

United States Department of the Interior

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Wyoming State Office
P.O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828

In reply refer to: 1610
Kemmerer RMP Revision

August 2008

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Kemmerer Field Office. The Proposed RMP was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in consultation with cooperating agencies, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. This Proposed RMP provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of BLM-administered lands and resources located in most of Lincoln and Uinta counties and part of Sweetwater County, Wyoming. The document contains land use planning decisions to facilitate management of the public lands and resources administered by the Kemmerer Field Office. The Proposed RMP is open for a 30-day review and protest period beginning, August 8, 2008, the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS in the *Federal Register*.

This Proposed RMP and Final EIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The Proposed RMP is largely based on Alternative D, the preferred alternative in the Draft RMP and EIS, which was released on July 13, 2007. This document contains the proposed plan, summary of changes made between the Draft RMP and EIS and Proposed RMP (see Executive Summary), predictable impacts of the proposed plan, summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public review period of the Draft RMP and EIS, and responses to the comments received.

Any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed RMP, and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected, may protest approval of this Proposed RMP and land use planning decisions contained within it (see 43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.5-2) during this 30-day period. Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process leading to the Proposed RMP may protest. The protesting party may raise only those issues submitted for the record during the planning process leading up to the publication of this Proposed RMP. These issues may have been raised by the protesting party or others. New issues may not be brought into the record at the protest stage.

Protests must be filed with the BLM Director in writing. Regular mail protests should be sent to: Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, PO Box 66538, Washington DC 20035. Overnight mail should be sent to: Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, 1620 L Street, NW, Suite 1075, Washington DC 20036. E-mail and fax protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, BLM will consider the e-mail or fax protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide BLM with such advance notification, please direct e-mails to Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov and faxes to (202) 452-5112 (Attn: BLM Protest Coordinator).

All protests must be postmarked by the end of the 30 day protest period.

IMPORTANT: In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2 the protest must contain the information described in the following critical elements check list:

- The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person filing the protest.
- The “interest” of the person filing the protest. (How will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of the resource management plan?)
- A statement of the part(s) of the Proposed RMP, and the issue(s) being protested. (To the extent possible, this should reference specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, maps, etc., which are believed to be incorrect or incomplete.)
- A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process OR a statement of the date they were discussed for the record.
- A concise statement explaining why the protestor believes the BLM State Director’s proposed decision is incorrect.

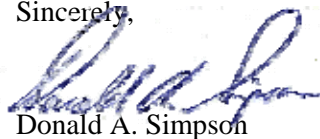
All of these elements are critical parts of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents, or available planning records (e.g., meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). To aid in ensuring the completeness of your protest, a printable protest check list is available online at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/docs.htm>.

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

BLM’s practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Upon resolution of any protests, an Approved Plan and Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued. The Approved Plan will be mailed to all who participated in the planning process and will be available to all parties through the “Planning” page of the BLM national website (<http://www.blm.gov>), or by mail upon request. The Approved RMP and ROD will include the appeals process for implementing decisions that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals following its publication.

Sincerely,



Donald A. Simpson
Acting State Director

Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist

**The following items *must* be included to constitute a valid protest
whether using this optional format, or a narrative letter.
(43 CFR 1610.5-2)**

BLM's practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Resource Management Plan (RMP) or Amendment (RMPA) being protested:

Name:
Address:
Phone Number: ()

Your interest in filing this protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of this plan?):

Issue or issues being protested:

Statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested:

Chapter:
Section:
Page:
(or) Map:

Attach copies of all documents addressing the issue(s) that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, OR an indication of the date the issue(s) were discussed for the record.

Date(s):

A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decisions is believed to be wrong:

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**Proposed Resource Management Plan and
Final Environmental Impact Statement
for the
Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area**

**Volume 1 of 2
Chapters 1 - 6**

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kemmerer Field Office, Wyoming**

August 2008

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**Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area
Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement**

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

Type of Action: Administrative

Jurisdiction: Lincoln, Sweetwater, and Uinta Counties, Wyoming

Abstract: This Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes and analyzes alternatives for the planning and management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Kemmerer Field Office. The administrative area is located in southwest Wyoming and includes land in most of Lincoln and Uinta counties, and parts of Sweetwater County. Within the Kemmerer planning area, the BLM manages approximately 1.4-million acres of BLM-administered public land surface and 1.6-million acres of federal mineral estate (refer to Maps 1 through 3 in Volume 2).

Alternatives A through D were presented in the Draft RMP and EIS. **Alternative A** is a continuation of the existing management (No Action Alternative). Under this alternative, use of public lands and resources continue to be managed under the 1986 Kemmerer RMP, as amended. **Alternative B** provides a high level of environmental protection for wildlife habitat and other resource values, while allowing the production of resource commodities. **Alternative C** maximizes the production of resource commodities while providing an adequate level of environmental protection for other resources. **Alternative D** (Preferred Alternative) provides energy development opportunities while maintaining and/or improving resource conditions, protecting unique resource values and allowing proactive and adaptive management on a landscape basis.

After careful consideration of both public and internal comments received on the Draft RMP and EIS, adjustments and clarifications have been made to Alternative D. As modified, Alternative D is now presented as the Proposed RMP in the Final EIS. The major issues addressed include: (1) energy and mineral resource exploration and development; (2) vegetation and habitat management; (3) landownership adjustments, access and transportation; (4) National Historic Trails management; and (5) special designations.

Protest: Protests must be postmarked not later than 30 days after publication of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. Refer to the instructions in the letter preceding this abstract for additional information on how to protest. The close of the protest period will be announced in news releases, newsletters, and on the Kemmerer RMP website at www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer.

For Further Information Contact:

Bureau of Land Management, Kemmerer Field Office
Attn: Michele Easley
312 Hwy 189 N
Kemmerer, Wyoming 83101-9711
Telephone: (307) 828-4524

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

μg/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter	EPCA	Energy Policy and Conservation Act
<	less than	ERMA	Extensive Recreation Management Area
>	greater than	ESA	Endangered Species Act
§	Section	FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
°F	degrees Fahrenheit	FAR	Federal Aviation Regulations
2-D	two-dimensional	FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 USC § 1701 et seq.)
3-D	three-dimensional		
ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern	FY	Fiscal Year
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act	G	Global rank: refers to the range-wide status of a species
AJE	annual job equivalents		
AML	abandoned mine land	GHG	greenhouse gas
AMP	Allotment Management Plan	GIS	Geographic Information System
AMR	appropriate management response	H ₂ S	hydrogen sulfide
APD	application for permit to drill	HAP	hazardous air pollutant
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	HABS/HAER	Historic American Buildings Survey/ Historic American Engineering Record
APWG	Activity Plan Working Group	HMP	Habitat Management Plan
AQD	Air Quality Division	HMRRP	Hazard Management and Resource Restoration Program
AQRV	Air Quality-Related Value		
AUM	animal unit month	I-80	Interstate Highway 80
BA	Biological Assessment	ID	Interdisciplinary
BACT	best available control technology	IM	Instruction Memorandum
bbls	barrels	IMPLAN	Impact Analysis for Planning model
Bcf	billion cubic feet	IMPROVE	Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments
BEA	Bureau of Economic Analysis		
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	INNS	Invasive Nonnative Species
BMP	Best Management Practice	KSLA	Known Sodium Leasing Area
BTU	British Thermal Units	lbs	pounds
CAA	Clean Air Act	LAC	level of acceptable change
CASTNet	Clean Air Status & Trends Network	LAUs	Lynx Analysis Units
CBNG	coalbed natural gas	LBA	Lease By Application
CCF	hundred cubic feet	LOC	level of concern
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	MA	Management Area
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	MBF	thousand board feet
cfs	cubic feet per second	MCF	thousand cubic feet
CO	carbon monoxide	MMB	million barrels
COA	conditions of approval	MMBF	million board feet
CRMP	Cooperative Resource Management Plan	MMTA	Mechanically Mineable Trona Area
CSU	controlled surface use	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CWA	Clean Water Act	mph	miles per hour
CWCS	Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy	MSA	Management Situation Analysis
		msl	mean sea level
dB	decibel	MW	megawatts
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	N	North
DEQAML	Department of Environmental Quality Abandoned Mine Lands	NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
DFC	desired future conditions	NADP	National Atmospheric Deposition Program
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy		
DOR	Wyoming Department of Revenue	NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
DPS	Distinct Population Segment		
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act (42 USC § 4321 et seq.)
EO	Executive Order		
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	NGL	natural gas liquids

NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
NHT	National Historic Trail	SIP	State Implementation Plan
No.	Number	SMCRA	Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide	SO _x	sulfur oxides
NO ₃	nitrate	SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
NOI	Notice of Intent	SRP	Special Recreational Permits
NO _x	nitrogen oxides	SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
NPA	National Programmatic Agreement	T	Township
NPS	National Park Service	TCP	Traditional Cultural Property
NREL	National Renewable Energy Laboratory	TMA	Travel Management Area
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places	TLS	timing limitation stipulation
NSO	no surface occupancy	TUP	temporary use permit
NSS	native species status	UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge	U.S.	United States
OHV	off-highway vehicle	USC	United States Code
pH	potential of hydrogen	USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
planning area	Kemmerer Field Office planning area	USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
PM	particulate matter	USDI	U.S. Department of the Interior
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter	USFS	U.S. Forest Service
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter	USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
POO	plan of operation	USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
PSD	prevention of significant deterioration	VOC	volatile organic compound
Pub. L.	Public Law	VRM	visual resource management
R	Range	vs.	versus
R&PP	Recreation and Public Purposes (Act)	W	West
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation	WAAQS	Wyoming Ambient Air Quality Standards
RFA	Reasonable Foreseeable Action or Activity	WGFD	Wyoming Game and Fish Department
RFD	Reasonable Foreseeable Development	WOGCC	Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
RMP	Resource Management Plan	WSA	Wilderness Study Area
RNA	Research Natural Area	WSR	Wild and Scenic River
ROD	Record of Decision	WUI	wildland-urban interface
ROW	rights-of-way	WYDOT	Wyoming Department of Transportation
RSFO	Rock Springs Field Office	WYNDD	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide	WYPDES	Wyoming Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
SO ₄	sulfate		
SD	Special Designation		
Sec.	Section		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzes the proposed action to revise the existing Kemmerer Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Kemmerer, Wyoming planning area. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 United States Code [USC] § 1701 et seq.) (FLPMA) requires developing, maintaining, and, as appropriate, revising land use plans for public lands. The purpose, or goal, of the land use plan is to ensure lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are managed in accordance with the FLPMA and the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

Revising an existing land use plan is a major federal action for the BLM. The National Environmental Policy Act (42 USC § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, requires federal agencies to prepare an EIS for major federal actions; thus, this Proposed RMP and Final EIS is a combined document. The Final EIS analyzes the impacts of four alternative RMPs for the planning area, including the No Action Alternative and agency Preferred Alternative (now the Proposed RMP). The No Action Alternative reflects current management (the existing plan).

