develop a looped trail system with existing routes, alleviating the need to backtrack or travel cross-country; provide maps and signs to delineate riding areas, which would discourage travel through environmental sensitive areas;

provide interpretive areas and overlooks; and develop new routes to relocate existing routes causing resource damage.

A great number of comments agreed that maintaining or improving access to public lands, including access across them to lakes and waterways, should be a priority; however, user group conflicts were apparent, primarily demonstrated by the different levels of restrictions and access desired for motorized and nonmotorized recreation. Public comments make it obvious that there is a great demand for motorized (OHV) use on the public lands. One reason mentioned for keeping roads and trails open to motorized access included the need for equal access to the resource for people of all ages and abilities. OHVs include various four-wheel drive vehicles (jeeps, ATVs, etc.), two wheel vehicles (motorcycles), and snowmobiles. BLM recognizes that the types of roads or desired settings, and the impacts to the environment, differ among types of vehicles. This is especially true when comparing snowmobiles to other OHVs. Consideration of opportunities for nonmotorized recreational uses (i.e., mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, cross-country and backcountry skiing, and snowshoeing) and potential conflicts among these types of uses, and with motorized use, make the situation more complex. There is also a difference of opinion among all types of recreational users regarding the setting. Some say that BLM should provide more developed facilities, while others desire more primitive settings. Some comments suggest that BLM should develop or maintain its existing road and trail system while allowing for segregation of users through route or area designations. Some also recommended that BLM attempt to link its roads and trails to other public trail systems to increase opportunities. Improving signage and availability of maps to reduce user conflicts was also a common suggestion.

### **Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

#### 1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:

-  Management of Transportation, Public Access, and Recreation Opportunities
-  Management of Habitat for Wildlife and Special Status Species
-  Management of Areas with Special Value

#### 2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:

-  How will resources be managed to enhance recreation experiences and quality of life?
-  How will transportation and public access be managed to improve access, protect resources, reduce user conflicts, and provide motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities for public land visitors?

#### 3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:

-  In bull trout areas, suggestions were made for permitting helicopter logging only, placing 300-foot buffers around riparian areas, restricting

OHVs and snowmobiles to ridges only, and not allowing water crossings or trails on slopes of watersheds.

-  Travel plan should assess the need for individual road closures and address user conflicts.

4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:

-  During the public scoping meetings, the public voiced concerns regarding the availability and access to cross-country and roadless travel across BLM lands.
-  Additionally, the public was concerned regarding recreational opportunities and access for OHVs (e.g., potential use of former timber roads, other roads to close/remain open; reevaluation of the restrictions of certain vehicle types in some areas).
-  BLM discussed with the public during the scoping meetings the history of BLM land ownership in the planning area.
-  The public inquired as to the types of decisions that will be made by the BLM regarding roads and access and what restrictions may be instated as a result of land transfers, special designations, or management area zoning. The public's concerns stemmed from recreational enjoyment, economic reliance, and environmental stewardship.
-  Members of the public requested to be taxed equally with skiers, bicyclists, and other recreationists who are not currently required to attain a permit to use the public lands.
-  Although not directly relevant to the RMP scoping process, the BLM received a copy of a petition being circulated in response to potential development and activities in the Blue Creek Bay area, either by BLM or other landowners. As appropriate, the BLM incorporated overlapping public concerns. One primary concern was the effect of traffic and other activities on air quality, health and safety conditions, and environmental conditions.
-  A representative of the Blue Ribbon Coalition voiced concerns regarding how the BLM will manage OHV use specifically, as well as travel management, such as road designations.
-  Bonner County Commissioners inquired about recreational opportunities to specific areas within the planning area. They also asked for clarification on right-of-way access procedures.

5. Written Scoping Comments:

-  In the CdA focus group, we asked “What do you believe is the greatest outdoor recreation need in this region (unmet needs)?” Our focus group participants said that a shortage of recreation facilities, improving recreational water access, and camping opportunities with river access were needed, among other things.

- ☞ Work with rails-to-trails programs and help link trail systems, such as route of Hiawatha to CdA trails, CdA-Rathdrum Prairie, Higgins Pt. to Blue Creek. [This statement was made by several commentors.]
- ☞ Continue to work with Rails-to-Trails, Idaho Centennial Trail Foundations, and other trail programs to develop linkages between existing trails and develop new trails at appropriate locations, including Memorial Field to Riverstone.
- ☞ Continue to acquire and preserve public access to lakes and waterways for launches-moorage and destination parks. Example: Fernan Lake IDL 70 ac./Brown's Bay.
- ☞ Develop existing resources with trails and interpretive areas and overlooks, viewpoints and wildlife blinds - low impact passive uses (i.e., Wally Forest Park & Coffs Bay). Work with waterways groups to support nonmotorized and small boat users.
- ☞ Provide and maintain public access areas on our lakes.
- ☞ Create launching sites for nonmotorized boats.
- ☞ Continue to develop projects focusing on interpretive areas and viewpoints with attention to access, including water access.
- ☞ Increase public boat launches and water-accessible parks. Would love to see more campgrounds with water/boat access/launches.
- ☞ The plan must maintain public access and rights-of-way for utilities and/or transportation of product and provide such additional access when future need is demonstrated.
- ☞ The plan should provide for access for the elderly and the physically impaired within all WSAs and SMAs and all must be in compliance with the American Disabilities Act.
- ☞ Continue to acquire and develop public access to lakes and waterways for boat launches and moorage, including destination boater parks, including consideration for acquisition of shoreline along Fernan Lake, Brown's Bay, and Blue Creek Bay.
- ☞ Develop existing resources, such as Cougar Bay, Wally Forest Conservation Area, Blue Creek, Loff's Bay, and Windy Bay, with trails and interpretive areas, overlooks, and blinds (bird and watchable wildlife), and work with adjacent landowners and managers of these properties.
- ☞ Minimize closed travel designations and segregate travel designations at some locations to specific user groups, including OHV, horses, biking, and walking/hiking.

- ☞ We support the maintenance or improvement of recreational motorized access on the lands covered by this Resource Management Plan. To accomplish this, the plan should include:
  1. Development of loop route systems that provide for motorcycles, ATVs, and 4 wheel drive vehicles. These systems should provide a variety of trail difficulties so that the rider can find a variety of experiences.
  2. The BLM should closely coordinate with other land management agencies to increase the potential for identification of routes that will resolve issues on the public land as well as the land of other owners.
  3. In wilderness study areas (WSAs) where trail widening is restricted, the BLM should explore potential routes around the restricted areas.
  4. Trails and routes should be open for motorized use year round unless wet conditions make it impossible to sustain the trail.
  5. In areas where routes cross private land easements should be acquired so that the trail can be maintained in perpetuity.
  6. The ridge trail along the St. Joe divide should be widened for ATV use and extended to reservation land and beyond if possible. This should also serve as a base for multiple loops.
  7. Access across BLM lands from the private lands to Forest Service or State lands must be maintained.
  8. Routes should be identified to connect with small communities that could provide support facilities for trail riders.
- ☞ Access across BLM lands from the private lands to Forest Service or State lands must be maintained.
- ☞ Closure of some small areas, such as the Lund Creek ACEC, is appropriate.
- ☞ The Crystal Lake WSA and the Grandmother Mountain WSA should not be recommended for Wilderness but should be managed for semi-primitive motorized use. The BLM should consider recommending them for a new designation of Back Country, where motorized use would be allowed but the existing character of the lands would be preserved.
- ☞ I urge you to write the resource management plan to make management of BLM lands to maintain excellent habitat for wildlife and plant life the number one priority. Second priority should be given to maintaining wilderness qualities to BLM lands that have them and third to providing access for recreation. I would favor access by people on foot and/or horseback as opposed to road building and use by motorcycles, four wheelers, and/or other vehicles.

- ☞ Want Jeep trails on BLM land to remain open. Would like to see these trails designated for short wheelbase four wheel drive vehicles and developed into a trail system.
- ☞ I would like to see BLM land stay open to Jeeps/4-wheel drive vehicles, hiking, cross-country skiing, canoeing, and fishing.
- ☞ Please keep jeep trails open on the BLM ground near Pine Hurst and Cataldo.
- ☞ Keep jeep trails open for people who enjoy using them.
- ☞ I think Idaho has an outstanding trail system for single track trails as well as pretty fair use and would like to see this continue. I would like to request that access to the backcountry be continued for multiple use recreation unless endangering highly sensitive habitat. If possible could designated trail systems be incorporated for specific off-road vehicle use; ORV/jeep trail. I feel it is important not to neglect this growing user group and provide a system to try and avoid renegade use of sensitive areas. If such user groups have challenging terrain in less sensitive areas and safe routes around sensitive riparian areas that must be passed to access other areas, I think it would be good practice to do so. One such area exists in the Pine Creek watershed. I recall that there are beautiful, scenic vistas and some challenging obstacles in the area but there are also currently potentially damaging creek fordings that occur. I would like to implore that access continue to be allowed but perhaps make designated crossing points or bridges to protect habitat.
- ☞ Besides mining and logging, perhaps the next most damaging activity is motorized traffic. Legislation does not usually keep the worst activity from occurring. Ignorance and lack of alternatives usually leaves us wanting. Provide opportunity and let the “good guys/gals” spread the word and the work.
- ☞ I come over to go wheeling with close relatives in the Pinehurst and Wallace areas quite frequently and feel the trails and land should be kept open. We wheel with the Northern Idaho Trail Blazers and enjoy doing this recreational activity in these areas.
- ☞ I would like to register my opinion as to future use of the Pinehurst area. Some of my family live in the Coeur d’Alene area, and we have just purchased a second home in the area in order to fully enjoy the recreational opportunities. I believe we bring a lot economically to the county. Our family enjoys 4-wheeling with our Jeeps in the Pinehurst area, and we are very sensitive to the environmental impact we may have and as such, try to be mindful of staying on the trail, removing trash, etc. We would appreciate the lands and logging roads remaining available in the future, as we see this activity to be wholesome and fun for the whole family. Thank you for your consideration.

- ☛ I am a disabled person that requires motorized use to access public lands. My vehicle is modified to traverse areas that I am not able to walk into any more. I travel with a group to keep from getting into a bad situation alone. I do not require a maintained road to travel on, but would ask that you not totally remove roads, just leave them to travel on for access, without having to resort to cross-country travel. I have a smaller ATV, but I am not able to use it for public land travel. I use a full-size 4x4 for public land travel.
- ☛ I have an old Jeep that I take on the trail and I love to ride motorcycles as well, and I know my sons will be the same way. My wife and I spend a lot of time outdoors. We do a lot of exploring in the mountains above Pinchurst and Wallace. We love the Pine Creek area mostly because of the access to some beautiful country. We are responsible recreationists, and we try to promote responsible motorized use on public land through local Jeep and motorcycle clubs. I speak for many and I hope that my involvement with the BLM, Forest Service, and local clubs will help preserve one of my favorite past times and protect motorized use of public lands for my children, as well as their own.
- ☛ I would like the Resource Management Plan to consider the desires of Four Wheel Drive (Jeeps, etc.) enthusiasts, as well as other motorized recreationists. All too often, our needs are ignored when making transportation or recreation decisions, resulting in narrow trails for ATVs and motorcycles and improved roads for normal 2WD passenger vehicles, but no challenging trails wide enough to accommodate 4x4s.
- ☛ 4x4 enthusiasts seek trails with challenges, such as steep climbs, rocky ledges, limited traction, and/or side hills. We like trails in remote areas, away from signs of development. We believe trails can be shared with other user groups, including equestrians and hikers, as long as everybody practices common sense and courtesy. Please consider the needs of 4x4 enthusiasts during this revision of the Resource Management Plan.
- ☛ Currently the area [regarding the Wallace Conservation Area by Blue Creek Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene] is closed to motorized vehicles and hunting with guns. I strongly believe the area should be kept as such. There are already plenty of areas in the National Forest for gun hunting and motorized vehicles, and it is nice for those of us who do not hunt or ride all-terrain vehicles to have a quiet safe place to go and actually see and hear wildlife. I think it was also the intent of the original owner to preserve this area for wildlife. The same is true for opening the area up to any other use- timber harvest, mineral digs, etc.; again there are many areas where these activities are allowed already.
- ☛ I have been an active outdoorsman all my life, was born in Idaho, and have lived in the CdA area for 30 years, moving here from the Lapwai, Lewiston area. I like to fish and hunt and am very involved in 4x4 and motorcycle use. In particular, we use the Pine Creek area a lot. We also

use the Middlefork, Westfork, Colusia Creek, Palasides Mine road, and over the top to St Joe River and also into the Latour Creek drainage. We also use Pine Point road now and then. I was the person that showed our club these trails. It would be a shame to loose these trails after all these years. We also use the Big Creek road and Lake Elsie area to the St Joe River and the trails to Bronson Meadows. If these trails and roads are {not maintained}, please don't close them. We prefer that these roads, {trails} not be maintained but be left open for use. I broke both of my legs in a vehicle accident and can not travel on foot very far but can drive.

- ☛ My family and I enjoy jeeping on BLM land. Please allow this to continue.
- ☛ I'm a very active outdoorsman and enjoy camping, Jeeping, and riding ATVs. I own a classic 1975 Ford Bronco and have always enjoyed the recreation of Jeeping, and I believe that if we don't preserve the lands that we have and keep them in use for recreation of all types, then eventually there will be no land for Jeeping, camping, and ATV.
- ☛ Some of the Jeep trails currently in use on BLM land: Middle Fork Rd. on Pine Creek; Calusa Creek Rd.; West Fork Rd. on Pine Creek to the Twin Craigs; Trail that goes to the top of Pine Point; Draw to Palisade mine.
- ☛ I would like to see short wheel base 4 wheel drive vehicle access to back county be continued and considered in your long range plans. I believe that the BLM should acquire easements and coordinate access with others for designated use. I am affiliated with the Northern Idaho Trailblazers, a 4-wheel drive club. We have had the physically handicapped travel with us to enjoy areas that might otherwise be inaccessible to them. I know there are environmental sensitive areas that might not be suitable for this use; however, other areas should be developed for multiple use. I can and do respect others, horses, hikers, etc, in the backcountry. I have traveled to areas designated ORV use in Washington, Oregon and California; these areas seem to be working well and I would encourage similar use plans for the BLM lands.
- ☛ Back Country ATV is concerned about continued access to existing and future trails. We are interested in helping maintain and enhance these trails and look forward to working with all agencies, as well as other organizations with a like mindset. Maps should be available describing which trails are open and designated for ATV use. Making/improving existing trails interconnect, this will create an environment where backtracking over the same terrain is no longer required. Provide contact information on trails relative to enforcement, so people can identify individuals that are not following trail rules. Let us help GPS [geographical positioning system] trails by loaning proper equipment and basic instructions for usage. Provide a BLM representative each quarter

at the Northwest Access Alliance meetings; bring us up to date with any information or needs relative to access.

- ☞ We are deeply concerned about the diminishing access to our public lands.
- ☞ We are avid hunters, hikers, and pack out what we pack in and in many instances what someone else leaves. And now we are seeing decreasing access to lands that belongs to the public.
- ☞ Currently the public access to this area is creating a nuisance for the local homeowners. Day visitors are using the area to picnic and swim and unfortunately are not being very courteous. My neighbors have complained that they are trespassing onto my property and urinating on my wall in broad daylight. I have been at a loss as to how to resolve this problem. Also, the wall has been vandalized and completely broken out in areas. It will likely suffer considerable damage this winter as the brick contracts and expands from the temperature fluctuations and will be costly to repair. Trash from the picnickers, broken glass, and dirty diapers are left behind when their fun for the day is over. This means that the neighbors must volunteer to clean the trespassers mess. I am grateful that you are planning to address these problems. I am very willing to assist you in any way that I am able.
- ☞ Access to our public lands is a hot issue. The Kinnikinnick Chapter does not believe the BLM needs to provide access for all the machines and transportation modes available today, beyond some of those already open. People always have access by foot -- sometimes it may be difficult and distant, but we are not fenced out. The limitations are those of individual time available, physical condition, and age. You are not a transportation department with responsibility for roadway access everywhere. Forest health and that of its wildlife and flora components should be given higher priority. All vehicles should stay on established roadways, not travel cross-country.
- ☞ The BLM should conduct current inventories on roadless areas within the Resource Area. FLPMA mandates that federal agencies maintain an “inventory of all public lands and their resource and other values.” Keeping track of special resources, such as roadless areas, must be part of this inventory process. FLPMA mandates that this inventory “be kept current so as to reflect changes in conditions and to identify new and emerging resource and other values.” 43 USC 1711§ (a). Thus, the BLM cannot rely on outdated roadless area inventories for information on the amount of primitive lands within the Resource Area. This inventory should also include lands suitable for wilderness designation.
- ☞ The RMP must include scientifically based standards dictating when new road construction will be allowed, where they should be constructed, and when roads should be decommissioned. It should include an objective

set of criteria with which the BLM should evaluate every proposal for new road construction. The evaluation criteria should include whether the proposal is in an environmentally sensitive area, such as a riparian area, unroaded area, or steep slope. It should also include whether the road is needed, not just in the short-term, whether there are alternative access routes or methods, and whether the BLM has sufficient funds to maintain additional roads.

- ☞ Recreation opportunities for visitor exploration and discovery should focus on activities in an undeveloped, primitive setting. BLM should be specific in identifying the uses that will be acceptable and allowable in certain and designated areas and settings. BLM should manage overnight camping and backcountry use to prevent impacts to resources. BLM should identify seasonal or permanent restrictions on backcountry use and camping to avoid damage to sensitive resources. Recreational collecting of objects should be prohibited, unless expressly permitted for specific items from specific locations. Competitive events should be limited or prohibited on BLM land in these landscapes. Other areas may be identified for these events, including private property.
- ☞ Through this planning process the BLM should designate a transportation network that retains the minimum amount of routes necessary to provide for reasonable access. Extraneous, duplicative, unstable, or little used routes should be closed, decommissioned, and rehabilitated. Existing routes should not be upgraded, and no new routes should be constructed, unless for relocation purposes to protect resource damage. The BLM should establish maintenance agreements with the county, state, and/or road districts to conduct their road maintenance in the least impacting ways possible. A detailed monitoring plan should be developed and implemented to track and address increased impacts from motorized use associated.
- ☞ Lands administered by the BLM must be immediately closed to all cross-country indiscriminate travel. Motorized travel must be limited to designated roads and trails only. Motorized vehicle use must not be allowed in areas with sensitive or highly erodible soils, or at times of the year when soil conditions are inappropriate for such use. ORV use must be designed to encourage the safety and protection of all public land users. Such use must be eliminated from sensitive areas and areas identified for the protection of biological, geological, paleontological, cultural, and other resource values. The Idaho Conservation League and Idaho Rivers United oppose commercial and recreational competitive use of the resource area for motorized vehicle events. This type of use is incompatible with the values and resources found in these areas. The BLM must develop a travel plan and associated maps and educational materials for recreational motorized use. Enforcement of the regulations must be a top priority for the BLM. Designated routes should be

established, and the BLM should establish routes as being closed unless posted open.

-  BLM should work to assure public access to public lands in areas with no resource conflicts or impacts. The BLM should incorporate into any grazing and other types of permitted uses a stipulation of keeping access routes open for the public, even if they cross private lands. If resource users want to continue to use the public lands for their economic benefit, then the public has a right to use roads that cross their private property to access public lands.
-  Selkirk Conservancy Alliance recommends that ORV and snowmobile use be restricted to BLM system roads only. Motorized overland (off road) travel should be restricted on all parcels using area closures in a way that is enforceable.
-  Control and direct OHV use to protect resources (i.e., wildlife habitat and security) and prevent erosion, including adequate policing and enforcing.
-  The RMP must include motorized use. When managed properly, it is the most convenient and widely used access to our public lands. As an extreme jeeper I realize there are different levels of trail and outdoor opportunities needed for the many levels of motorized used. Four-wheel drive use has gone unregulated or unrecognized in the present plan. As a responsible user I would like to see trail systems developed and maintained through local user groups. The Pine Creek drainage provides many excellent opportunities for the extreme or the moderate Jeoper. The rocky drainage is perfect.
-  Decommission the road(s) in T-63N, R-3W, S-17 (west of Abandon Mountain) to provide security and reduce the risk of mortality to mountain caribou and grizzly bear. Implement and enforce an area closure to motorized use for that important parcel.
-  I would ask that the trail/road from the twin crags (Mirror Lake) east to the west for of Pine Creek be reopened. That will make a great ATV route from the Cataldo/Latour Creek areas, into Pinehurst. Good for Pinehurst business. I also ask for better maintenance on the Latour Creek Road plus dust control.
-  Use mineral ridge as a prototype for developing Wally Forest Park.
-  The plan must provide a detailed economic analysis, including cumulative impacts, of proposed agency actions on the local government tax base, economy, cultural and heritage values.