PURPOSE AND NEED

Within the Kemmerer planning area, the BLM manages approximately 1.4-million acres of BLM-administered public land surface and 1.6-million acres of federal mineral estate. Since 1986, the existing plan has served as the framework for managing these BLM-administered lands; however, the existing plan has undergone more than 30 maintenance actions, including updates and amendments, and is in need of revision. Since the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in 1986 for the existing plan, new data have become available, new policies established, and old policies revised. This, along with emerging issues and changing circumstances, resulted in the need for revision. This new version will address the changing needs of the planning area and select a management strategy that best achieves a combination of the following:

- Employing a community-based planning approach and complying with applicable tribal, federal, and state laws, standards, and implementation plans, as well as BLM policies and regulations.
- Establishing goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for managing resources and resource uses according to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- Identifying land use plan decisions to guide future land-management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions.
- Identifying management actions and allowable uses anticipated to achieve the established goals and objectives and reach desired outcomes.
- Providing comprehensive management direction by making land use decisions for all appropriate resources and resource uses administered by the BLM Kemmerer Field Office.
- Recognizing the nation's needs for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber, and incorporating requirements of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act Reauthorization, the Energy Policy Act, the National Fire Plan, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, and the Healthy Forest Initiative.
- Retaining flexibility to adapt to new and emerging issues and opportunities, and providing for adjustments to decisions over time based on new information and monitoring.
- Striving to be compatible with existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, tribal, and federal agencies and consistent with federal law, regulations, and BLM policy.

PLANNING ISSUES AND CRITERIA

Planning issues identified through the scoping process and other public outreach efforts focus on conflicts among resources and resource uses. Major issues described and analyzed in this Final EIS include the following:

Energy and Mineral Resources

- What areas are suitable or not suitable for energy and mineral resource development?
- What conflicting resource issues should be considered in areas suitable for energy and mineral resource development?

Vegetation and Habitat Management

- How should soil, water, and vegetation be managed to reduce fuel loads and achieve forest health and healthy rangelands while providing for livestock grazing and fish and wildlife habitats?
- How should special status species conservation strategies be applied given the BLM's requirement for multiple-use management and sustained yield? How will these strategies affect other public land resources?

Land Ownership Adjustments, Access, and Transportation

- What land adjustments are necessary to improve access and management of public lands?
- How should travel be managed to provide access for recreation, commercial uses, and general enjoyment of the public lands while protecting cultural and natural resources?

National Historic Trails Management

- How should National Historic Trails be managed to protect the physical trail trace and the integrity of the setting?
- How should BLM manage areas with National Historic Trails that no longer retain their physical properties or setting characteristics?

Special Designations

- What areas, if any, contain unique or sensitive resources requiring special management?

Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and guidelines that help direct the RMP planning process. In conjunction with planning issues, planning criteria ensure the planning process is focused and incorporates appropriate analyses. Planning criteria for the Kemmerer RMP revision also apply to development of the final RMP and are summarized below.

- The revised RMP will recognize valid existing rights.
- Decisions in the revised RMP will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Decisions may comply, as appropriate, with policy and guidance.
- Planning decisions in the revised RMP will cover BLM-administered public lands, including split-estate lands where the subsurface minerals are severed from the surface right. On split-estate lands, the BLM has legal jurisdiction over one or the other (surface land or subsurface minerals).

- 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 its planning jurisdictions and adjoining properties within the boundaries described by law and regulation.
- The environmental analysis will consider a reasonable range of alternatives that focus on the relative values of resources and respond to the issues. Management prescriptions will reflect the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- The BLM will consider current scientific information, research, new technologies, and the results of resource assessments, monitoring, and coordination to determine appropriate local and regional management strategies to enhance or restore impaired ecosystems.
- The *Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for the Public Lands Administered by the BLM in the State of Wyoming* (BLM 1998a) will apply to all activities and uses.
- The BLM will provide for public safety and welfare relative to fire, hazardous materials, and abandoned mine lands.
- Visual resource management class designations will be analyzed and modified to reflect present conditions and future needs.
- The BLM will consider current and potential future uses of the public lands through the development of reasonable foreseeable future development and activity scenarios based on historical, existing, and projected levels of use.
- Planning decisions will include the preservation, conservation, and enhancement of cultural, historical, paleontological, and natural components of public land resources, while considering energy development and other activities.
- The BLM will coordinate with tribes to identify sites, areas, and objects important to their cultural and religious heritages.
- Planning decisions will comply with the Endangered Species Act and BLM interagency agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Areas potentially suitable for an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or other special management designations will be identified and, where appropriate, brought forward for analysis in this EIS.
- Waterway segments are classified and determinations of eligibility and suitability will be made in accordance with Section 5(d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Appropriate management prescriptions for maintaining or enhancing the outstanding remarkable values and classifications of waterway segments meeting suitability factors will be part of the RMP revision.
- Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use management decisions in the revised RMP will be consistent with the BLM's National OHV Strategy (BLM 2001b).
- A coal lease application—the Haystack Lease by Application—is located in northwestern Uinta County. Coal-screening determinations were made on this area during planning efforts for the Kemmerer RMP (BLM 2004b). No additional coal-screening determinations or coal-planning decisions are anticipated for the Kemmerer Field Office RMP, unless public submissions of coal resource information or surface resource issues indicate a need to update these determinations.

OVERVIEW OF ALTERNATIVES

The BLM conducted a series of four workshops in the Kemmerer Field Office with an Interdisciplinary (ID) Team comprised of BLM staff and government cooperating agencies. During the initial workshop, the ID Team shared their respective knowledge and expertise and collaborated to identify goals and objectives (desired outcomes) representing a full range of alternatives for each resource. The second workshop narrowed the scope of alternatives to a reasonable range bounded by the planning criteria.

The BLM formulated four action alternatives from the information gathered during the first two workshops; the ID Team reviewed these Action Alternatives during the third workshop. The BLM analyzed the potential impacts of the four action alternatives and the No Action Alternative. Based on this analysis, the similarity among alternatives became apparent and, therefore, the BLM eliminated two of the four action alternatives prior to the fourth workshop. During the fourth workshop, the ID Team considered the No Action Alternative (A) and the two remaining Action Alternatives (B and C) and provided the BLM with recommendations for selecting the agency's Preferred Alternative (D). BLM selected the Preferred Alternative based on the following criteria:

1. Satisfies statutory requirements.
2. Reflects the best combination of decisions to achieve BLM goals and policies.
3. Represents the best solution to the purpose and need.
4. Provides the best approach addressing key planning issues.
5. Considers government cooperating agencies and BLM specialists' recommendations.

After careful consideration of both public and internal comments received on the Draft RMP and EIS, adjustments and clarifications have been made to Alternative D. As modified, Alternative D is now presented as the Proposed RMP in the Final EIS. The major issues addressed include: (1) energy and mineral resource exploration and development; (2) vegetation and habitat management; (3) landownership adjustments, access and transportation; (4) National Historic Trails management; and (5) special designations.

Including the No Action Alternative (A), the four alternatives analyzed in this Final EIS represent differing approaches to managing resources and resource uses in the planning area. Each alternative comprises two categories of land use planning decisions: (1) desired outcomes (goals and objectives) and (2) allowable uses and management actions.

Goals and objectives provide overarching direction for BLM actions in meeting the Agency's legal, regulatory, policy, and strategic requirements. Goals are broad statements of desired outcome, but generally are immeasurable. Objectives are more specific statements of a desired outcome that may include a measurable component. Objectives generally are anticipated to achieve the stated goals.

Allowable uses and management actions are anticipated to achieve the desired outcomes (goals and objectives). Management actions are proactive measures or limitations intended to guide BLM activities in the planning area. Allowable uses are a category of land use decisions that identify where specific land uses are allowed, restricted, or prohibited on BLM-administered surface lands and federal mineral estate in the planning area. Alternatives may include specific management actions to meet goals and objectives and may exclude certain land uses to protect resource values.

For each alternative, the BLM predicted actions and associated surface disturbance acreage for each resource over the life of the plan. These predicted actions, allowable uses, and management actions form the basis for the impact analysis of alternatives described in Chapter 4. The three Action Alternatives and the No Action Alternative are described in detail in Chapter 2 and summarized in the following section.

Alternative A

The No Action Alternative represents a continuation of current management and provides a baseline from which to identify potential environmental consequences when compared to the Action Alternatives. The No Action Alternative describes current resource and land management direction as represented in the existing plan and associated maintenance actions, updates, and amendments. Current management addresses resource conflicts on a case-by-case basis. The current designation of the Raymond Mountain ACEC does not change, and no other Management Areas (MAs) are identified if the No Action Alternative is selected. Selection of the No Action Alternative results in no revision to the existing plan at this time and does not meet the purpose and need of the proposed action.

Alternative B

Alternative B emphasizes conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources with the most constraints on resource uses compared to all other alternatives. Alternative B designates the highest number of ACECs (10) and establishes the most land area for other MAs (3), Research Natural Areas (RNAs) (2), Wild and Scenic River waterway segments (13), and Back Country Byways (1). Alternative B also manages contiguous blocks of native vegetation to minimize habitat fragmentation, includes the most restrictions to protect highly erosive soils, and is the most restrictive to OHV use, wind-energy development, and leasing for oil and gas and other solid leasable minerals.

Alternative C

Alternative C emphasizes resource uses (e.g., energy and minerals, grazing, recreation, and forest products) while reducing some resource conservation measures to protect physical, biological, and heritage resource values. Compared to all alternatives, Alternative C conserves the least land area for protecting physical, biological, and heritage resource values; designates no ACECs; identifies the smallest area for special management; is the least restrictive to OHV use; places the fewest constraints on resource uses; and allows the most land area for leasing oil and gas and other solid leasable minerals.

Alternative D (Proposed RMP)

Alternative D is the BLM's Proposed RMP because it reflects the best combination of decisions to achieve BLM goals and policies, meet purpose and need, address the major planning issues, and consider the recommendations of government cooperating agencies and BLM specialists.

Alternative D emphasizes a moderate level of protection for physical, biological, and heritage resource values and moderate constraints on resource uses. Alternative D retains the Raymond Mountain ACEC, designates the Bridger Butte ACEC, and two additional ACECs, one for special status plant species habitats and one for cushion plant communities. Alternative D is a balanced approach to land management that the BLM believes best addresses the issues, management concerns, and purpose and need for revising the existing RMP.

In addition to the four alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS, several alternatives were considered, but were not carried forward for detailed analysis because they

- Did not fulfill requirements of the FLPMA or other existing laws or regulations.
- Did not fulfill the purpose and need.
- Were already part of an existing plan, policy, requirement, or administrative function.
- Did not fall within the limits of the planning criteria.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Environmental consequences potentially resulting from each of the four alternatives were analyzed relative to meaningful direct, indirect, short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts. The impacts of

each alternative are summarized in Table 2-4 and described in more detail in Chapter 4. This analysis includes an estimate of the social and economic impacts that are anticipated as a result of the alternatives considered. It may also provide a starting point for local governments to use in local planning efforts. Also included in Chapter 4 is a discussion of cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impact of each alternative when added to other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

As the lead federal agency for the RMP revision, the BLM invited local, state, and federal agencies to participate as cooperating agencies. Lincoln, Sweetwater, and Uinta County Commissioners and conservation districts agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the RMP revision. The State of Wyoming and the Bureau of Reclamation also are cooperating agencies. The BLM and cooperating agencies participated in four workshops to formulate alternatives and multiple meetings to keep cooperating agencies informed and to solicit their inputs. Development of this Final EIS considered comments from cooperating agencies on previous administrative drafts.

COORDINATION WITH NATIVE AMERICANS

The BLM also invited tribes to participate as cooperating agencies and conducted ongoing coordination throughout the RMP revision process. Coordination included letters, multiple phone calls, and face-to-face meetings with interested tribal representatives to identify places and issues of concern regarding the RMP revision.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The BLM issued a Notice of Intent (NOI), on June 16, 2003, indicating a revision of the existing plan and preparation of this EIS. Issuance of the NOI initiated a 5-month scoping period to solicit input from the public and interested agencies on the nature and extent of issues and impacts addressed in the Draft EIS. The BLM conducted three individual public scoping meetings in Evanston, Rock Springs, and Kemmerer, Wyoming, during the 5-month scoping period to identify planning issues and introduce the public to the project and preliminary planning criteria. The BLM also established a project website (www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer) to keep the public informed about the RMP revision and to provide an ongoing method for public comment.