### **3.3.2 Issue 2. How will the BLM manage vegetation treatments and provide forest products, while providing fish and wildlife habitat and protecting water quality, native plant communities, old growth forest, and cultural resources?**

The BLM manages the health of its lands, including fish and wildlife habitat, fisheries, and special status species habitat, and provides for sometimes conflicting uses, such as logging, grazing, and recreation. Certain public groups or individuals suggested that the BLM should emphasize conservation over extractive commodities, while others conversely advocated for the BLM to balance the needs of both uses.

Vegetation treatments include fuel reductions, stewardship projects, and commercial harvesting. There were also many concerns regarding habitat and wildlife protection and restoration, water quality degradation relevant to aquatic species and their habitats, the effects of exotic species on wildlife sustainability, and road impacts to neighboring habitats. Many of the comments received during the scoping period expressed concern about past and present forest and fire management actions. The public recognizes the need for fuel reduction and protection of the Wildland Urban Interface. Wildlife habitat includes that for terrestrial, aquatic, and special status species. Riparian areas are key components of wildlife habitat and are directly tied to water quality. It is important to the public to maintain diverse and healthy vegetative components for fish, wildlife, and rare plant populations, riparian areas, water and air quality, and cultural and tribal interests.

There were a few comments that identified forestry-related issues. The specific forestry-related issues were fire management, the need for forest management and forest inventory, restoration and sustainability of old-growth timber stands, and a desire to see commercial timber harvesting in the planning area. Those comments that mentioned forest management indicated that forested areas lacked natural fire regimes and that controlled burns should be examined as a management tool. Several comments indicated the need for a more complete forest management strategy, including old-growth inventory and management. Comments also pointed out the mandate for sustained yield, a need for cooperation between forest landholders, and brought up the possibility of commercial timber harvests in the planning area. Forest management was also described as potentially beneficial to watershed, wildlife, and livestock management.

One of the issues addressed was the need to minimize conflict between fish and wildlife habitat and other resources. Many comments identified recreation, commercial forest production, and mineral development as uses that have potential wildlife conflicts. These comments suggested that the RMP identify ways to limit these impacts through closures or restrictions. The letters requested that the best available data and science be used to determine the nature and extent of wildlife conflict before management decisions are made. Other comments addressed the need to manage for and protect native species. Many individuals requested that all special status species in the planning area be given significant management attention in the RMP. Some comments focused

on limiting the amount of management attention paid to nonnative species' habitat management, as well as avoiding the introduction of new nonnative species.

Comments specifically mentioned a need for management attention towards threatened and endangered (T&E) species, native fish species, groups of species, or types of habitats to be evaluated or designated. Many of the comments received during the scoping period expressed concern about fish and wildlife habitat, fisheries, and special status species protection and restoration, water quality degradation relevant to aquatic species, the effects of vegetation management on wildlife sustainability, and roadway and roadless area impacts on neighboring habitats. The public suggested specific management actions or management paradigms. Concerns were also voiced over the quality of data used in the plan.

Some comments were of the position that water quality was being negatively impacted by resource uses in the area. Other comments stated that water quality might actually be improving and that activities permitted in the past should be allowed to continue. Specific activities mentioned in relation to water quality included water development, recreation, mining, roads, and timber harvest. Many of these comments stated that the impacts to water quality from these resource uses were minimal and easily managed, while other comments of this type explained that past impacts in the planning area have been substantial and should be kept to a minimum from the various resource uses.

Cultural resources include traditional uses by Native American Tribes, as well as historic sites and artifacts. Management actions also need to protect municipal water supplies and protect traditional practices. Comments included the request that BLM conduct inventories to determine the distribution, comparative importance, and relative sensitivity of cultural resources and to allocate their potential use in interpretation, education, scientific research, and in the maintenance of cultural traditions and religion. Respondents also asked that BLM adopt management actions necessary to protect and restore cultural sites or areas that are most vulnerable to current and future impacts and expressed concern about unauthorized collection and vandalism. Specific concerns were expressed regarding the potential for direct effects and visual intrusions on a known traditional cultural property and the need to maintain confidentiality of resource locations.

**Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:

- ☛ Vegetation Management
- ☛ Fire Management
- ☛ Management of Habitat for Wildlife and Special Status Species
- ☛ Availability and Management of Public Lands for Commercial Uses
- ☛ Water Resources
- ☛ Management of Areas with Special Values

2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:

-  How will uses and activities be managed to achieve, maintain, or improve riparian upland and forest communities, with an emphasis on native species restoration?
-  What actions and/or restrictions will be needed to maintain or improve natural resource values that have been affected by, or are susceptible to, noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species?
-  How will forest health be maintained and restored?
-  How will uses and activities be managed to maintain and/or improve fish and wildlife habitats in a scattered land ownership pattern?
-  How will BLM manage uses and activities to protect special status species and their habitats?
-  How will mineral and energy development activities be managed to provide for projects while protecting other natural resources?
-  What plants and animals in the planning area are typically used for traditional and/or treaty use purposes?
-  How will cultural resources needing proactive management, protection, and use be identified?
-  How will sacred sites and traditional cultural places that need protection be identified?
-  How will the BLM manage paleontological and cave resources?
-  Where can fuel management activities be used to reduce fuel accumulations in the wildland urban interface and promote and sustain a healthy ecosystem?
-  How will management of BLM lands affect the social and economic resiliency and sustainability of local economies?
-  Where and at what harvest levels will BLM provide for forest products?
-  How can fire suppression actions be managed to minimize the adverse effects to resources while providing public health and safety and protecting private property?

3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:

-  Habitat connectivity should be an important component for habitat protection in key wildlife areas.
-  In bull trout areas, suggestions were made for permitting helicopter logging only, placing 300-foot buffers around riparian areas, restricting OHVs and snowmobiles to ridges only, and not allowing water crossings or trails on slopes of watersheds.

-  Habitat protection measures should be implemented to maintain viable and diverse animal populations and not just focus on particular managed species.
4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:
-  Chairman of the Kootenai Tribe and Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative expressed interest in future forest stewardship projects.
  -  Representatives of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe inquired about impacts to botanical resources that may be important to the Tribe.
  -  The Coeur d'Alene Tribe voiced concerns regarding the management of watersheds in the BLM planning area.
  -  The Coeur d'Alene Tribe was further concerned regarding the confidentiality of archeological sites or traditional cultural properties.
  -  The Coeur d'Alene Tribe was also interested in the potential effects to Native American uses of BLM lands within the traditional use areas.
  -  The Bonner County Commissioners inquired as to how the BLM will manage certain municipal watersheds in the planning area and what types of protection measures may be implemented.
  -  Although not considered as a meeting or an official scoping comment, the BLM received a petition compiling some of the concerns the public had with another project. Concerns relevant to the RMP planning area and process were pulled from this document to be considered. The public voiced concerns regarding the effects of pollution from improvements and traffic within the planning area on the environmental and local ecosystems.
5. Written Scoping Comments:
-  In the current plan how are the following issues addressed: rare and sensitive plants, weed control, riparian protection and restoration, and regulating commercial harvesting of non-timber resources? What are the rankings of stream health on BLM lands? More importantly, how will these issues be addressed in the Resource Management Plan under development?
  -  EPA recommends focusing fuels management in WUIs and areas of high and severe fire risk and evaluating water quality, fisheries, and wildlife impacts of fuels management to reduce fire risk vs. risk of and effects of potential wildfire.
  -  Prevent continued loss and promote long-term sustainability of old growth stands and restore where possible the geographic extent and connectivity of old growth.
  -  To maintain or restore a healthy ecosystem, there must be a balance among all of the components. I would begin with a thorough knowledge

of the system prior to major impacts by humans, including harvesting, introduction of exotic insects, pathogens and woods, and fire exclusion. This historical ecosystem often best describes the species composition, etc. that is in balance with all other components (i.e., nature). In this way, you can usually determine what the “healthy” forest should be. My knowledge is largely limited to trees, and the following comments will be limited to them.

- ☞ In this northern region, the conditions of many forest stands have been altered to fewer shade tolerant species, such as the true firs (Abies) and Douglas fir. These species were in the historical forests, but they were far less in abundance. These species are highly susceptible to several root disease fungi. The fungi spread largely below ground through root contacts. Since several of these fungi tend to be host specific, they move from tree to neighboring tree of the same species via root contacts. Hence, if the firs and Douglas fir are relatively few and interspersed among other species, most belowground movement of the fungi is inhibited. Thus, whenever appropriate we should manage to encourage mixed conifer stands.
- ☞ The old growth section of the NEPA document should supply accurate scientific analysis and high quality information, with expert agency comments regarding issues relating to old growth located on the approximately 96,732 acre of BLM-managed lands. There should be information that will describe the procedures BLM uses to classify trees in one or more old growth categories, such as verified old growth, allocated old growth, or recruitment old growth.
- ☞ There should also be information that will indicate when the most recent old growth surveys occurred, and the tree species that have been found to have old growth characteristics. If there are any blocks of old growth larger than 100 acres, there should be one or more maps that display the locations of these blocks of old growth.
- ☞ We are concerned with survival, and opportunity to thrive, for native plants, especially sensitive and rare plants. This involves maintaining habitat for these populations and the larger community with which they interact. As much as possible, lands which closely resemble those found before logging and managing for timber production will best nurture sensitive plants. Prior to any use of BLM lands for extractive purposes (mining, grazing, timber production), we encourage botanical surveys of the land to be impacted. Riparian protection from degradation and restoring damaged waterways is a very high priority.
- ☞ Work to enhance and protect the health and sustainability of our forest resources and forest wood products industry.
- ☞ Vegetative management concerns, we believe, should be a top priority as they ultimately impact every other plan objective.

- ☞ The streams and creeks that fully support viable populations of Westslope Cutthroat trout should be displayed.
- ☞ The plan should recognize that it is not the intention of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to restore all of the original habitat once occupied by the species, but only the amount needed to conserve the species. The plan should recognize that recovery plans and experimental populations for introduced, threatened, and endangered species grow exponentially beyond boundaries and scope and result in detrimental effects on the area economy, lifestyle, culture, and heritage.
- ☞ I urge you to write the resource management plan to make management of BLM lands to maintain excellent habitat for wildlife and plant life the number one priority. Second priority should be given to maintaining wilderness qualities to BLM lands that have them and third to providing access for recreation. I would favor access by people on foot and/or horseback as opposed to road building and use by motorcycles, four wheelers, and/or other vehicles.
- ☞ There is a good variety of wildlife, from Mt. Lions (until recently) to passerine birds, which tells me that the vegetation is that of a healthy forest that can support a wide variety of wildlife.
- ☞ I do not see any need for further resource management [regarding the Wallace Conservation Area by Blue Creek Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene] at this time. The vegetation is such that the fire danger is low, the variety of wildlife would indicate that there is a good variety of wildlife and in abundance to support them. It is one of the few public forest places in northern Idaho that I have visited that does not have thistle and hawkweed growing all over it. And this I believe is largely due to the roadlessness of the area.
- ☞ Much of the area [around Grandmother Mountain and Pinchot Butte] is crucial habitat for Threatened and Endangered (T&S) fish species like bull trout. Water quality and fish habitat must be major issues in this revision. They are crucial to treaty rights.
- ☞ We are concerned with survival, and opportunity to thrive, for native plants, especially sensitive and rare plants. This involves maintaining habitat for these populations and the larger community with which they interact. As much as possible, lands which closely resemble those found before logging and managing for timber production will best nurture sensitive plants. Prior to any use of BLM lands for extractive purposes (mining, grazing, timber production), we encourage botanical surveys of the land to be impacted. Riparian protection from degradation and restoring damaged waterways is a very high priority.
- ☞ Members and staff of Idaho Rivers United have a particular concern for restoring water quality and native fish habitat in the Salmon and Clearwater drainages and were active participants in the development of

the total maximum daily load for the South Fork Clearwater River and the draft State Comprehensive Basin Plan.

- ☞ BLM should place the highest priority for all management activities that contribute to the recovery of endangered species, especially caribou, bull trout, and grizzly bear, in the Selkirk and Cabinet mountains and for the maintenance of sensitive wildlife and plant species.
- ☞ Manage the lands using the principles of landscape ecology and conservation area design to contribute to long-term species maintenance and restoration of ecosystem functions. BLM should emphasize ecosystem restoration and not extractive commodities, such as logging and grazing.
- ☞ Manage for maximum grizzly bear security in all parcels located in the grizzly bear recovery zone or areas outside of the recovery area that are currently or potentially occupied through road decommissioning, effective gating, and area closures.
- ☞ Protect project areas with unique resource values, particularly population strongholds and key refugia for listed or proposed species and narrow endemic populations.
- ☞ Protect high quality waters, riparian areas, wetlands, and aquatic species, including development of riparian protection guidelines to protect water quality and riparian areas and gain recovery of native fish populations (e.g., INFISH riparian protection guidelines).
- ☞ Improve watershed/aquatic monitoring and assessment programs to identify impacts, detect problems, measure restoration success, and make changes to management based on monitoring (adaptive management), and address coordination efforts and budget needs for monitoring. Identify how monitoring will improve from the current plan.
- ☞ Reduce road impacts to water quality, fisheries, and wildlife; identify road network needed for access and management that can be adequately maintained within budgets and capabilities; close/decommission roads that can not be maintained; minimize new roads; identify existing road conditions that cause or contribute to nonpoint source pollution/stream impairment; and promote conduct of necessary road maintenance to correct deficiencies and reduce nonpoint source pollution from roads.
- ☞ Retain adequate snags and woody debris for wildlife habitat and necessary ecological structure and functioning (e.g., soil productivity, nutrient cycling, etc.).
- ☞ Maintain and restore degraded wildlife habitats, evaluating road management, habitat characteristics, security, displacement, fragmentation, connectivity, wildlife movement corridors, forest openings, and edge effects, and promote T&E and sensitive species recovery.

- ☞ In the current plan how are the following issues addressed: rare and sensitive plants, weed control, riparian protection and restoration, and regulating commercial harvesting of non-timber resources? What are the rankings of stream health on BLM lands? More importantly, how will these issues be addressed in the Resource Management Plan under development?
- ☞ Integrate National Fire Plan direction, including restoring more natural fire disturbance regimes to forest ecosystems, and evaluate the role of fire and other natural disturbance processes (e.g., insects, disease) and ecosystem processes (e.g., flows, cycles of nutrients and water) and their dynamics in developing revised direction for vegetation and fuels management.
- ☞ Much of the area is crucial habitat for T&E fish species like bull trout. Water quality and fish habitat must be major issues in this revision. They are crucial to treaty rights.
- ☞ The plan should maintain livestock grazing permits and grazing allocations at present levels until rangelands are improved and accurate range studies support an increase. The plan must NOT allow livestock allocations to be converted to wildlife allocations unless valid economic studies show the conversion is equal to or better for the local area economic infrastructure and tax base.
- ☞ The plan should improve forage for both livestock and wildlife, and when forage levels have increased, allocations for both wildlife and livestock should be increased proportionally. Current livestock and wildlife allocations must be maintained or restored to levels that the range can sustain without resource damage. The plan should recognize and involve both wildlife agencies and livestock permit holders in management decisions concerning forage allocations and establishing forage allotments. The plan should allow that forage reductions resulting from forage studies, drought, or other natural disasters must be implemented on an allotment basis, and reductions must be applied proportionately to all allocations. Forage allocation reductions shall be temporary, and when forest production is restored, grazing allocations should be restored. The plan should recognize that no increases in wildlife populations or the introduction of additional species may be made until forage allocations have been provided for the introduced species, and an impact analysis has been completed showing the impact to other wildlife and livestock species.
- ☞ Besides mining and logging, perhaps the next most damaging activity is motorized traffic. Legislation does not usually keep the worst activity from occurring. Ignorance and lack of alternatives usually leaves us wanting. Provide opportunity and let the “good guys/gals” spread the word and the work.

- ☛ On the subject of Mining and Logging I am somewhat pragmatic to the needs for such as an average consumer of goods. I do note however that I have seen heavy impact from logging near stream/riverbeds and on roads that made me wonder if anyone was keeping an eye out for the environment. Then there is the common knowledge of superfund cleanup in the CdA basin. I for one don't want that to happen again. Please be firm when considering granting sales/rights for those activities. I am not expert enough to comment other than saying if public lands will be used for such we need supervision and follow up to make sure those folks profiting are not taking advantage of the situation. Also are clear cuts good practice? They certainly aren't the prettiest looking patchwork on our forests.
- ☛ Livestock grazing should be managed in a manner that will not harm the objects or resources that are of value and concern in these landscapes. BLM should ensure grazing conforms to the "Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration" by placing a priority on assessing areas to see if they are in compliance. If the areas are not in compliance, immediate action should be taken to rectify the grazing management. BLM should not allow intensive grazing management systems of any kind, whether off-stream or in upland locations. Grazing should be eliminated in riparian/wetland areas after the growing season. Grazing should also be eliminated from all riparian pastures where water quality standards are not met within a reasonable amount of time, suggested two years, for factors affected by livestock grazing (fecal coliform, turbidity, temperature, etc).
- ☛ Grazing in Bonner and Boundary counties on BLM lands should be phased out, unless exceptional circumstances coupled with proof of no degradation to sensitive native plant populations and riparian areas exist.
- ☛ BLM should identify any inventories needed to provide a basis for understanding the distribution, comparative importance, and potential uses of cultural, geologic, and paleontological resources, relative sensitivity, relative opportunities for interpretive development, relative scientific importance, and relative potential for research and education. The BLM is no doubt aware of the extensive amount of information available on the historic, geologic, paleontologic, and cultural significance of many of the lands. Coordination and communication with the tribes, the State Historic Preservation Office, local historical societies, area universities, and other sources of useful information is important during this planning process to identify and protect the vast array of significant resources present in these landscapes. The BLM should consider designating new Archaeological Districts and should seek designation of all sites eligible for protection as additions to the National Register of Historic Places.

- ☞ BLM should establish goals to protect the unique and outstanding cultural, geologic, and paleontological resources of the land administered by the BLM. The BLM should determine the sites or areas that are most vulnerable to current and future impact and adopt management actions necessary to protect and restore these resources. Specific management actions may include site stabilization, fencing, signing, closures, rehabilitation, and increased monitoring or interpretative development, and measures should be adopted to protect these resources from artifact collectors, looters, thieves, and vandals. The Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene Tribes should be engaged at every possible opportunity to determine site locations or particular concerns and to obtain their input on how to best protect their heritage and culture.
- ☞ Incorporate watershed and water quality concerns into all site development.
- ☞ Water developments should only be allowed where it is the only method to protect resources. New and additional water developments and diversions should be very limited. Existing water developments and diversions should be assessed for their overall impact on resources and should not be allowed to dewater springs, seeps, or streams. BLM should remove or relocate water developments where they are causing harm, and developments should not be allowed for the purpose of increasing livestock numbers.
- ☞ Fund aggressive enforcement of Best Management Practices during logging to control erosion.
- ☞ The plan should be written to provide for sound timber rotation and harvesting to promote a stable timber economy, enhanced forest health, and sound fuel load management techniques that should minimize fire potential.
- ☞ Regulate commercial harvesting of huckleberries, mushrooms, beargrass and any other living resource for sustainability and appropriate harvesting techniques.
- ☞ Economic impacts are measured in three ways: (1) the direct costs of management and control, (2) the direct or indirect costs of lost productivity or impacts to species with economic or ecological values, and, (3) rates of spread or other measures to the extent of the species.
- ☞ The plan must provide a detailed economic analysis, including cumulative impacts, of proposed agency actions on the local government tax base, economy, cultural and heritage values.

### 3.3.3 Issue 3. How will BLM adjust land ownership to provide public benefits and improve access?

Because of the scattered land ownership patterns found in northern Idaho, the issue of land tenure is a fundamental concern of the public and neighboring landowners. Land tenure includes retained and acquired lands and those available for exchange. Comments received supported the need to evaluate the scattered land ownership patterns; however, the comments expressed concern that access and commercial uses may be limited, restricted, or otherwise changed as a result of future land exchanges. Some comments asked that land exchanges be sought only when they supported resource conservation. In this regard, land tenure may be used as a mechanism or mitigation to isolate and protect certain watersheds, wildlife, plants, or other sensitive resources. Land tenure opportunities were otherwise interpreted as a tool to provide further access or public land use availability. For example, many isolated parcels provide valuable recreation access to water. The BLM will evaluate the potential effects of any land tenure decisions on public benefits, including access to lakes, waterways, and contiguous land parcels previously obstructed by private or alternate land ownership and recreational opportunities (especially the availability of trails). These resources will be considered for retention or swap with other public agencies. The BLM will work cooperatively with other relevant agencies to highlight some of these opportunities and to develop consistent plans for effective management of the lands. Many specific land areas were recommended for future land acquisition consideration, which may be considered under the implementation phase of the RMP.

#### **Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:
  -  Land Tenure
  -  Management of Transportation, Public Access, and Recreation Opportunities
  -  Management of Areas with Special Values
2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:
  -  What opportunities exist to make adjustments to public land ownership that would result in greater management efficiency and increased public and natural resource benefits?
3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:
  -  N/A
4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:
  -  During the public scoping meetings, the public requested clarification regarding how land transfers, acquisitions, and disposals worked and what plans the BLM has regarding land tenure in the planning area. They were also confused on the differences between BLM and USFS land tenure programs. The public encouraged the BLM to consolidate the

scattered land patterns to provide easier access and more efficient management.