The BLM issued a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft RMP and EIS on July 13, 2007, beginning the 90-day comment period. During the comment period a series of two open houses and three public meetings were held in Cokeville, Kemmerer, Rock Springs, Evanston, and Lyman, Wyoming.

CHANGES SINCE PUBLICATION OF DRAFT RMP AND EIS

Public comments, requests for additional information, and updated information resulted in a number of changes from the Draft RMP and EIS that are reflected in the Proposed RMP and Final EIS. The majority of these changes are editorial in nature and serve to clarify sections of the main document.

Primarily in response to public comments, some changes were made in the management actions of specific alternatives, described in detail in Table 2-3. A brief summary of those changes is listed below.

- Common to all alternatives:
 - Added avoidance of disruptive activity in elk calving areas from May 1 through June 30.
 - Health and Safety Management Action for emergency situations.

- Changes under Alternative A:
 - Two parcels, totaling 243 acres, were dropped from the list available for disposal because they are not BLM-administered lands.
 - Additional sustained yield forage could be allocated for livestock use on an allotment-by-allotment basis if the results of an evaluation based on the Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands and monitoring data determined the forage was available. (43 Code of Federal Regulation [CFR] 411.3-1)
- Changes under Alternative B:
 - Minimize impacts of continuous noise on species relying on aural cues for successful breeding.
 - Within a six-tenths (0.6) mile radius of the perimeter of occupied or undetermined sage-grouse leks, prohibit all surface disturbance or surface occupancy, and limit human activity between one hour before sunset to one hour after sunrise from March 1 – May 15.
 - Prohibit surface disturbing activities and/or disruptive activities in suitable sage-grouse nesting and early brood rearing habitat within 3 miles of an occupied sage-grouse lek or in identified nesting or brood rearing habitat outside the 3-mile buffer from March 15 – July 15.
 - Prohibit surface disturbing activities and/or disruptive activities in suitable sage-grouse winter concentration areas from November 15 – March 14.
 - Mid-scale mapping of sagebrush ecosystems and sage-grouse seasonal habitats will be completed within one year of the ROD.
 - BLM-administered lands (33,445 acres) in the Dempsey Ridge area would be managed as an SRMA.
 - No new fluid mineral leasing would occur on currently unleased areas within large, contiguous blocks of federal land containing sagebrush, mountain shrub, and aspen habitat. When leases in these areas expire they would not be reoffered. This will result in an increase of 100,000 acres of federal minerals that are administratively unavailable for leasing.
 - A reclamation plan will be developed and approved prior to any surface disturbing activities being authorized. Reclamation will be required within the first available planting season and monitoring of reclamation success according to developed performance standards will begin during the first growing season after seeding.
 - Additional sustained yield forage would not be allocated for livestock use.
- Changes under Alternative C:
 - BLM-administered lands (33,445 acres) in the Dempsey Ridge area would be managed as an SRMA.
 - Additional sustained yield forage could be allocated for livestock use on an allotment-by-allotment basis if the results of an evaluation based on the Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands and monitoring data determined the forage was available. (43 CFR 411.3-1)
 - Mechanized vehicle use would not be allowed in the WSA.
 - Two parcels, totaling 243 acres, were dropped from the list available for disposal because they are not BLM-administered lands.
- Changes under Alternative D:
 - Consider all new ROW actions on a case-by-case basis and encourage the use of existing disturbed areas in the Bear River Divide MA.
 - Minimize impacts of continuous noise on species relying on aural cues for successful breeding.
 - Within a six-tenths (0.6) mile radius of the perimeter of occupied or undetermined sage-grouse leks, prohibit or restrict surface disturbance or surface occupancy, and limit human activity between one hour before sunset to one hour after sunrise from March 1 – May 15.

- Prohibit or restrict surface disturbing activities and/or disruptive activities in suitable sage-grouse nesting and early brood rearing habitat within 3 miles of an occupied sage-grouse lek or in identified nesting or brood rearing habitat outside the 3-mile buffer from March 15 – July 15.
- Prohibit or restrict surface disturbing activities and/or disruptive activities in suitable sage-grouse winter concentration areas from November 15 – March 14.
- Mid-scale mapping of sagebrush ecosystems and sage-grouse seasonal habitats will be completed within one year of the ROD. Detailed mapping of sagebrush ecosystems and sage-grouse seasonal habitats in the Slate Creek and Moxa Arch areas will be completed within two years of the ROD.
- BLM-administered lands (33,445 acres) in the Dempsey Ridge area would be managed as an SRMA.
- Prevention and control of weeds will be required in new disturbance areas. Emphasis will be focused on the control of the infestation of cheatgrass.
- Fluid mineral leasing is allowed on areas within large, contiguous blocks of federal land containing sagebrush, mountain shrub, and aspen habitat.
- Mechanized vehicle use would not be allowed in the WSA.
- Two parcels, totaling 243 acres, were dropped from the list available for disposal because they are not BLM-administered lands.
- Additional sustained yield forage could be activated for livestock use on an allotment-by-allotment basis if the results of an evaluation based on the Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands, monitoring data, range surveys, or other scientific information determined the forage was available.
- The former chariot race area east of Lyman (80 acres between I-80 and the frontage road.) was deleted from the areas proposed to be open to OHV use.
- Visual resource impacts will be evaluated based on the visual contrast of proposed projects from key observation points.
- The Emigrant Springs Back Country Byway route would not be designated.

In Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, text was added to expand certain sections. None of the changes summarized below altered the conclusions presented in Chapter 4 of the draft RMP and EIS, nor did the changes result in any major modification of land use allocations presented as the Proposed RMP (Alternative D). The following are examples of the most extensive additions and edits:

- Sections 4.1.1.2, 4.1.2.2, 4.1.3.2, 4.2.2.2, 4.4, 4.8.1.2, 4.8.2.2, and 4.9 have been updated to address the additional acreage under Alternative B that would be designated administratively unavailable for leasing on currently unleased areas within large, contiguous blocks of federal land containing sagebrush, mountain shrub, and aspen habitat.
- Section 4.2.4.2: text modified to address restrictions applied in the MMTA
- Sections 3.4.8 and 4.4.8 were updated to reflect changes in status of some listed or protected species and updated management plans as appropriate.
- Section 4.4.1.1: text modified to clarify methods and assumptions
- Section 4.5.1: text modified to further describe the management and protection of National Historic Trails
- Section 4.6.2: text modified to clarify areas unavailable for wind energy development with the addition of a map for Alternative D
- Section 4.6.6.2: text modified to address road management in winter closure areas
- Section 4.6.8.2: text modified to address mitigation for Visual Resource Management

- Section 4.4: text modified to address the establishment of native plant communities in the descriptions of impacts of Alternative B
- Section 4.8: text modified to reference collaboration in socioeconomic analysis during local planning efforts
- Information was added to Table 4-11 to display the potential effects of expanded buffer zones to protect sage-grouse leks and nesting and early brood rearing habitats.
- BLM internal reviews indicated that airborne emissions resulting from geophysical exploration should be added to the list of sources contributing to regional and cumulative air quality. This resulted in minor changes to Tables 4-24 to 4-27.

Changes to appendices and maps in Volume 2 were made to provide additional information or clarification and to support some of the changes to the analyses in Chapter 4. Changes and new appendices are summarized below.

- Appendix A was edited to include only those species listed as Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Because the species list and management recommendations for BLM designated sensitive species can change as new information is gathered, Appendix A now refers readers to the Wildlife Management Program page of the BLM Wyoming website, for the most recent conservation measures, conservation agreements, and BLM-endorsed management strategies for BLM sensitive species.
- Four appendices were added to the Proposed RMP and Final EIS:
 - Appendix P lists the main laws, regulations, policies, and guidance which guide BLM management (formerly located in Chapter 1 of the Draft RMP and EIS).
 - Appendix Q provides additional analysis of an alternative proposed during the public comment period.
 - Appendix R presents an analysis of the public comments received on the Draft RMP and EIS.
 - Appendix S contains a report that supplements the 2006 Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario (BLM 2006b) in order to support the effects analysis of a potential new alternative presented in Appendix Q.
- New maps were added in response to comments and revised constraints maps are included in this Proposed RMP and Final EIS.
 - Four new maps (8A, 9A, 10A, 11A) were added to display the location of proposed oil and gas stipulations under each alternative.
 - Map 66 was added to display the Key Observation Points for evaluating VRM classifications.
 - The four original oil and gas constraints maps (8, 9, 10, 11) were modified as follows:
 - Map 8 (Alternative A)—Less area of moderate constraints due to elimination of sensitive soils or floodplains
 - Map 9 (Alternative B)—More area unavailable for leasing; more area of major constraints due to increased acreage of sensitive soils and floodplains, as well as increased size of sage-grouse lek buffers
 - Map 10 (Alternative C)—Less area of moderate constraints due to elimination of sensitive soils or floodplains
 - Map 11 (Alternative D)—Increase in acreage administratively unavailable for leasing in the MMTA; more area of major constraints due to due to increased acreage of sensitive soils and floodplains, as well as increased size of sage-grouse lek buffers

THE NEXT STEPS

This Proposed RMP and Final EIS considered all substantive oral and written comments received during the 90-day public comment period for the Draft RMP and EIS. Publication of the Proposed RMP and

Final EIS is followed by a 30-day protest period. Members of the public with standing have the opportunity to protest the content of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS during the specified 30-day period. Upon resolution of any protests, the Governor's Consistency Review, and a determination that a supplemental Proposed RMP and Final EIS is not warranted, the BLM will issue the Approved Plan and ROD.

READER'S GUIDE TO THIS DOCUMENT

Volume 1

Chapter 1. Purpose and Need for Action. This chapter introduces the Final EIS, describes the purpose and need to which BLM is responding, provides an overview of the BLM planning process, identifies planning issues and criteria, summarizes consultation and coordination, and identifies topics not addressed by this RMP revision.

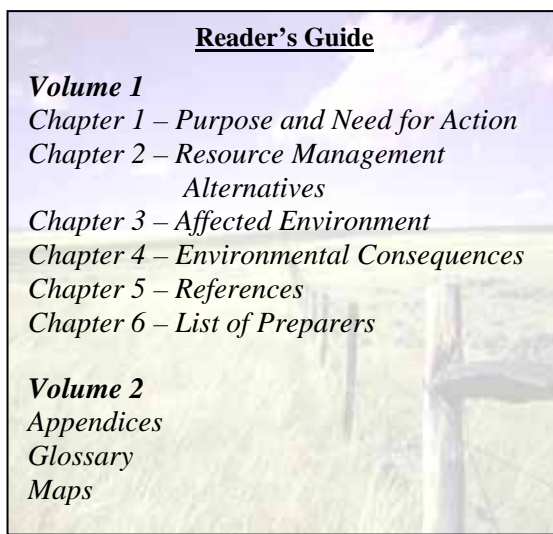
Chapter 2. Resource Management Alternatives.

Chapter 2 describes how the four alternatives (A through D) were developed, the components and content of each alternative, and discusses the alternatives considered but eliminated from further consideration. It also presents a comparative summary of impacts of each alternative. Resource discussions in chapters 2, 3, and 4 are organized according to the following eight resource topics:

- 1000** Physical Resources – Air, Soil, and Water
- 2000** Mineral Resources – Locatable, Leasable, and Salable Minerals
- 3000** Fire and Fuels Management – Unplanned/Wildland Fire, Planned/Prescribed Fire, and Stabilization and Rehabilitation
- 4000** Biological Resources – Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species, and Invasive, Nonnative Species
- 5000** Heritage Resources – Cultural, Native American Concerns, Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities, and Paleontological
- 6000** Land Resources – Lands and Realty, Renewable Energy, Rights-of-way and Corridors, Livestock Grazing, Recreation, Travel Management, OHV, and Visual
- 7000** Special Designations – ACECs, MAs, RNAs, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness Study Areas, and Back Country Byways
- 8000** Socioeconomic Resources – Social and Economic Conditions, Health and Safety, and Environmental Justice.