- The public had concerns with future land transfers potentially limiting access to certain desired areas but encouraged the BLM to consider land acquisitions to lands they wish to access and use.
- Certain members of the public inquired as to how one may convey a land title to the BLM to manage as open area or for land preservation.
- The public was concerned with the amount of land the BLM has lost or disposed of since the original Management Framework Plan in 1981.
- Bonner County Commissioners discussed past land exchanges and acquisitions with the BLM, which have since ceased.
- KVRI, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe expressed interest in the land exchange program and opportunities.

5. Written Scoping Comments:

- The Coeur d'Alene Field Office's lands are scattered in numerous parcels throughout northern Idaho. The BLM has been working to consolidate its lands in the Field Office. While this is an important land management tool, small parcels of land that provide valuable access or recreational opportunities should be retained.
- Work with rails-to-trails programs and help link trail systems, such as route of Hiawatha to CdAs trail, CdA-Rathdrum Prairie, and Higgins Pt. to Blue Creek.
- Acquire lands to augment and support existing and/or new interpretive areas (e.g., Marble Creek etc.). Combine Cougar Bay parcels and build joint trails and picnic areas with The Nature Conservancy and others.
- Continue to acquire public access to lakes and waterways (e.g., Fernan Lake and Eastend boater's park).
- Continue to acquire available property, and work with other agencies to coordinate efforts to develop and preserve areas for public. Develop trust areas with trails and interpretive centers.
- The plan must insure that special designations do not influence the use of resources on lands outside of those listed in the designation.
- Acquire lands, where appropriate, to augment and support existing interpretive areas, such as Marble Creek, Frost Peak, and Cougar Bay.
- The scoping letter recognizes that coordination between the BLM and the Forest Service is crucial, as most of these areas are adjacent to or surrounded by national forest. It may be that land transfers between the two agencies are advisable for scattered tracts in some instances. However, there must be full public involvement on proposals of that nature.

-  Acquire Brown's Bay.
-  BLM parcels are small and widely dispersed north of the Clark Fork River, Pend Oreille Lake, and Pend Oreille River. We would like to see these lands be added to the US Forest Service land base. This would be more efficient and would allow for better management, especially in Recovery Areas.

### 3.3.4 Issue 4. How will the BLM manage invasive plant species?

A large component of vegetation management is the control of invasive and exotic plant species. Management of noxious weeds and exotic species was a primary concern by the public. Specifically, the effects of other resources (e.g., water quality, fuels management, wilderness, and wildlife) as well as the contribution of other activities (e.g., recreational activities and vehicular access) on the spread of weeds and exotic species. Most comments focused on how, when, and where noxious weeds and other invasive species would be controlled in the planning area and what conditions would apply to other resource activities to prevent further invasions in the planning area.

#### **Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:
  -  Vegetation Management
2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:
  -  How will uses and activities be managed to achieve, maintain, or improve riparian upland and forest communities, with an emphasis on native species restoration?
  -  What actions and/or restrictions will be needed to maintain or improve natural resource values that have been affected by, or are susceptible to, noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species?
  -  How will forest health be maintained and restored?
3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:
  -  Noxious weed control measures should be applied equally to all visitors, and the document should make a fair evaluation of all sources and uses that contribute to the noxious weed program.
4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:
  -  During the scoping meetings the public offered support and requested an explanation of the BLM's Weeds Management Program. An attendee from the Wallace, Idaho meeting asked whether ATVs are used to spray weeds. The BLM responded that these vehicles were used in areas where special status species do not require vehicle use restrictions.

## 5. Written Scoping Comments:

-  In the current plan how are the following issues addressed: rare and sensitive plants, weed control, riparian protection and restoration, and regulating commercial harvesting of non-timber resources? What are the rankings of stream health on BLM lands? More importantly, how will these issues be addressed in the Resource Management Plan under development?
-  The plan should implement the most economical and effective weed control methods for targeting and controlling weeds. Reduce the extent and density of established noxious weeds to a point that natural resource damage is within acceptable limits. Support conservation programs and efforts to educate the public on the benefits of improving vegetative cover and the control of noxious weeds.
-  Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) desires that the issue of noxious weeds will be addressed by the RMP and EIS.
-  Incorporate invasive weed management strategies at all OHV use areas, including informational signage and rinse stations, where possible.
-  The other concern is the lack of response from authorities when dumping of trash is reported and the total lack of weed control.
-  Weed control is exceedingly important. This may involve restricting recreational or other access to sensitive areas. Preventing invasive plants from entering is much better than controlling them afterwards. Although detailed protocols have been established for weed control, the efforts appear to be failing, and weeds are spreading fast and far. Longitudinal research in specific areas and more innovative and stringent controls are needed.
-  Identify noxious weeds/exotic plants; discuss the magnitude and occurrence of the weed infestations; and identify strategies for prevention, early detection, and control procedures for weed management. Promote integrated weed management, with mitigation to avoid herbicide transport to surface or ground waters.
-  Significant effects to the environment - Native plants and native vegetative patterns - Management objectives must include rapid detection, containment, and control of nonindigenous weeds species. Harmful nonindigenous weed species transform the vegetation composition through competitive exclusion of native species and the facilitation of wildfires. If given an opportunity, infestations occur rapidly. Many weeds thrive after fire and outcompete native forbs and grasses.
-  Water quality - Water quality can be greatly impacted by infestations of harmful nonindigenous weed species. Infiltration may be reduced and

runoff increased in sites dominated by weeds such as Spotted Knapweed.

-  Wilderness - Management activities can positively affect nearby wilderness areas. The very nature of pristine areas can be negatively affected by noxious and invasive weeds. Early detection and treatment options must be available and utilized.
-  All treatment options must be considered to protect the wilderness resource values. The recreational use of contiguous wilderness leaves the area susceptible to introduction of harmful vegetative species. The project must be flexible enough to allow for a large treatment area. Recreational opportunities should be limited long term, however, by management objectives or treatment options.
-  ISDA supports the BLM in efforts to efficiently manage noxious weeds. Control of noxious and invasive weeds area will benefit the quality of the wilderness and the human environment. Management of noxious and invasive weeds on all BLM lands must be an aggressive effort.

### 3.3.5 Issue 5. How will the BLM reduce the risk of harm or damage from fire to the public and their property?

Comments regarding fire management focused on several issues, including restoration of the natural historical fire regime, restoration of lands from fire damage, prescribed burns, fire control and management in the WUI, air quality, and removal of dead and dying timber to reduce fuel loads. An updated fire management plan was requested (a plan is currently under development in conjunction with the CdA RMP). There was also a request from a representative of the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to integrate the National Fire Plan policies into the RMP.

#### **Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:

-  Fire Management

2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:

-  What should be the landscape level fire management goals and objectives?

-  How can fire suppression actions be managed to minimize the adverse effects to resources while providing public health and safety and protecting private property?

-  What is the appropriate management response to naturally occurring wildfire in a scattered land ownership pattern?

3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:

-  N/A

4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:

- The public voiced concerns at the Wallace scoping meeting regarding impacts of how methods of fire suppression will impact uses and access of certain areas.
- Bonner County Commissioner voiced concerns about the BLM's fuels reduction and wildland-urban interface efforts.

5. Written Scoping Comments:

- ☒ Restoration of Fire - The RMP should include an analysis of restoration of fire to BLM lands. This should include identification of areas 1) that will allow prescribed natural fire, 2) where the BLM will prescribe its own burning policy, and 3) where suppression will be employed, with appropriate social and ecological justification.
- ☒ A comprehensive fire management plan should be developed for the planning area and should include the identification of the threats imposed by hazardous fuel situations. BLM should define the appropriate management response to fires, taking into account protection of objects and resources. Emergency fire rehabilitation protocols should also be developed and must be consistent with the protection of the area's objects, resources, and objectives.
- ☒ Integrate National Fire Plan direction, including restoring more natural fire disturbance regimes to forest ecosystems, and evaluate the role of fire and other natural disturbance processes (e.g., insects, disease) and ecosystem processes (e.g., flows, cycles of nutrients, and water) and their dynamics in developing revised direction for vegetation and fuels management.
- ☒ Discuss "Cohesive Strategy for Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire-Adapted Ecosystems" and implications for increased prescribed burning, and "Interim Air Quality Policy on Wildland and Prescribed Fires," and identify participation in Idaho State Airshed Group to minimize air quality impacts of prescribed fire.
- ☒ EPA recommends focusing fuels management in WUIs and areas of high and severe fire risk and evaluating water quality, fisheries, and wildlife impacts of fuels management to reduce fire risk vs. risk of and effects of potential wildfire.

### 3.3.6 Issue 6. What strategies and priorities will BLM use to protect healthy or restore damaged watersheds and riparian areas?

The BLM must ensure a watershed approach to land and resource management that emphasizes assessing the function and condition of watersheds, incorporating watershed goals in planning, enhancing pollution prevention, monitoring and restoring watersheds, recognizing waters of exceptional value, and expanding collaboration with other agencies, states, tribes, and communities. Specifically, the BLM is required to provide for enhanced watershed restoration efforts, including the integration of watershed restoration as a key part of land management planning and program strategies. Also, considering that CdA FO manages land adjacent to high quality waters, BLM is in the position to protect important watersheds. Several comments were received pertaining to water quality and watershed restoration, which resulted in designation of a new issue theme to be considered during the RMP planning process. Watershed issues are further discussed in Section 3.1, The Chronology of Issue Identification.

Riparian areas are directly tied to water quality and habitat sustainability. It is important to the public to maintain diverse and healthy vegetative components for fish, wildlife, and rare plant populations, riparian areas, water and air quality, and cultural and tribal interests. Some comments requested fish and wildlife habitat and watershed restoration efforts to be incorporated into the planning process, especially for those areas determined to be critical habitats. A request was received for a listing of impaired water bodies that do not currently meet Idaho Water Quality Standards. One comment encouraged BLM to identify high quality watersheds needing protection and impaired watersheds needing restoration/remediation. The public also requested restrictions be placed on activities that may contribute to adverse impacts on water resources. Other comments suggested that the BLM consider incorporating riparian and wetland area protection as part of the protection of associated watersheds.

The mixed ownership of the planning area is interpreted to be a contributing factor to damaging watersheds. Water quality and watershed degradation from mixed land uses, roads, recreational activities, and commercial uses was a major concern.

#### **Scoping Indicators of this Issue:**

1. BLM Preliminary Planning Issue Themes:
  -  Water Resources
  -  Management of Habitat for Wildlife and Special Status Species
2. BLM Anticipated Planning Issues:
  -  How will uses and activities be managed to maintain and/or improve watersheds and fish and wildlife habitats in a scattered land ownership pattern?
3. Idaho Panhandle National Forests Scoping Collaboration:

-  In bull trout areas, suggestions were made for permitting helicopter logging only, placing 300-foot buffers around riparian areas, restricting OHVs and snowmobiles to ridges only, and not allowing water crossings or trails on slopes of watersheds.
  -  Habitat protection measures should be implemented to maintain viable and diverse animal populations and should not just focus on particular managed species.
  -  Habitat connectivity should be an important component for habitat protection in key wildlife areas.
4. Relevant Issues Attained from Other Meetings during Scoping Period:
-  During the public scoping meetings the public provided concerns regarding pollution to municipal watersheds.
  -  Bonner County Commissioners expressed interest regarding the management and protection of municipal watersheds.
  -  The Coeur d'Alene Tribe addressed their vested interest in the management of Lake Coeur d'Alene, of which they own the southern third, and its resources, as well as other watersheds.
5. Written Scoping Comments:
-  If there are areas of mixed ownership in any of the five counties that include BLM-managed lands, there should be accurate high quality maps that indicate the mixed ownership. If past or current activities by landowners in watersheds have resulted in impaired water quality of streams or creeks on BLM-managed lands, there should be a detailed discussion of activities that have led to the impaired water quality on the BLM-managed lands. There should also be a discussion concerning cumulative effects analysis as defined by NEPA that will be required by the BLM for proposed projects that are in areas of mixed ownership where there are impaired water bodies. If the BLM classifies streams or creeks in the following categories—Properly Functioning, Functioning at Risk, or Not Properly Functioning—there should be a list that will indicate the conditions of the streams and creeks in the planning area. If these classifications are not used, there should be information that will describe the procedures used to classify streams and creeks on the BLM-managed lands.
  -  The aquatics section should describe in detail the current status of the water bodies that are located within the Coeur d'Alene Planning Area. If there are any water bodies that do not currently meet Idaho Water Quality Standards, the names of each water body needs to be listed, with information that will indicate whether the water body is impaired due to sediment, temperature, or other reasons.
  -  If there are any impaired water bodies located downstream of the BLM lands, and these water bodies have an EPA-approved TMDL, there

should be an extensive discussion that will describe any proposed activities on the BLM lands that could impact water quality of the downstream water bodies.

- ☞ Much of the area is crucial habitat for T&E fish species like bull trout. Water quality and fish habitat must be major issues in this revision. They are crucial to treaty rights.
- ☞ The plan should analyze for impacts on water resource and management facilities such as dams, reservoirs, delivery systems, and monitoring facilities. In addition, the plan must recognize all legal canals, laterals, and ditch rights-of-ways.
- ☞ Incorporate watershed and water quality concerns into all site development.
- ☞ Water developments should be allowed where it is the only method to protect resources. New and additional water developments and diversions should be very limited. Existing water developments and diversions should be assessed for their overall impact on resources and should not be allowed to dewater springs, seeps, or streams. BLM should remove or relocate water developments where they are causing harm, and developments should not be allowed for the purpose of increasing livestock numbers.
- ☞ Promote watershed restoration to achieve water quality that fully supports beneficial uses in cooperation with State/EPA TMDL development and implementation efforts; link watershed proper functioning condition to water quality that fully supports beneficial uses.
- ☞ Reduce road impacts to water quality, fisheries, and wildlife; identify road network needed for access and management that can be adequately maintained within budgets and capabilities; close/decommission roads that can not be maintained; minimize new roads; identify existing road conditions that cause or contribute to nonpoint source pollution/stream impairment; and promote conduct of necessary road maintenance to correct deficiencies and reduce nonpoint source pollution from roads.
- ☞ In the current plan, how are the following issues addressed: rare and sensitive plants, weed control, riparian protection and restoration, and regulating commercial harvesting of non-timber resources? What are the rankings of stream health on BLM lands? More importantly, how will these issues be addressed in the Resource Management Plan under development?
- ☞ We are concerned with survival, and opportunity to thrive, for native plants, especially sensitive and rare plants. This involves maintaining habitat for these populations and the larger community with which they interact. As much as possible, lands which closely resemble those found before logging and managing for timber production will best nurture

sensitive plants. Prior to any use of BLM lands for extractive purposes (mining, grazing, timber production), we encourage botanical surveys of the land to be impacted. Riparian protection from degradation and restoring damaged waterways is a very high priority.

- ☞ Protect high quality waters, riparian areas, wetlands, and aquatic species, including development of riparian protection guidelines to protect water quality and riparian areas and gain recovery of native fish populations (e.g., INFISH riparian protection guidelines).
- ☞ Livestock grazing should be managed in a manner that will not harm the objects or resources that are of value and concern in these landscapes. BLM should ensure grazing conforms to the “Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration” by placing a priority on assessing areas to see if they are in compliance. If the areas are not in compliance, immediate action should be taken to rectify the grazing management. BLM should not allow intensive grazing management systems of any kind, whether off-stream or in upland locations. Grazing should be eliminated in riparian/wetland areas after the growing season. Grazing should also be eliminated from all riparian pastures where water quality standards are not met within a reasonable amount of time, suggested two years, for factors affected by livestock grazing (fecal coliform, turbidity, temperature, etc.).
- ☞ Grazing in Bonner and Boundary counties on BLM lands should be phased out, unless exceptional circumstances coupled with proof of no degradation to sensitive native plant populations and riparian areas exist.
- ☞ How will uses and activities be managed to achieve, maintain, or improve riparian upland and forest communities, with an emphasis on native species restoration?

### 3.4 NON-RESOURCE CATEGORIES

#### 3.4.1 RMP Planning Process Comments

Although not a designated resource category, as discussed in Sections 1.5 and 1.6, consultation with other agencies and local tribes is imperative to a successful management plan. Several agencies are preparing or have already prepared similar plans and/or have implemented resource-level plans (e.g., fire management plans, weed programs). Consultation can save time, money, and effort for all parties involved and can generate more effective approaches to broad-scale issues.

The RMP planning process is complex, as discussed in Section 1. Section 5 summarizes the next steps during this process. Comments received regarding the RMP Planning Process specifically request a thorough evaluation of cumulative effects, alternative formulation, and overall NEPA compliance review. Continuous communication was requested after the review of the AMS and throughout the planning process (which the BLM encourages). The BLM was encouraged to consult with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the USFS, as well as neighboring BLM field offices, and to incorporate relevant effective approaches to such issues as land tenures and habitat protection and to ensure that all potential impacts are addressed. The BLM will take these concerns and suggestions under advisement during the planning process.

Written Scoping Comments:

- ☞ The scoping letter recognizes that coordination between the BLM and the Forest Service is crucial, as most of these areas are adjacent to or surrounded by national forest. It may be that land transfers between the two agencies are advisable for scattered tracts in some instances. However, there must be full public involvement on proposals of that nature.
- ☞ RMP consistency with the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy.
- ☞ BLM parcels are small and widely dispersed north of the Clark Fork River, Pend Oreille Lake, and Pend Oreille River. We would like to see these lands be added to the US Forest Service land base. This would be more efficient and allow for better management, especially in Recovery Areas.
- ☞ BLM should establish goals to protect the unique and outstanding cultural, geologic, and paleontological resources of the land administered by the BLM. The BLM should determine the sites or areas that are most vulnerable to current and future impact and adopt management actions necessary to protect and restore these resources. Specific management actions may include site stabilization, fencing, signing, closures, rehabilitation, and increased monitoring or interpretative development, and measures should be adopted to protect these resources from artifact collectors, looters, thieves, and vandals. The Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene Tribes should be engaged at every possible opportunity to determine site locations or particular concerns and to obtain their input on how to best protect their heritage and culture.

- ☞ Please see entire booklet, “NTC Environmental Assessment Level Analysis” – this generally stresses input from public, proper notices to public, and collaboration and education with public and full disclosure of impacts in document.
- ☞ The plan must be a guide and not a rule. All science data provided for the plan must meet the requirements of the Environmental Quality Data Act.
- ☞ Rather than having end point goals of management, some areas may be better suited to process. For example, the goal for some areas may be to allow natural processes to shape the character of the area.
- ☞ We are unclear as to what is meant by collaborative planning. Often these processes are vehicles for circumventing NEPA. Also, the selection of elite groups disenfranchises citizens from the process as by the time a draft is released, the group has already made a decision.
- ☞ Is the ID Team available to meet with the public to discuss issues?
- ☞ Since the current comment period will end before the AMS is available, we hope that we will be able to submit additional detailed comments under an extended deadline to be considered in establishing preliminary planning issues and criteria. Unfortunately, the lack of detailed information regarding current plan objectives precludes detailed comments.
- ☞ Land use plans must also be scientifically defensible. In developing land use plans, agencies must use a “systematic interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences” 43 USC § 1712(c)(2).
- ☞ NEPA requires that each EIS examine a range of alternatives to the proposed action, including a no action alternative [42 USC § 4332(C)(iii)]. The alternatives considered must be of sufficient range to provide both the decision maker and the public with an understanding of the full scope of possible options to achieve a purpose or goal. See 42 U.S.C. §§ 4332(2)(c)(iii), 4332(2)(E); 40 C.F.R. §§1502.14 (range of alternatives should sharply [define] the issues and [provide] a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public).
- ☞ Alternatives should identify the purpose and need for the proposed management direction; resource/environmental conditions that will result from application of proposed management direction; and estimated outputs of goods and services, timing and flow of outputs, costs and benefits, and resource management/protection standards and guidelines.
- ☞ Include “indicators” or “criteria” for ecological, social, and economic sustainability.
- ☞ Include programmatic cumulative effects analyses to reduce the extent of analysis for each project using appropriate analysis area for each resource analyzed, and focus analysis on the resources significantly impacted. Ecological effects may extend beyond boundaries.

- ☞ The plan should recognize that the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey is the document for which all public land decisions and activities relating to soil conservation will be based.
- ☞ Soil-related activities will be based on all available survey drafts until the final survey is published. Any deviation from this material or soil data developed outside of the survey must be coordinated with the NRCS.

### 3.5 ISSUES RAISED THAT WILL NOT BE ADDRESSED

To date, comments and concerns raised during the scoping period have been summarized in this Scoping Summary Report, and the preliminary planning issues have been refined as presented in Section 3.3, Comments Received by Planning Issue Statement, above. The below list provides the comments and concerns separated by planning issue theme (see explanation in Section 3.1, The Chronology of Issue Identification) received that will not be addressed in the RMP. These comments were considered to be beyond the scope of the RMP purpose and goals. These comments were not considered in the formulation of the issue statements and will not be used to develop alternative management strategies in the planning process.