Chapter 3. Affected Environment. This chapter describes the Kemmerer planning area and the existing environmental conditions that could be impacted by the alternatives.

Chapter 4. Environmental Consequences. Chapter 4 forms the scientific and analytic basis for comparing environmental impacts of each alternative, including the No Action Alternative. Impacts are described in terms of direct or indirect and short-term or long-term, when applicable. Potential cumulative and unavoidable impacts and irreversible and irretrievable commitments also are discussed in this chapter.



Chapter 5. References. This chapter provides full citation information for all references cited within the document.

Chapter 6. List of Preparers. Chapter 6 presents the names and qualifications of the people responsible for preparing this EIS.

Volume 2

Appendices. The appendices include documents that support existing resource conditions or situations, substantiate analyses, provide resource management guidance, explain processes, or provide information directly relevant to or support conclusions in the RMP revision. Nineteen appendices, labeled Appendix A to Appendix S, are included.

Glossary. The glossary defines select terms used throughout this document.

Maps. Maps depict the alternatives by resource. In hardcopy documents, maps can be found on a CD attached to the inside back cover of Volume 1. For CD versions of the document, maps are provided as a separate file on the CD. Electronic copies of the maps are also available on the RMP website (www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/).

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CHAPTER 1
PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Roadmap to Chapter 1

A roadmap is provided at the beginning of each chapter. These diagrams are intended to serve as a quick reference guide for the reader.

1.1 Introduction and Background (Page 1-1)

- ◆ Historical Overview
- ◆ Land Ownership Within the Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area

1.2 Purpose and Need for the Resource Management Plan Revision (Page 1-4)

- ◆ Purpose
- ◆ Need for Revising the Existing Plan

1.3 Planning Process (Page 1-7)

- ◆ Nine-Step Planning Process
- ◆ Resource Management Plan Implementation

1.4 Decision Framework (Page 1-11)

- ◆ Planning Issues
- ◆ Planning Criteria
- ◆ Other Related Plans

1.5 Consultation and Coordination (Page 1-16)

- ◆ Consultation and Coordination
- ◆ Public Involvement

1.6 Topics Not Addressed in This Resource Management Plan Revision (Page 1-25)

CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 Introduction and Background

This Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes and analyzes alternatives for the future management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Kemmerer Field Office. The Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area (planning area) is located in southwestern Wyoming and includes approximately 3.9-million acres of land in most of Lincoln and Uinta counties and part of Sweetwater County (Map A). Within the Kemmerer planning area, the BLM manages approximately 1.4-million acres of BLM-administered public land surface and 1.6-million acres of mineral estate. Current management follows the 1986 Kemmerer RMP (existing plan) (BLM 1986a) which has undergone more than 30 maintenance actions.

County	BLM Surface	BLM Mineral Estate
Lincoln	834,888	922,700
Uinta	404,785	489,269
Sweetwater	184,143	167,172
Sublette	0	0

Federal mineral estate in Sublette County is generally under Forest Service jurisdiction.

1.1.1 Historical Overview

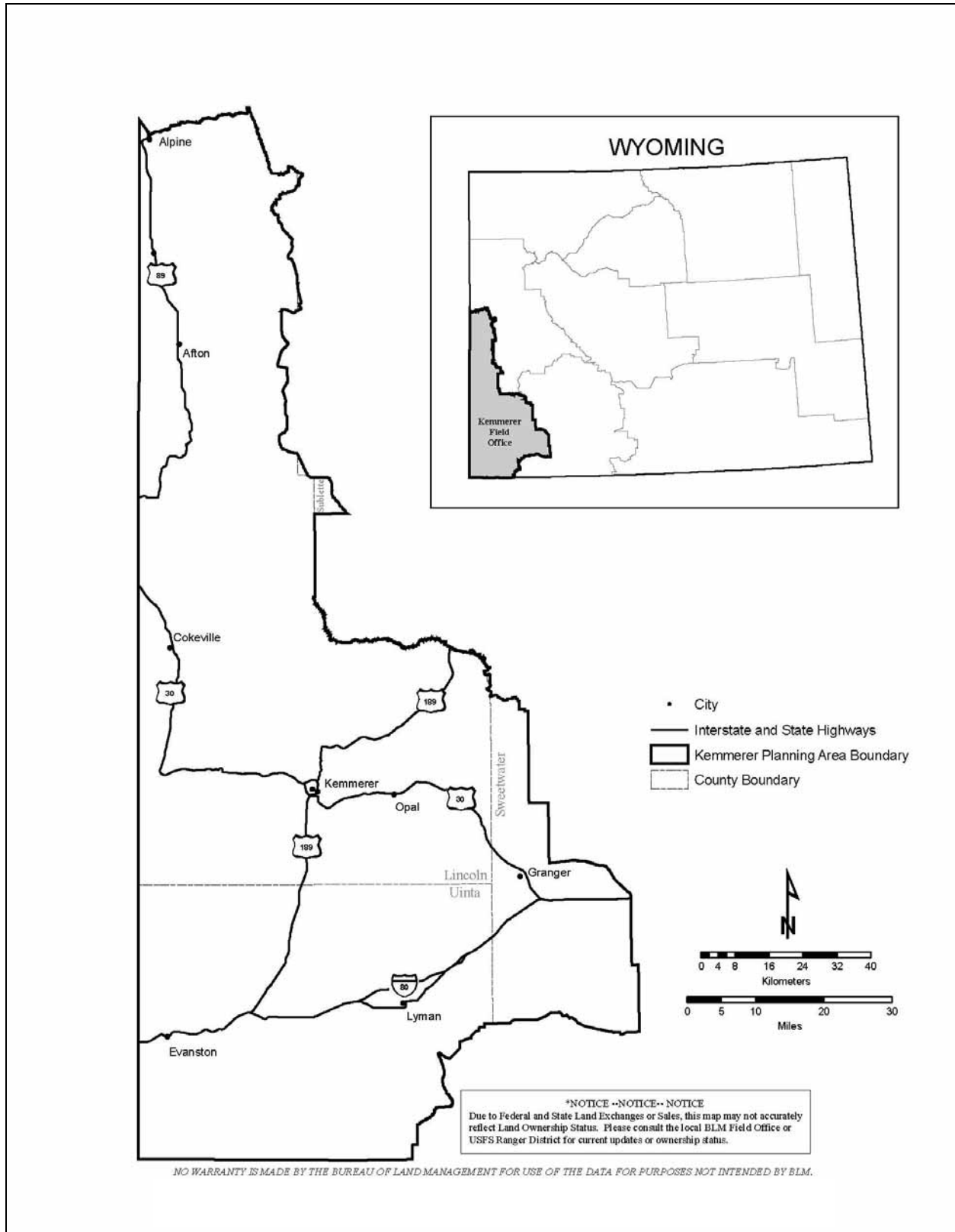
In 1946, the U.S. Grazing Service merged with the General Land Office to form the BLM. The foundation for the BLM dates back to the Land Ordinance of 1785, which established the public domain and led to the creation of the General Land Office. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 instituted the survey and settlement of lands ceded from the 13 colonies to the federal government and lands later acquired by the government from other countries. While the Nation's westward expansion progressed and the land base expanded, the settlement of western lands was encouraged through the enactment of a variety of laws, including the Homestead acts and the Mining Law of 1872. Over time, the luring of pioneers to settle the west became less necessary and the commercial value of these lands increased. A variety of statutes established to manage mineral, timber, and livestock foraging activities on public lands followed. For example, the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 allowed leasing, exploration, and production of selected commodities, such as coal, oil, gas, and sodium, on public lands. Another example is the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which provided for management of the public rangelands.

After passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), BLM-administered lands were managed according to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Since 1976, the BLM has managed for multiple use and to balance increasing and competing demands for resources on public lands.

1.1.2 Land Ownership Within the Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area

As defined by FLPMA, "... public lands means any land and interest in land owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management...." The U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI) BLM Kemmerer Field Office is responsible for managing much of the public land in Lincoln and Uinta counties, and a relatively small acreage in Sweetwater County, Wyoming (refer to Map A).

Map A. Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area



The BLM-administered surface land in the planning area exists in various configurations. Within Lincoln County, large contiguous areas of BLM-administered lands are intermingled with state and private lands. Southeastern Lincoln, most of Uinta, and almost all of the Kemmerer planning area lands in Sweetwater County are affected by the “checkerboard” land ownership pattern. There are no Kemmerer Field Office BLM-administered surface lands in Sublette County. Throughout the planning area, there are also intermingled mineral ownerships, as well as federal minerals under privately owned surface, usually referred to as split-estate land. The scattered surface land pattern and varied mineral ownerships, along with split-estate lands, strongly impact management options. Tables 1-1 and 1-2 contain summaries of the surface and mineral ownership and administrative relationships for the planning area. The BLM leases oil and gas, coal, and trona, and records mining claims on lands administered by other federal agencies. However, the approved RMP will not include planning and management decisions for (1) lands or minerals privately owned or owned by the State of Wyoming or local governments or (2) lands and minerals administered by other federal agencies (see Maps 1 through 3 in Volume 2).

Table 1-1. Acreage of Surface Land Within Each Jurisdiction of the Kemmerer Planning Area

Agency	Lincoln County	Uinta County	Sweetwater County	Sublette County
Bureau of Land Management	834,888	404,785	184,143	0
Bureau of Reclamation	8,034	0	12,147	0
National Park Service	8,340	0	0	0
State of Wyoming	95,698	51,320	8,093	13
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	0	0	1,870	0
U.S. Forest Service	758,965	37,561	80	13,172
Other federal agencies	0	0	0	0
Other (water and private lands)	562,203	742,258	198,718	0
Bankhead Jones Act (USDA)	0	0	0	0

Source: BLM 2006a

Due to the variation in Geographic Information System data layers, values in this table are approximate and not additive.

USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture

Table 1-2. Acreage of Subsurface Mineral Ownership Within Each Jurisdiction of the Kemmerer Planning Area

Agency	Mineral Ownership			
	Lincoln County	Uinta County	Sweetwater County	Sublette County ¹
Bureau of Land Management	922,700	489,269	167,172	0
Other (federal, state, and private)	1,351,585	748,220	238,432	13,187

Source: BLM 2006a

¹Federal mineral estate in Sublette County occurs under lands managed by the USFS and generally falls under USFS jurisdiction.

Due to the variation in Geographic Information System data layers, values in this table are approximate and not additive.

USFS U.S. Forest Service

1.2 Purpose and Need for the Resource Management Plan Revision

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1502.13) require the purpose and need of an EIS to “briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action.” The purpose and need section of this EIS provides a context and framework for establishing and evaluating the reasonable range of alternatives described in Chapter 2.

1.2.1 Purpose

FLPMA sets forth the policy for periodically projecting the present and future use of public lands and their resources using the land use planning process. Section 1712 of the FLPMA establishes the BLM’s land use planning requirements. BLM Handbook H-1601-1, *Land Use Planning Handbook*, provides guidance for implementing the BLM land use planning requirements established by FLPMA and the regulations in 43 CFR 1600 (BLM 2005a).

The purpose, or goal, of the land use plan is to ensure BLM-administered lands are managed in accordance with the FLPMA and the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The purpose of revising the existing plan is to address the growing needs of the planning area and to select a management strategy that best achieves a combination of the following.

- Employ a community-based planning approach to collaborate with federal, state, and local cooperating agencies.
- Establish goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for management of resources and resource uses within the approximately 1.4-million surface acres and 1.6-million acres of federal mineral estate administered by the BLM Kemmerer Field Office in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- Identify land use plan decisions to guide future land-management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions.
- Identify management actions and allowable uses anticipated to achieve the established goals and objectives and reach desired outcomes.
- Provide comprehensive management direction by making land use decisions for all appropriate resources and resource uses administered by the BLM Kemmerer Field Office.
- Provide for compliance with applicable tribal, federal, and state laws, standards, implementation plans, and BLM policies and regulations.
- Recognize the Nation’s needs for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber, and incorporate requirements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 2005).
- Retain flexibility to adapt to new and emerging issues and opportunities and to provide for adjustments to decisions over time based on new information and monitoring.
- Strive to be compatible with existing plans and policies of overlapping local, state, tribal, and federal agencies and consistent with federal law, regulations, and BLM policy.

The purpose of the land use plan is to ensure BLM-administered lands are managed in accordance with FLPMA and the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

1.2.2 Need for Revising the Existing Plan

BLM identified the need, or requirement, to revise the existing plan through a formal evaluation of the existing plan (BLM 2001a), consideration of the Management Situation Analysis (MSA) (BLM 2003a), examination of issues identified during the public scoping process and through collaboration with cooperating local, state, and federal agencies. Since the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed (April 1986) for the existing plan, new data have become available, new laws and regulations have been passed, new policies have been established, and old policies have been revised. This, along with emerging issues and changing circumstances, resulted in the need to revise the existing plan. In addition, the existing plan's decisions no longer serve as a useful guide for resource management in the Kemmerer planning area. For example, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109-58), coupled with the Nation's growing demand for domestic energy, resulted in a significant increase in resource conflicts that was not foreseen when the existing plan was established in 1986. These and other select examples of new data, new and revised policies, and emerging issues and changing circumstances, demonstrate the need to revise the existing plan.

The existing plan's decisions no longer serve as a useful guide for resource management in the Kemmerer planning area; hence, the need to revise the existing plan.

New Data

Monitoring, availability of new information, and advances in science and technology provide new data to consider in the revision of the existing plan. Select new data can be found in the following documents and sources:

- BLM Assessing the Potential for Renewable Energy on Public Lands (BLM 2003b)
- BLM Evaluation of the Kemmerer RMP (BLM 2001a)
- BLM Mineral Occurrence and Development Potential Report (BLM 2004a)
- BLM MSA (BLM 2003a)
- BLM Wyoming Statewide Biological Assessments for Species Regulated by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) published between 2004 and 2005
- Coal Screening Summary Report, Kemmerer Field Office Planning Area (BLM 2004b)
- Cultural Class I Regional Overview (BLM 2004c)
- Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) Scientific Inventory of Onshore Federal Lands Oil and Gas Resources and Reserves and the Extent and Nature of Restrictions or Impediments to their Development (USDI 2003)
- Final Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas, Kemmerer Field Office (BLM 2006b)
- Final Report: Kemmerer Unleased Federal Lands Geologic Oil and Gas Analysis, Kemmerer Field Office, Wyoming (see Appendix S) (BLM 2008a).
- Final Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States (BLM 2005b)
- Visual Resource Inventory (BLM 2003h)

Purpose and Need for the Resource Management Plan Revision

- Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan (Wyoming Sage Grouse Working Group 2003) and Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Habitats (Connelly et al. 2004).

New and Revised Laws and Policies

Numerous laws and policies either have been revised or developed since the ROD for the existing plan was signed in 1986. Some of the more important and relevant law and policy changes since 1986 to consider when revising the existing plan include the following:

- BLM National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Use on Public Lands (BLM 2001b)
- Umbrella Memorandum of Understanding Between Wyoming Game and Fish Department and U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (Wyoming) for Management of the Fish and Wildlife Resources on the Public Lands (WGFD and BLM 1990)
- BLM MOU WO220-2004-01, Memorandum of Understanding Between U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management and the Public Lands Council (BLM 2004r)
- BLM Instruction Memoranda (IM), including, but not limited to,
 - Washington Office IM-2002-034 – Guidance on Fire Management, Prescribed Fire, and National Fire Plan (BLM 2002a)
 - Washington Office IM-2002-196 – Additional Guidance on Right-of-Way Management in Land Use Planning (BLM 2002b)
 - Washington Office IM-2003-137 – Integration of the Energy Policy Conservation Act Inventory Results into Land Use Planning and Energy Use Authorizations (BLM 2003d)
 - Washington Office IM-2006-73 – Weed-Free Seed Use on Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM 2006c)
 - Washington Office IM-2005-024 – National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy (BLM 2005c)
- Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L.109-58)
- EPCA Reauthorization of 2000 (EPCA 2000)
- Executive Orders (EOs)
 - EO 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites)
 - EO 13112 (Invasive Species)
 - EO 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments)
 - EO 13186 (Migratory Birds)
 - EO 13211 (Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution or Use)
 - EO 13212, as amended by 13302 (Actions to Expedite Energy-Related Projects)
 - EO 13443, Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation
- Handbook H-1601-1, *Land Use Planning Handbook* (BLM 2005a)
- Handbook H-8550-1, Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review (BLM 1995a)
- Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-148)
- Manual 6840 – Special Status Species (BLM 2001d)

- Manual 8351 – Wild and Scenic Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management (BLM 1992e)
- Manual H-8410 –1, BLM Visual Resource Inventory, Section V. Visual Resource Classes and Objectives (BLM 2003e)
- National Fire Plan (USFS 2000)
- Onshore Oil and Gas Operations; Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases; Onshore Oil and Gas Order Number 1, Approval of Operations (USDI 2007a)
- Onshore Oil and Gas Operations; Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases; Onshore Oil and Gas Order Number 7 (USDI 1993)
- Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development, The Gold Book (BLM and USFS 2007)
- Rights-of-Way, Principles and Procedures; Rights-of-Way Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Mineral Leasing Act; Final Rule published April 22, 2005, in the *Federal Register* (USDI 2005)
- *Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands Administered by the BLM in the State of Wyoming* (BLM 1998a)
- Wyoming Weed and Pest Control Act Designated List – Designated Noxious Weeds and Declared List of Weeds and Pests (Wyoming Weed and Pest Council 2005a; 2005b; 2006; 2007)
- Wyoming Weed Management Strategic Plan (Wyoming State Weed Team 2003).

Emerging Issues and Changing Circumstances

Emerging issues and changes in local, regional, and national circumstances to consider when revising the existing plan include the following:

- Increasing and conflicting demands on the planning area’s resources and resource uses
- Increasing complexity of resource management issues
- Increasing energy prices and interest in energy (including wind) exploration and development
- Increasing interest in energy related corridors
- Changes in the legal status of plants and wildlife potentially occurring in the planning area
- Growing Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas and fire management
- Urbanization of rural areas and the WUI
- Changes in the National Historic Trail setting as it relates to adjacent development
- Addressing habitat fragmentation given BLM’s requirement for multiple use management and sustained yield
- Public access to public lands
- Spreading of invasive nonnative species on public lands
- Increasing use of OHVs on public lands
- Increasing interest in travel management.

The BLM uses a nine-step planning process when developing and revising RMPs.

1.3 Planning Process

Revision of an existing plan is a major federal action for the BLM. NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an EIS for major federal actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment; thus, this EIS accompanies the revision of the existing plan. This EIS analyzes the impacts of four alternative RMPs for the planning area, including the

No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative reflects current management (the existing plan). NEPA requires an analysis of a No Action Alternative.

1.3.1 Nine-Step Planning Process

The BLM uses a nine-step planning process (see Figure 1-1) when developing and revising RMPs as required by 43 CFR 1600 and planning program guidance in the BLM Handbook H-1601-1, *Land Use Planning Handbook* (BLM 2005a). BLM manages federal land for multiple use, consistent with laws, regulations, and policies governing the administration of public land, in consultation with Native American tribes, coordination with state and local governments, and considering the views of the general public.

As depicted in Figure 1-1, the planning process is issue-driven (Step 1). The BLM utilized the public scoping process to identify planning issues to direct (drive) the revision of the existing plan (see Kemmerer Field Office Final Scoping Report (BLM 2004d). In addition to public involvement, input from the RMP Interdisciplinary (ID) Team provided clarification and refinement of planning issues. The scoping process was also used to introduce the public to preliminary planning criteria, which set limits to the scope of the RMP revision (Step 2).

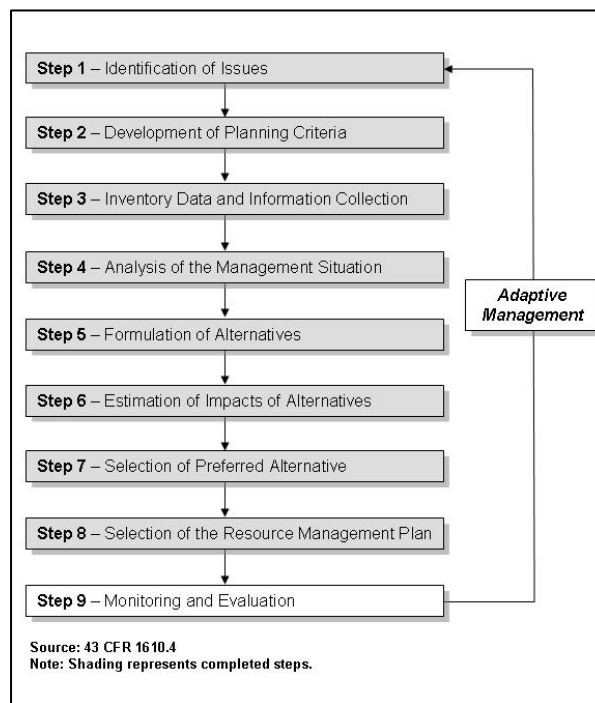
As appropriate, the BLM collected data to address planning issues and to fill data gaps identified during public scoping (Step 3). Using these data, the planning issues, and the planning criteria, the BLM conducted an MSA (Step 4) to describe current management and identify management opportunities for addressing the planning issues. Management opportunities identified in the MSA were used to help formulate alternatives to address planning issues. Current management reflects management under the existing plan and management that would continue through selection of the No Action Alternative.

Results of the first four steps of the planning process clarified the purpose and need and identified planning issues that need to be addressed by the RMP revision. Planning issues are described in more detail in the Planning Issues section.

During alternative formulation (Step 5), the BLM collaborated with cooperating agencies to identify goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resources and resource uses in the planning area. These desired outcomes addressed the key planning issues, were constrained by the planning criteria, and incorporated the management opportunities identified by the BLM.

The details of alternatives were developed through the formulation of management actions and allowable uses anticipated to achieve the goals and objectives. The alternatives represent a reasonable range for managing resources and resource uses within the planning area. Chapter 2 of this document describes and summarizes the alternatives.

Figure 1-1. Nine-Step Planning Process



This EIS also includes an analysis of the impacts of each alternative in Chapter 4 (Step 6). With input from cooperating agencies and BLM specialists, and consideration of planning issues, planning criteria, and the impacts of alternatives, the BLM selected a Preferred Alternative from among alternatives A through C (Step 7). Alternative D (Proposed RMP) is the fourth alternative.

An RMP provides basic program direction with the establishment of goals, objectives, and allowable uses for a planning area.

Step 8 of the land use planning process will occur following receipt and consideration of public comments on the Draft EIS. Step 9, Monitoring and Evaluation, occurs when the selected RMP is being implemented.