#### ☞ Vegetation Management

- ☞ Global warming should be considered both for the potential of changing vegetative composition and for the value of the forest as a sequesterer of carbon. I have no data on the latter value but some must exist with respect to the Kyoto Treaty. In the near future, such sequestering may be one of the most valuable assets to be derived from the forest.

#### ☞ Management of Habitat for Wildlife and Special Status Species

- ☞ Fisheries - There should be information in the fisheries section that includes a discussion of fisheries that historically were present in the streams and creeks on the BLM-managed lands, but that are now classified as functionally extinct.

#### ☞ Management of Transportation, Public Access, and Recreation Opportunities

- ☞ Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers. The WSAs may not address all areas that should have been studied. Other areas, especially any land contiguous with USFS roadless areas, should be studied (section 202 FLPMA), including the Pinchot Butte area adjacent to Grandmother Mountain. Also, Grandmother Mountain and Pinchot Butte should be closed to all vehicles. This is an important hiking area for Moscow residents (see explanation under Section 3.7, Special Designations, Including Nominations).
- ☞ BLM should be very cautious in issuing special use permits for recreational or commercial purposes. Certain permitted uses should be required to pay for the monitoring necessary to make sure they are

compliant with the terms of their use and prevent unnecessary resource damage. This may even include paying for a BLM staff person to accompany the group in their activities. BLM should also incorporate a cost analysis and cost recovery program into the issuance of special use permits. Such uses should be required to post bonds for unintended resource damage and restoration. Special uses should also pay for the costs of the BLM to administer and monitor their uses, including staff time in evaluation and processing of the permit.

- ☛ Availability and Management of Public Lands for Commercial Uses

- ☛ The plan must compensate any individual or entity physically harmed by federal actions, including negative impacts on the local government tax base.

- ☛ Management of Areas with Special Values

- ☛ The BLM cannot rely on outdated roadless area inventories for information on the amount of primitive lands within the Resource Area. This inventory should also include lands suitable for wilderness designation (see explanation under Section 3.7, Special Designations, Including Nominations).

No comments are listed on this list for the following issue themes; all written comments received will be considered in the RMP planning process and impact evaluation.

- ☛ Fire Management
- ☛ Land Tenure
- ☛ Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities
- ☛ Water Resources

### 3.6 ANTICIPATED DECISIONS TO BE MADE

The BLM is responsible for multiple-use management of public lands and resources based on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with the FLPMA. Management direction resulting from the planning process for the RMP needs to be adaptable to changing conditions and demands over the life of the RMP. RMPs provide management direction and help to determine decisions regarding appropriate multiple uses and allocation of resources, develop strategies to manage and protect resources, and establish systems to monitor and evaluate the status of resources and effectiveness of these management practices. As part of an Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), the BLM is reviewing the existing condition of the environment and the existing management situation. At the same time, the BLM is identifying which existing management decisions should be continued, which existing management directions should be modified, and which new management directions should be developed and added.

This Scoping Summary Report does not make any decisions, nor does it change current management direction set forth in the 1981 Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan, as amended. It only summarizes those issues distilled from comments identified during the scoping period for the CdA RMP planning area. Issues summarized in this Scoping Summary Report (Section 3.2), along with subsequently identified issues, planning criteria, and other information (e.g., Analysis of Management Situation, Mineral Occurrence and Development Potential Report), will be used by the BLM and cooperators to help formulate a reasonable range of alternatives during the next phase (i.e., alternative formulation) of the RMP process. Each identified alternative (including continuation of existing management) will represent a complete and reasonable plan for managing the CdA FO. Future decisions to be made will occur at two levels: the RMP, or land use planning, level, and the implementation level. These decision types are described below. In general, only RMP-level decisions will be made as part of the RMP process. The BLM's evaluation of identified alternatives will be documented in an EIS prepared as part of the RMP process (as required by NEPA).

### **3.6.1 Future RMP-Level Decisions**

Future RMP-level decisions to be made will be on a broad scale. These decisions will identify management direction and guide future actions for the next 10 to 20 years within the planning area. The RMP will provide a comprehensive yet flexible framework for managing the numerous demands on resources managed by the BLM.

The vision for the CdA FO planning area will be described in the RMP in terms of desired outcomes, which represent the first of two categories of RMP-level decisions. Desired outcomes will be expressed in terms of specific goals, standards, and objectives. Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes (e.g., ensure sustainable development). Standards are descriptions of conditions or the degree of function required (e.g., land health standards). Objectives are specific, quantifiable, and measurable desired conditions for resources (e.g., manage sagebrush communities to achieve a certain canopy cover density).

The second category of RMP-level decisions, allowable uses and actions to achieve these desired outcomes, will be expressed in the RMP as allowable uses, actions needed, and land tenure decisions.

### **3.6.2 Future Implementation Decisions**

The RMP makes broad-scale decisions that guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. Implementation decisions are often referred to as project-level or activity-level decisions and represent the BLM's final approval of on-the-ground actions. Implementation decisions require a more detailed site-specific environmental analysis that will tie back to (i.e., tier to) the EIS prepared for the RMP. It is noted that in some circumstances, site-specific implementation decisions may be made through the RMP process.

### **3.7 SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS, INCLUDING NOMINATIONS**

The special designations section of the RMP will include a discussion of designated areas such as ACECs, National Historic Trails, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and WSAs. It also will consider new special management area (SMA) designations, including Special Recreation Management Areas, ACECs, and river segments eligible and suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Some comments stated that roadless areas and unroaded areas should be studied and/or designated as Wilderness. BLM Instruction Manual (IM) 2003-275 provides guidance regarding the consideration of wilderness characteristics in the land use planning process. Per IM No. 200-275, the BLM will not designate new WSAs through the land use planning process. Instead, the BLM may consider information on wilderness characteristics, along with information on other uses and values, when preparing land use plans. With public input, the BLM can make a variety of land use plan decisions to protect wilderness characteristics.

## SECTION 4

# DRAFT PLANNING CRITERIA

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Scoping involves the introduction of planning criteria to the public for comment. At a minimum, the BLM must offer a 30-day comment period on planning criteria. Planning criteria guide development of the plan by helping to define the decision boundaries and focuses; they are generally based upon applicable laws, director and state director guidance, and results of public and governmental participation (43 CFR 1610.4-2) (BLM Handbook 1601-1). Planning criteria establish constraints, guidelines, and standards for the planning process. Prior to the public scoping period, the BLM identified the following preliminary planning criteria to be used for evaluating planning issues and developing project alternatives. These preliminary planning criteria were included in the NOI and on the project Web site for public comment during the 73-day scoping period.

- The RMP will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and current policies. This includes local, state, tribal, and federal air quality standards, as well as water quality standards from the Idaho nonpoint source management program plans.
- The RMP planning effort will be collaborative and multi-jurisdictional in nature. The BLM will strive to ensure that its management decisions are complimentary to other planning jurisdictions and adjoining properties, within the boundaries described by law and federal regulations.
- All previously established Wilderness Study Areas will continue to be managed for wilderness values and character until Congress designates them as wilderness areas or releases them for multiple use management.
- The RMP will recognize all valid existing rights.
- As part of this RMP process, the BLM will analyze areas for potential designation as ACEC in accordance with 43 CFR 1610-7-2, and river corridors for recommendation and designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Although no specific criteria differing from those above were suggested by the public during scoping, many comments supported the method provided by these principles to evaluate the aforementioned issue themes. Conversely, several comments opposed certain criteria, such as special designation areas. Therefore, the above planning criteria will be used to guide the RMP process. Furthermore, the BLM is currently consulting with—and will continue to consult with—relevant agencies and tribal governments on issues that will support an effective planning process and offer consistency with similar processes within and adjacent to the CdA RMP planning area.

# SECTION 5

## FUTURE STEPS

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### 5.1 SUMMARY OF FUTURE STEPS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

The next phase of the BLM's planning process is to develop management alternatives framed by the issue statements generated from public comments presented in Section 3.3. These alternatives will focus on addressing planning issues identified during scoping and meeting goals and objectives to be developed by the interdisciplinary team. In compliance with NEPA, CEQ regulations, and the BLM planning regulations and guidance, alternatives should be reasonable and capable of implementation. A detailed analysis of the alternatives will be documented. Based on the analyses of the alternatives, the BLM's Preferred Alternative will then be selected and analyzed in detail. The Preferred Alternative is often made up of a combination of management options from the other alternatives that provide the best mix and balance of multiple land and resource uses to resolve the issues.

The analysis of the alternatives will be documented in a Draft RMP/EIS.

Although the BLM welcomes public input at any time during the project, the next official public comment period will be open upon publication of the Draft RMP/EIS, which is anticipated in early 2006. The draft document will be widely distributed to elected officials, regulatory agencies, and members of the public and will be available on the project Web site ([www.cdarmmp.com](http://www.cdarmmp.com)). The availability of the draft document will be announced in the *Federal Register*, and a 90-day public comment period will follow. The BLM will hold public meetings during the comment period.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, the BLM will prepare a Proposed RMP/Final EIS which will address comments received during the comment period on the Draft RMP/EIS. The proposed document will be published and the availability of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be announced in the *Federal Register*. A 30-day public protest period will follow. As necessary, a notice will be published in the *Federal Register* requesting comments on significant changes made as a result of protest.

At the conclusion of the public protest period, the BLM will resolve all issues and publish a Record of Decision/Approved RMP. The availability of these documents will be announced in the *Federal Register*.

Figure 5-1 outlines the major milestones of the CdA RMP/EIS planning process when the public will be asked for their input.

All publications, including this Scoping Summary Report, newsletters, Draft RMP/EIS, and the published Notice of Availability, will be published on the official CdA RMP Web site ([www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com)). Pertinent dates regarding solicitation for public comments will also be published on the Web site.