1.3.2 Resource Management Plan Implementation

After issuing the Approved Plan and ROD, an Implementation Strategy will be developed. The Implementation Strategy will include an annual coordination meeting between BLM and the Cooperating Agencies in the RMP revision. The annual coordination meeting will include an update on implementation of the plan, foreseeable activities for the upcoming year, and opportunities for continued collaboration with the RMP cooperators. Additional coordination meetings could be held as needed.

Planning and decisionmaking for the management of BLM-administered lands is a tiered, ongoing process. Documents produced during each successive tier are progressively more detailed in terms of their identification of specific measures to be undertaken and impacts that may occur. For example:

- The RMP provides an overall vision of the future (goals and objectives) and includes measurable steps, anticipated management actions, and allowable uses to achieve that vision.
- Upon approval of the RMP, subsequent implementation decisions are carried out by developing activity-level or project-level plans.

At each tier, a more detailed NEPA analysis may occur. In general, a planning-level EIS is prepared at the RMP tier and a more site-specific EIS or Environmental Assessment is prepared at the implementation tier.

The activity- or project-level plans will reflect the management direction and vision articulated in the revised RMP. These subsequent plans may require additional public review and environmental compliance documentation. Activity level actions include implementation plans and analyses such as Allotment or Habitat Management Plans, Oil and Gas Field Development Plans, Recreation Management Plans, and Travel Management Plans. These activity level plans evaluate the sufficiency of RMP decisions and standard practices. They analyze the need to modify existing decisions and practices in light of proposed or projected resource use or activity. BLM supports the formation of Activity Plan Working Groups (APWGs) when circumstances dictate. Potential cooperating agencies in these working groups could assist BLM in the preparation of environmental analyses for activity level actions or modifications to current plans. The BLM or potential cooperating agencies may identify the need for activity planning and the associated APWG formation. This approach is similar to the process used by BLM and its cooperating agencies to develop this RMP.

The objectives of APWGs are to:

- Minimize analysis and decision making controversy by being proactive rather than reactive to public land use and resource conflicts.
- Provide effective and cost efficient, consensus based mitigation of resource conflicts.

Planning Process

- Improve resource conditions by recommending practices and mitigation measures appropriate to special situations.
- Streamline public land authorizations, increase implementation flexibility, and notify public land users of required practices.

This recommendation commits BLM to meet with potential cooperating agencies prior to scoping for major activity plans or RMP amendments to establish the level and extent of APGWs activity. Examples include:

- Off-highway vehicle use escalating to a significant issue.
- Activity level approaching that contained in the impact analyses made from reasonable foreseeable actions in an RMP or previous activity plan analysis.
- Proposals for oil and gas surface location densities or acres disturbed above a certain amount per unit area.
- Identification of the need to prepare a Recreation Area Management Plan.
- Significant change to assumptions used for impact analysis in an RMP.

Examples of resource locations or management situations where activity or use may trigger working group formation include:

- Where crucial or important wildlife habitat overlap with areas of high potential for surface disturbance. For example, where the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) has identified crucial deer winter range or other important habitats and high intensity oil and gas development areas overlap.
- Wildland urban interfaces.
- Where two or more resources of interest to cooperating agencies are in conflict. For example, significant surface disturbance in identified habitat for special status species.

When an APWG is convened, objectives for the first meeting include:

- Establish working group membership and organization. Existing examples that may be employed include the Continental Divide/Wamsutter II Wildlife Protection Plan (Record of Decision, page 15 and App. D; [BLM 2000c]) or the Powder River Basin Interagency Work Groups (Record of Decision, page 11; [BLM 2003j]).
- Identify issues, practices, and management actions the working group could address.
- Establish mechanisms and processes for communicating recommendations to the BLM.
- Identify public involvement and notification needs associated with working group activities.

Other attributes and functions of APGWs are:

- APGWs will be specific to the activity plan.
- Provide suggestions and recommendations for evaluating mitigation, reclamation, and habitat management practices to the BLM. Examples of these topics include off-site mitigation, compensation mitigation, and a mitigation account, in addition to specific practices.

Only the RMP, the first tier, is involved in the present document. As a result, activity- and project-level plans are not considered further in this document. RMP decisions establish goals, objectives, and

management actions for activities on public lands. Standard or best management practices are identified in RMPs. The RMP focuses on what resource conditions, uses, and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time. Since this involves considering natural processes with long-term timeframes, the RMP must take a long-term view.

1.4 Decision Framework

As described in the previous section, identifying the planning issues and developing planning criteria are the first steps in defining the scope of the RMP revision. The planning issues and planning criteria provide the framework in which RMP decisions are made. RMP decisions refer to what is established or determined by the final RMP. For example, the BLM received several nominations (issues) for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) during the scoping process for the RMP revision. These issues fall within one of the planning criteria (see Planning Criteria section), the need to identify and analyze areas potentially suitable for ACEC designation. The RMP revision will establish (decide) whether any ACEC will be designated within the planning area. In this example, the land use planning decision is referred to as *special designation*. The RMP provides guidance for land use planning decisions according to the following categories:

- Physical, biological, and heritage resources
- Resource uses and support
- Special designations

In the context of these categories, the planning team develops management strategies aimed at providing viable options for addressing planning issues. The management strategies provide the building blocks from which general management scenarios and, eventually, the more detailed resource management alternatives, are developed. The resource management alternatives reflect a reasonable range of management options that fall within limits set by the planning criteria. The planning issues and planning criteria used to revise the existing plan are described in the following sections.

1.4.1 Planning Issues

The BLM conducted an early and open scoping process to determine the scope of issues to be addressed in this EIS. As part of the scoping process, the BLM solicited comments and issues from the public, organizations, tribal governments, and federal, state, and local agencies, as well as from BLM specialists. The BLM's *Land Use Planning Handbook* defines planning issues as "...disputes or controversies about existing and potential land and resource allocations, levels of resource use, production, and related management practices" (BLM 2005a).

Issues identified during the scoping and RMP revision process for this EIS comprise two categories:

Key planning issues serve as the rationale for alternative development.

- Issues within the scope of the EIS and used to develop alternatives or otherwise addressed in the EIS.
- Issues outside the scope of the EIS or that could require policy, regulatory, or administrative actions.

Planning issues determined to be within the scope of the EIS are used to develop one or more of the alternatives or are addressed in the analysis section of the EIS. Key planning issues serve as the rationale for alternative development. For this EIS, as planning issues were refined, the BLM collaborated with cooperating agencies to develop a reasonable range of alternatives designed to address and (or) resolve key planning issues. The reasonable range of alternatives provides various scenarios for how the BLM

can address key planning issues in the management of resources and resource uses in the planning area. The key planning issues identified for developing alternatives in this EIS are listed below:

Energy and Mineral Resources

- What areas are suitable or not suitable for energy and mineral resource development?
- What conflicting resource issues should be considered in areas suitable for energy and mineral resource development?

Vegetation and Habitat Management

- How should soil, water, and vegetation be managed to reduce fuel loads and achieve forest health and healthy rangelands while providing for livestock grazing and fish and wildlife habitat?
- How should special status species conservation strategies be applied given the BLM's requirement for multiple use management and sustained yield? How will these strategies affect other public land resources?

Land Ownership Adjustments, Access, and Transportation

- What land adjustments are necessary to improve access and management of public lands?
- How should travel be managed to provide access for recreation, commercial uses, and general enjoyment of the public lands while protecting cultural and natural resources?

National Historic Trails Management

- How should National Historic Trails be managed to protect the physical trail trace and the integrity of the setting?
- How should BLM manage areas with National Historic Trails that no longer retain their physical properties or setting characteristics?

Special Designations

- What areas, if any, contain unique or sensitive resources requiring special management?

In addition to key planning issues, other issues, themes, and positions were identified during the scoping process. Those issues determined to be outside the scope of the EIS or that could require policy, regulatory, or administrative actions to address were not used to develop alternatives and were not carried forward in this EIS. For example, issues that should be addressed by other agencies or by industry were considered outside the scope of this EIS. Similarly, issues related to the conflicting rights of split-estate could require policy, regulatory, or administrative actions and were not addressed in detail in this EIS.

Items that were considered but not carried forward for detailed study in the EIS because they were outside the scope of the RMP revision, could not be acted upon or did not require action, or because they required the BLM to exceed its authority, are summarized below:

- The BLM should consult, work, and coordinate with or recognize specific organizations, agencies, and (or) authorities.
- The BLM should analyze impacts from specific actions or activities that will occur or be addressed during subsequent RMP implementation decisions.

- The BLM should conduct site-specific analyses, inventories, or surveys, or adopt specific measures or mandates.
- The BLM should adopt or otherwise ensure the RMP revision is compatible with specific plans outside of BLM's authority.
- The BLM should adopt or require site-specific stipulations, resource protection measures, or technologies.

For a detailed description of all issues identified during scoping, please refer to the Kemmerer Field Office Final Scoping Report (BLM 2004d). The scoping report is available on the Kemmerer RMP website at www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/.

Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and guidelines that help to guide the RMP planning process.

1.4.2 Planning Criteria

Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and guidelines that help to guide the RMP planning process. These criteria influence all aspects of the planning process, including inventory and data collection, developing planning issues to be addressed, formulating alternatives, estimating impacts, and selecting the Preferred Alternative and the Proposed RMP. In conjunction with the planning issues, planning criteria ensure that the planning process is focused and incorporates appropriate analyses. Planning criteria are developed from appropriate laws, regulations, and policies. The criteria also help to guide the final plan selection and are used as a basis for evaluating the responsiveness of the planning options.

Planning criteria used in this RMP revision are as follows:

- The revised RMP will recognize valid existing rights.
- Decisions in the revised RMP will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Decisions will comply, as appropriate, with policy and guidance.
- Planning decisions in the revised RMP will cover BLM-administered public lands, including split-estate lands where the subsurface minerals are severed from the surface right, and the BLM has legal jurisdiction over one or the other.
- 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 its planning jurisdictions and adjoining properties within the boundaries described by law and regulation.
- The environmental analysis will consider a reasonable range of alternatives that focus on the relative values of resources and respond to the issues. Management prescriptions will reflect the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- The BLM will consider best available scientific information, research, new technologies, and the results of resource assessments, monitoring, and coordination to determine appropriate local and regional management strategies that will enhance or restore impaired ecosystems.
- The *Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidance for Livestock Grazing Management for the Public Lands Administered by the BLM in the State of Wyoming* will apply to all activities and uses (BLM 1998a).
- The BLM will provide for public safety and welfare relative to fire, hazardous materials, and abandoned mine lands.
- Visual resource management class designations will be analyzed and modified to reflect present conditions and future needs.

- The BLM will consider current and potential future uses of the public lands through the development of reasonable foreseeable future development and activity scenarios based on technical analysis of historical, existing, and projected levels of use.
- Planning decisions will include the preservation, conservation, and enhancement of cultural, historical, paleontological, and natural components of public land resources, while considering energy development and other activities.
- The BLM will coordinate with tribes to identify sites, areas, and objects important to their cultural and religious heritages.
- Planning decisions will comply with the ESA and BLM interagency agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
- Areas potentially suitable for ACEC or other special management designations will be identified and, where appropriate, brought forward for analysis in the EIS.
- Waterway segments are classified and determinations of eligibility and suitability will be made in accordance with Section 5(d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Appropriate management prescriptions for maintaining or enhancing the outstanding remarkable values and classifications of waterway segments meeting suitability factors will be part of the RMP revision.
- OHV use management decisions in the revised RMP will be consistent with the BLM's National OHV Strategy (BLM 2001b).
- A coal lease application, the Haystack Lease by Application, is located in northwestern Uinta County. Coal-screening determinations were made on this area during planning efforts for the Kemmerer RMP (BLM 2004b). No additional coal-screening determinations or coal-planning decisions are anticipated for the Kemmerer Field Office RMP, unless public submissions of coal resource information or surface resource issues indicate a need to update these determinations.

In addition, Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (designation of West-wide energy corridors) is being implemented through the current development of an interagency Programmatic EIS. The Final Programmatic EIS will provide plan amendment decisions that will address numerous energy corridor related issues, including the utilization of existing corridors (enhancements and upgrades), identification of new corridors, supply and demand considerations, and compatibility with other corridor and project planning efforts. It is likely that the identification of corridors in the Final Programmatic EIS will affect the Kemmerer planning area, and the approved Programmatic EIS would subsequently amend the Kemmerer RMP.

The Kemmerer Field Office contains areas of oil shale resources. There are at present no regulations in place for leasing oil shale, nor any existing commercial oil shale leases. Lands containing oil shale resources were originally identified through an inventory that portrayed the occurrence of the Green River geologic formation in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado. Once identified, lands containing oil shale resources were withdrawn from mineral entry through a 1930 Executive Order, which was later modified to allow for oil, gas, and sodium leasing. Since that time, the economic potential for the oil shale resource has been further defined, now comprising a smaller area in the three states.

1.4.3 Other Related Plans

BLM must consider approved or adopted resource plans of other federal, state, local, and tribal governments and, where practicable, be consistent with those plans. Plans that are related to the management of land and resources that apply to this RMP revision include the following:

- Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan (Lincoln County Commissioners 2005)
- Uinta County Comprehensive Plan (Uinta County Commissioners 2004)
- Sweetwater County Comprehensive Plan (Sweetwater County Commissioners 2002)
- Sweetwater County Conservation District Land and Resource Use Plan and Policy (Sweetwater County Conservation District 2005)
- Revised Forest Plan Wasatch-Cache National Forest (USFS 2003)
- A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for Wyoming (WGFD 2005)
- Bridger-Teton National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USFS 1990)
- Green River Resource Management Plan (BLM 1997a)
- Pinedale Field Office Resource Management Plan (BLM 1988a)
- Strategic Habitat Plan (WGFD 2001)
- Wyoming Game and Fish Department Herd Unit Plans (WGFD 2006a, WGFD 2006b)
- Draft Oil Shale and Tar Sands Resource Management Plan Amendments to Address Land Use Allocations in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (USDI 2007c)

When the Kemmerer Resource Management Plan (revision) was initiated in 2003, there was no reasonable foreseeable development expectation for oil shale over the life of the plan. The mineral report identified this resource, but did not foresee any future leasing or development due to lack of regulations as well as prevailing and anticipated economic factors.

Since the start of this RMP (revision), Congress enacted the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Section 369 of the Energy Policy Act requires the Secretary of Interior to “complete a programmatic environmental impact statement for a commercial leasing program for oil shale and tar sands resources on public lands, with an emphasis on the most geologically prospective lands within each of the States of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.” On December 13, 2005, the BLM published a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* initiating a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to support a commercial oil shale and tar sands leasing program on federal lands in these three states.

Since that time, the scope of the Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS has been revised. The BLM is no longer using the Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS as the document that supports the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for leasing. Given that the development technologies for in-situ production of oil shale are just emerging, there is a lack of information regarding resource use and associated impacts. Consequently, the BLM has changed this document to a resource allocation document that identifies the BLM-managed lands for which applications to lease oil shale and tar sands resources would be accepted in the future. However, although applications would be accepted, additional NEPA analysis would be performed before any leasing of the area would be considered.

All decisions related to land use planning decisions (areas open to application for potential leasing) for oil shale resources in this Kemmerer RMP will be made by the ongoing Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS. The ROD on the final Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS will amend the existing Kemmerer RMP by making land use planning decisions on whether or not lands will be available for future application, leasing and development of oil shale resources on public lands for those areas where the resource is present. Additional site-specific NEPA analysis will be completed on each lease application before any leases would be issued.

Consultation and Coordination

As part of the site-specific NEPA analysis, the environmental consequences to specific resource values and uses within the areas and any alternative actions would be analyzed. Any decision to offer the lands for lease would be made based on a full disclosure of the impacts. If a decision is made to offer the lands for lease, specific mitigation measures may be developed to ensure that the commercial operations use practices that minimize or mitigate impacts.

This pre-leasing NEPA analysis would include the same opportunities for public involvement and comment that are part of this Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS process and every other land use planning and NEPA process the BLM undertakes. The decisions associated with the Oil Shale/Tar Sands PEIS will amend the Kemmerer RMP. Additional opportunities for public involvement and comment will occur when the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final PEIS is available.

This Kemmerer RMP will, however, provide allocation and leasing decisions for conventional oil and gas leasing in the Special Tar Sand Areas and Oil Shale Areas.

1.5 Consultation and Coordination

This section describes specific actions taken by the BLM to consult and coordinate with tribes, government agencies, and interest groups, and to involve the interested general public during preparation of the EIS. A Notice of Intent (NOI) published in the *Federal Register* on June 16, 2003, formally announced the intent of the BLM to revise the existing plan and prepare the associated EIS. Publication of the NOI initiated the scoping process and invited participation of affected and interested agencies, organizations, and the public in determining the scope and issues to be addressed by alternatives and analyses in the EIS. Additional detail regarding actions taken by the BLM to involve the public and to consult and coordinate with tribes, government agencies, and interest groups is provided in Appendices A and C.

1.5.1 Consultation and Coordination

This section documents the consultation and coordination efforts undertaken by the BLM throughout the process of revising the RMP and developing the Final EIS. The FLPMA (43 United States Code [USC] 1712) directs the BLM to coordinate planning efforts with Native American tribes, other federal departments, and agencies of the state and local governments as part of its land use planning process. The BLM is directed to integrate NEPA requirements with other environmental review and consultation requirements to reduce paperwork and delays (40 CFR 1500.4-5). The BLM accomplished coordination with other agencies and consistency with other plans through ongoing communications, meetings, and collaborative efforts with the ID Team, which includes BLM specialists and federal, state, and local agencies.

Cooperating Agencies

The Kemmerer Field Office extended cooperating agency status to the State of Wyoming, Lincoln County, Uinta County, Sweetwater County, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), various conservation districts, and tribal governments. The BLM invited these entities to participate because they have jurisdiction either by law or by special expertise. A list of the cooperating agencies that have actively participated in cooperators' meetings leading up to the development of the RMP revision and Final EIS include the following.

Local Governments

- Lincoln County Commissioners
- Lincoln Conservation District
- Uinta County Commissioners

- Uinta County Conservation District
- Sweetwater County Commissioners
- Sweetwater County Conservation District

Federal Government

- Bureau of Reclamation

State of Wyoming

- State Planning Coordinator’s Office
- Department of Agriculture
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Game and Fish Department
- Office of State Lands and Investments
- Department of Environmental Quality
- State Engineer’s Office

The BLM formally invited the cooperating agencies to participate in developing the alternatives and to provide existing data and other information relative to their agency responsibilities, goals, mandates, and expertise. Cooperating agencies provided input during the initial scoping process on issues of special expertise or legal jurisdiction. In addition, cooperating agencies participated in a series of alternative formulation workshops, reviewed draft information and documents, and periodically met with BLM management and resource specialists throughout the revision process to discuss planning issues and provide input to the process. Table 1-3 lists these meetings and workshops.

Table 1-3. Meetings with Cooperating Agencies

Date	Location	Type of Meeting
January 28, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Meeting with Shoshone-Bannock Tribes for an Overview of the RMP Process
February 2-6, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Workshop #1: Alternative Development (All Cooperating Agencies)
February 23-27, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Workshop #2: Alternative Formulation (All Cooperating Agencies)
April 12, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Meeting with Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Technical Staff and Business Council
June 29-30, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Field Manager’s Meeting with Shoshone-Bannock and Eastern Shoshone Tribes
December 13-15, 2004	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Workshop #3: Cooperators’ Input for the Preferred Alternative (All Cooperating Agencies)
April 20-21, 2005	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Field Manager’s Open House Meeting with Cooperators
May 11, 2005	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Cooperating Agency Work Session
September 14-15, 2005	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Workshop #4: Preferred Alternative Formulation (All Cooperating Agencies)
September 26-30, 2005	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Cooperating Agency Work Session
October 31 - November 2, 2006	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Review of comments on Preliminary Draft RMP/EIS Version 1

Section 7 Consultation

The Kemmerer Field Office contacted the USFWS regarding Section 7 of the ESA. The BLM sent a letter to the USFWS concerning the Section 7 consultations, presenting the approach for consultation and the process of Programmatic Species-Specific Section 7 Consultations on Wyoming BLM RMPs. The USFWS provided the following species lists to the Kemmerer Field Office for evaluating BLM Section 7 responsibilities:

- List of Endangered, Threatened, and Candidate species for the Bureau of Land Management, Kemmerer Field Office, dated March 17, 2004
- List of Endangered, Threatened, Proposed and Candidate Species, and Designated Critical Habitat in Wyoming State, dated March 23, 2004

Consultation letters between the USFWS and the Kemmerer Field Office are located in Appendix C. The Kemmerer Field Office will continue consultation with the USFWS through completion of the final biological assessment and final RMP.

Native American Interests

Consultation with Native American tribes is part of the NEPA scoping process and a requirement of FLPMA. The Kemmerer Field Office took multiple steps to contact the tribes and include them in the scoping process. On September 12, 2003, the BLM sent letters to the following tribes inviting them to be a part of the planning process through consultation and public scoping meetings, as well as requesting information to be considered in the planning process:

- Eastern Shoshone Tribes
- Northern Arapaho Tribes
- Northern Ute Tribes
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

Following the scoping process, the BLM sent a letter to each of the above-listed tribes on November 21, 2003, requesting specific information to identify areas of special concern for the tribes and presenting the opportunity for meetings or field trips with representatives from the tribes. Representatives from the Kemmerer Field Office followed these letters with telephone calls to each tribe. In the letters and during the follow-up telephone calls, the BLM stressed the need for the tribes to review and comment on the Draft EIS.

Representatives of the Kemmerer Field Office met with members of the Shoshone-Bannock tribes several times to solicit input from the tribes concerning the RMP revision. A meeting with Shoshone-Bannock Technical Staff on January 28, 2004, included the BLM giving an overview of the RMP process, a description of land use planning procedures, and a PowerPoint presentation outlining some of the major issues that will be addressed in the RMP. A similar meeting was held on April 12, 2004; however, on this occasion, the BLM presentation was given before a larger group of representatives from the Shoshone-Bannock tribe, representing several technical staff departments and including four of the seven Business Council members. Members of the Shoshone-Bannock and Eastern Shoshone tribes met with representatives from the Kemmerer Field Office on June 29 and 30, 2004, to discuss the RMP revision. The tribes received maps of the general locations of cultural and spiritual interest to the tribes, as well as a tour of the planning area. Native American consultation letters can be found in Appendix C.

1.5.2 Public Involvement

The BLM decisionmaking process is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA, and the USDI and BLM policies and procedures implementing NEPA. NEPA and the associated regulatory and policy framework require federal agencies to involve the interested public in their decisionmaking.

In accordance with CEQ scoping guidance, the BLM provided avenues for public involvement as an integral part of revising the RMP and preparing the Final EIS. CEQ scoping guidance defines scoping as the “process by which lead agencies solicit input from the public and interested agencies on the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed and the methods by which they will be evaluated” (CEQ 1981). The scoping report, which summarizes issues identified during the scoping process, is available on the Kemmerer RMP website at www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/.