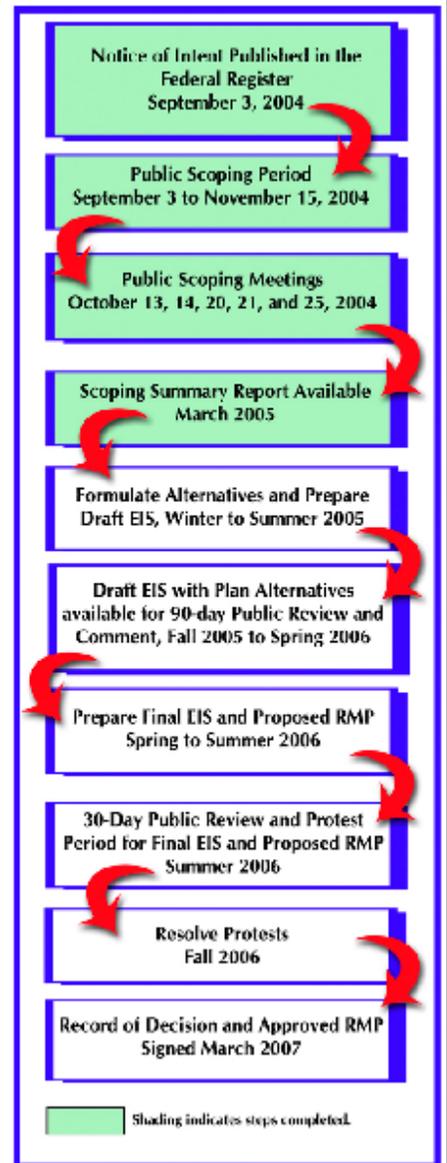


Figure 5-1  
RMP Public Involvement Process  
Timeline

## 5.1 CONTACT INFORMATION

The public is invited and encouraged to participate throughout the planning process for the RMP. Some ways you can participate include:

- Reviewing the progress of the RMP on-line at the official CdA RMP Web site at [www.cdarmp.com](http://www.cdarmp.com). The Web site will be updated with information, documents, and announcements throughout the RMP preparation; and
- Requesting to be added to the official CdA RMP mailing list in order to receive future mailings and information. Individuals and groups that are already receiving this type of information in the mail will remain on the mailing list.

Anyone wishing to be added to or deleted from the distribution list or requesting further information may e-mail a request to [information@cdarmp.com](mailto:information@cdarmp.com) or may contact Scott Pavey at (208) 769-5059. Please provide your name, mailing address, and e-mail address, as well as your preferred method to receive information.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **NOTICE OF INTENT**

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The attached pages from the *Federal Register* include the NOI for the CdA RMP/EIS. The NOI was published on September 3, 2004, and officially initiated the scoping process for the project.

4. The RMP will recognize all valid existing rights.

5. As part of this RMP process, BLM will analyze areas for potential designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.7-2 and river corridors for suitability for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

July 6, 2004.

**K. Lynn Bennett,**

*Idaho State Director, Bureau of Land Management.*

[FR Doc. 04-19607 Filed 9-2-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-GG-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

#### **Notice of Availability of Record of Decision for the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA) and Associated Wilderness and Other Contiguous Lands in Nevada, Resource Management Plan (RMP)/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Nevada**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of Record of Decision (ROD).

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) policies, and the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-554), the BLM announces the availability of the RMP/ROD for the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Planning Area, located in northwestern Nevada. The Nevada and California State Directors will sign the RMP/ROD, which becomes effective immediately.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA) and Associated Wilderness and Other Contiguous Lands in Nevada RMP/ROD are available upon request from the Field Manager, Winnemucca Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 5100 E Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, Nevada 89445-2921, or via the Internet at <http://www.blackrockhighrock.org>. Copies of the RMP/ROD are also available for public inspection at the following repositories: University of Nevada-Reno

Getchell Library, Reno, NV; Humboldt County Library, Winnemucca, NV; BLM-Nevada Carson City Field Office, Carson City, NV; BLM-Nevada State Office, Reno, NV; Public Library, Gerlach, NV; Public Library, Reno, NV; Pershing County Public Library, Lovelock, NV; Lyon County Library, Dayton, NV; Lyon County Library, Fernley, NV; BLM-California Surprise Field Office, Cedarville, CA; Modoc County Library, Cedarville, CA; Modoc County Library, Alturas CA; BLM-California State Office, Sacramento, CA; and BLM-California Eagle Lake Field Office, Susanville, CA. Persons who are not able to inspect the RMP/ROD either on-line or at one of the locations provided may request one of a limited number of printed copies or compact discs (CDs) by contacting the NCA Planning Staff at the Winnemucca Field Office by e-mail at [wfoweb@nv.blm.gov](mailto:wfoweb@nv.blm.gov), by telephone at (775) 623-1500, or by fax at (775) 623-1503. Requests should be directed to the NCA Planning Staff, clearly state that it is a request for a printed copy or CD of the Black Rock-High Rock RMP/ROD, and include the name, mailing address and phone number of the requesting party.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** David C. Cooper, NCA Manager, BLM Winnemucca Field Office, 5100 E Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445-2921, (775) 623-1500, [wfoweb@nv.blm.gov](mailto:wfoweb@nv.blm.gov) ("Attn: NCA Manager" in subject line of message).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The RMP/ROD was developed with broad public participation through a 3-year collaborative planning process. This RMP/ROD addresses management on approximately 1.2 million acres of public land in the planning area. The RMP/ROD is designed to achieve or maintain objectives that were identified in the legislation that created the NCA and wilderness areas or developed through the planning process. The RMP/ROD includes a series of management actions to meet the desired resource conditions for upland and riparian vegetation, wildlife habitats, cultural and visual resources, livestock grazing and recreation.

The approved RMP is essentially the same as Alternative D in the Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS), published in September 2003. BLM received eight protests to the PRMP/FEIS. No inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies or programs were identified during the Governor's consistency review of the PRMP/FEIS. As a result, only minor editorial modifications were made in preparing

the RMP/ROD. These modifications corrected technical errors that were noted during review of the PRMP/FEIS and provided further clarification for some of the decisions.

Dated: May 10, 2004.

**Terry A. Reed,**

*Field Manager, Winnemucca Field Office, Bureau of Land Management.*

[FR Doc. 04-19606 Filed 9-2-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[ID-086-1610-DO-006D]

#### **Notice of Intent To Prepare a Resource Management Plan and Associated Environmental Impact Statement for the Coeur d'Alene Field Office**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** This document provides notice that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to prepare an RMP with an associated EIS for the Coeur d'Alene Field Office. The planning area for the RMP, which includes 96,745 acres of BLM-administered public land, is located in Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone Counties, Idaho. Preparation of this RMP and EIS will conform with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Federal Regulations, and BLM management policies.

**DATES:** This notice initiates the public scoping process. Comments on the scope of the plan, including issues or concerns that should be considered, should be submitted in writing to the address listed below by November 15, 2004. However, collaboration with the public will continue throughout the planning process. Dates and locations for public meetings will be announced through local news media, newsletters, and the BLM Web site (<http://www.id.blm.gov/planning/cdarmp/index.htm>), at least 15 days prior to the event.

**ADDRESSES:** Please mail written comments to the BLM, Coeur d'Alene Field Office, Attn: RMP, 1808 North Third Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814-3407, or fax to (208) 769-5050. All public comments, including names and mailing addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Coeur d'Alene Field Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30

p.m.) Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EIS. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, please state this prominently at the beginning of your written correspondence. The BLM will honor such requests to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information or to have your name added to the Coeur d'Alene RMP Mailing List, contact Scott Pavey at the Coeur d'Alene Field Office (see address above), telephone (208) 769-5059.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Coeur d'Alene RMP planning area is located entirely in the northern part of the Idaho panhandle. The area is bordered to the west by the Washington state line, to the north by the Canadian border, to the east by the Montana state line, and to the south by Latah and Clearwater Counties, Idaho. The Coeur d'Alene Field Office planning area also lies partially within the ceded territory of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The Coeur d'Alene Reservation lies entirely within the planning area, and there are about 180 acres of BLM-administered land within the reservation boundary. Management of BLM-administered lands within the ceded area and the reservation boundaries will involve trust and treaty resources. Other Federally recognized tribes with aboriginal or historic ties to the planning area include the Kootenai Tribe in Idaho, the Kalispell Tribe in Washington, and the Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Montana.

The BLM-administered public lands within the Coeur d'Alene Field Office planning area are currently managed in accordance with the decisions in the 1981 Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan (MFP) as amended. BLM will continue to manage these lands in accordance with the MFP and amendments until the RMP is completed and a Record of Decision is signed.

Preparation of an RMP for the Coeur d'Alene Field Office is necessary to respond to changing resource conditions; respond to new issues; and prepare a comprehensive framework for managing public lands administered by the field office. The RMP will establish

new land use planning decisions to address issues identified through public scoping and, where appropriate, will incorporate decisions from the existing Emerald Empire MFP.

**Public Participation:** The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national interests. The public scoping process will help identify planning issues and provide for public comment on the proposed planning criteria.

BLM has identified the following preliminary issue themes:

1. Vegetation management (including noxious weeds, riparian areas and wetlands, and fuels and forest management).
2. Fire management.
3. Management of habitat for wildlife and special status species.
4. Management of transportation, public access, and recreational opportunities.
5. Land tenure adjustments.
6. Availability and management of public lands for commercial uses (minerals, forest products and livestock grazing).
7. Management of areas with special values.
8. Tribal treaty rights and trust responsibilities.

These preliminary issue themes are not final and may be refined or added to through future public participation.

BLM has also identified some preliminary planning criteria to guide development of the plan, to avoid unnecessary data collection and analysis, and to ensure the plan is tailored to the issues.

These criteria may be modified or other criteria identified during the public scoping process. The public is invited to comment on the following preliminary planning criteria:

1. The plan will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and current policies. This includes local, State, tribal, and Federal air quality standards; as well as water quality standards from the Idaho Non-Point Source Management Program Plans.
2. The RMP planning effort will be collaborative and multi-jurisdictional in nature. The BLM will strive to ensure that its management decisions are complementary to other planning jurisdictions and adjoining properties, within the boundaries described by law and Federal Regulations.
3. All previously established Wilderness Study Areas will continue to be managed for wilderness values and character until Congress designates them as wilderness areas, or releases them for multiple use management.

4. The RMP will recognize all valid existing rights.

5. As part of this RMP process, BLM will analyze areas for potential designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.7-2, and river corridors for suitability for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Dated: July 6, 2004.

**K. Lynn Bennett,**

*Idaho State Director, Bureau of Land Management.*

[FR Doc. 04-19916 Filed 9-2-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-GG-P**

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### **Apostle Islands National Lakeshore General Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement, Wisconsin**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the General Management Plan, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

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**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4332(C), the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an environmental impact statement for a general management plan for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Wisconsin. The environmental impact statement will be approved by the Regional Director, Midwest Region.

The general management plan will establish the overall direction for the park, setting broad management goals for managing the area over the next 15 to 20 years. The plan will prescribe desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that are to be achieved and maintained throughout the park based on such factors as the park's purpose, significance, special mandates, the body of laws and policies directing park management, resource analysis, and the range of public expectations and concerns. The plan, also, will outline the kinds of resource management activities, visitor activities, and developments that would be appropriate in the park in the future.

A range of reasonable alternatives for managing the park will be developed through this planning process and will include, at a minimum, a no-action and a preferred alternative. Major issues the plan will address include changes in visitor use patterns, adequacy and