The intent of the scoping process is to provide an opportunity for the public, tribes, other government agencies, and interest groups to scope the planning process and to identify planning issues to be addressed by alternatives or analyzed in the EIS. In general, public involvement assists the agencies through the following.

- Broadening the information base for decisionmaking.
- Informing the public about the EIS and proposed RMP and the potential impacts associated with various management decisions.
- Ensuring that public needs and viewpoints are brought to the attention of the agency.

Scoping Period

Publication of the NOI on June 16, 2003, announced the BLM’s intention to revise the Kemmerer RMP and prepare a Draft EIS. Scoping for the RMP revision and Draft EIS took place from June 16, 2003, to November 26, 2003. BLM resource management regulations require a 30-day scoping period; however, the Kemmerer revision scoping period remained open for 5 months.

The BLM utilized the public scoping process to identify planning issues to direct (drive) the formulation of alternatives and to frame the scope of analysis in the EIS. The scoping process also was used to introduce the public to preliminary planning criteria, which set limits to the scope of the RMP revision. Approximately 54 comment letters were received during the scoping period. The scoping report provides a general summary of the issues found in these letters.

Scoping Notice

The BLM prepared a public scoping notice and mailed the notice to 779 federal, state, and local agencies, interest groups, and members of the public on October 27, 2003. In the scoping notice, the BLM solicited written comments on the RMP revision process, issues, and impacts and invited the public to a series of three public scoping meetings held throughout the planning area. The scoping notice served to remind the public of the opportunity to view the Summary of the MSA, the project schedule, and other relevant project information on the Kemmerer RMP website. In addition, the scoping notice provided general information on the planning area, background information on the planning process, and dates and locations scheduled for the public scoping meetings.

Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings were held in Kemmerer, Evanston, and Rock Springs, Wyoming, on November 17, 18, and 19, 2003, respectively (Table 1-4). The BLM structured the meetings in an open-house format, with two formal presentations made by the Kemmerer Field Office Assistant Manager for Resources. Resource specialists and other representatives of the BLM were on hand to personally address

questions and provide information to meeting participants. The BLM provided four fact sheets, a summary of the MSA, and a series of four display boards at each scoping meeting. The BLM encouraged attendees to comment using a variety of media, including written comment forms, flip charts, planning area maps, and a computer kiosk.

Table 1-4. Public Involvement, Coordination, and Consultation Meetings

Date	Location	Type of Meeting
November 17, 2003	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Public Scoping Meeting
November 18, 2003	Evanston, Wyoming	Public Scoping Meeting
November 19, 2003	Rock Springs, Wyoming	Public Scoping Meeting
August 6, 2007	Cokeville, Wyoming	Open House
August 7, 2007	Kemmerer, Wyoming	Public Meeting
August 8, 2007	Rock Springs, Wyoming	Public Meeting
August 9, 2007	Evanston, Wyoming	Public Meeting
August 10, 2007	Lyman, Wyoming	Open House

Public Meetings/Open Houses

Two open houses and three public meetings were held during the 90-day public comment period for the Draft RMP and EIS in Cokeville, Kemmerer, Rock Springs, Evanston, and Lyman, Wyoming (Table 1-4). Similar to the public scoping meetings, resource specialists and other representatives of the BLM were on hand to personally address questions and provide information to meeting participants. The BLM provided four fact sheets and a series of four display boards at each public meeting describing the RMP revision process, key planning issues, formulation of alternatives, and how to provide effective comments. The BLM encouraged attendees to comment using a variety of media including written comment forms, planning area maps, and a computer kiosk. A court reporter was also available to record verbal comments and the testimony of all attendees taking part in the public testimony portion of the meeting.

Opportunities to Comment

The BLM provided a variety of avenues through which the public could comment during the scoping period and the 90-day comment period. These avenues are listed below.

- **Mail** – The NOI and the scoping notice invited interested parties to submit comments by mail to the Kemmerer Field Office.
- **E-mail** – The NOI provided the following e-mail address for submitting comments electronically: krmpwymail@blm.gov.
- **Online** – The Kemmerer RMP revision website at www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/ was launched on November 3, 2003. The website provides history about the project, a project schedule, a document library, a mailing-list screen, and a comment screen. During the comment period, the public could enter their comments on the website and submit them electronically. The capability to submit comments via the website continued through the 90-day comment period for the Draft EIS.
- **Telephone** – The scoping notice and all four fact sheets provided a phone number so interested parties could call and leave oral comments.
- **In Person at Meetings** – The BLM provided the public the opportunity to comment at all three scoping meetings, two open houses, and three public meetings. Comment methods included a computer kiosk, through which interested individuals could type their comments; paper comment

forms that could be filled out and submitted at the meetings or mailed in at a later date; and flip charts and planning area maps, upon which comments could be written to share with the BLM and with other members of the public.

Mailing List

The project mailing list for public scoping was initially developed from the Kemmerer Field Office mailing list, but was updated throughout the planning process. The BLM encouraged scoping meeting participants to add their names to the mailing list. Some individuals added their names and addresses to the project mailing list by registering on the project website, as well as through personally contacting the BLM. Currently, the Kemmerer Field Office mailing list includes 916 addresses.

Newsletters

Periodic newsletters have been and are being developed and distributed to keep the public informed of the Kemmerer RMP revision process. The January 2004 newsletter provided basic background information on the project, including the purpose and need for updating the RMP and issues that the plan may address. The newsletter also extended an invitation to the public to be involved in the process, advertised the Kemmerer RMP revision website, and summarized public scoping comments.

A second newsletter (summer 2006) described the development of the alternatives, the process of selecting a preferred alternative, announced the schedule of the Draft EIS, and offered avenues for public involvement. A third newsletter was distributed in June 2007, to announce the publication of the Draft EIS and to provide details on how to provide comments. The fourth and final newsletter was distributed in July 2008 to announce the publication of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS.

Website

The Kemmerer RMP revision website is located at www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/. The site serves as a virtual repository for documents related to the development of the RMP revision, including announcements, bulletins, and documents. These documents are available in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) to ensure that they are available to the widest range of interested parties. The website gives the public the opportunity to submit their comments for consideration as part of the planning process. The website also offers the public an opportunity to be added to the project mailing list.

Future Public Involvement

Public participation is ongoing throughout the planning process. The Final EIS considered all substantive oral and written comments received during the 90-day public comment period for the Draft EIS (Appendix R). Members of the public with standing will have the opportunity to protest the content of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS during the specified 30-day protest period. The ROD will be issued by the BLM after the release of the Final EIS, the Governor's Consistency Review, and protest resolution.

Distribution List

Local and regional media outlets (radio stations, newspapers, and television stations) received notification of the release of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS. A copy of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS was provided to the following governments, individuals, and institutions:

Tribal Governments

- Eastern Shoshone Tribes
- Northern Arapaho Tribes
- Northern Ute Tribes
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

Local Governments (Counties, Cities, Towns)

Lincoln County, Wyoming

- Lincoln County Commissioners
- Lincoln Conservation District

Sweetwater County, Wyoming

- Sweetwater County Commissioners
- Sweetwater County Conservation District

Uinta County, Wyoming

- Uinta County Commissioners
- Uinta County Conservation District

State of Wyoming

- Senator Rae Lynn Job, Sweetwater/Fremont
- Representative Kathy Davison, Lincoln/Sublette/Sweetwater
- Senator John M. Hastert, Sweetwater
- Representative Dan Dockstader, Lincoln
- Senator Stan Cooper, Lincoln/Sublette/Sweetwater/Uinta
- Representative Stan Blake, Sweetwater
- Representative Marty Martin, SW Fremont/Sweetwater
- Senator Ken Decaria, Sweetwater
- Representative Sandra Meyer, Uinta
- Representative Bernadine Craft, Sweetwater
- Representative Bill Thompson, Sweetwater
- Representative Allen Jaggi, Uinta/Sweetwater
- Representative Owen Petersen, Uinta

Wyoming State Agencies

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Environmental Quality
- Game and Fish Department
- Office of State Lands and Investments
- Planning Coordinator's Office
- State Geological Survey

Wyoming State Boards/Commissions

- Air Quality Advisory Board
- Board of Wildlife Commissioners
- Natural Gas Pipeline Authority
- Agriculture Board
- Environmental Quality Council
- Farm Bureau Federation
- Land Quality Advisory Board
- Livestock Board
- Mining Council
- Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
- Recreation Commission
- State Board of Outfitters and Professional Guides
- State Grazing Board
- Trails Advisory Council

Associations/Councils

- Coalbed Methane Coordination Coalition
- Mormon Trails Association
- Oregon-California Trails Association
- Petroleum Association of Wyoming
- Powder River Basin Resource Council
- Wildlife Habitat Council
- Wyoming Association of Municipalities
- Wyoming County Commissioners Association
- Wyoming Mining Association
- Wyoming Natural Diversity Database
- Wyoming Outdoor Council

- Wyoming Sportsmen’s Association
- Wyoming Stockgrowers Association
- Wyoming Wilderness Association
- Wyoming Woolgrowers Association
- Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States

Clubs/Alliances/Societies/Groups

- American Lands Alliance
- Animal Protection Institute of America
- Audubon Society
- Audubon Wyoming
- Biodiversity Conservation Alliance
- Defenders of Wildlife
- Earthjustice
- Environmental Defense
- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
- Friends of Fort Bridger
- Humane Society of the United States
- Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
- Medicine Butte Wildlife Association
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- National Wildlife Federation
- People for the USA
- People for Wyoming
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Sierra Club (Northern Plains and Wyoming Chapters)
- Southwest Wyoming Dirt Riders
- Southwest Wyoming Industrial Association
- Southwest Wyoming Mineral Association
- Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife – Star Valley
- Sweetwater Wildlife Association
- The Fund for Animals
- The Land and Water Fund of the Rockies
- The Land Trust Alliance
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Mule Deer Foundation (Western and Southwest Wyoming)
- The Wilderness Society
- The Wildlife Society
- Trout Unlimited
- Western Watersheds Project
- Wyoming Advocates for Animals
- Wyoming Nature Conservancy
- Wyoming Wildlife Federation

Congressional Delegation

- U.S. Senator Mike Enzi
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Jackson, Wyoming
- U.S. Senator John Barrasso
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Rock Springs, Wyoming
- U.S. Representative Barbara Cubin
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Rock Springs, Wyoming

U.S. Department of the Interior

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Provo, Utah
- Minerals Management Service
- National Park Service
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Denver, Colorado
 - Salt Lake City, Utah
- Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
- Natural Resources Library
- Office of Surface Mining
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Denver, Colorado
 - Cheyenne, Wyoming
- U.S. Geological Survey
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Cheyenne, Wyoming
- Bureau of Land Management
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Wyoming State Office
 - Wyoming Field Offices
 - Buffalo, Casper, Cody, Lander, Newcastle, Pinedale, Rawlins, Rock Springs, and Worland
 - Salt Lake City, Utah Field Office
 - Pocatello, Idaho Field Office

Other Federal Agencies

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
 - Bighorn National Forest
 - Bridger-Teton National Forest
 - Medicine Bow/Routt National Forest
 - Shoshone National Forest
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Baggs, Wyoming
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Energy
Western Area Power Administration
 - Loveland and Lakewood, Colorado
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- U.S. Government Printing Office
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service

Libraries

- Library of Congress
- University of Wyoming Library
- Lincoln County Public Library
- Sweetwater County Public Library
- Sublette County Library
- Uinta County Public Library
- Western Wyoming College Library

Educational Institutions

- Eastern Wyoming College
- Western Wyoming Community College
Archeological Services
- University of Wyoming
 - Trustees
 - Geology Museum
 - Department of Rangeland Ecology
 - Department of Geology and Geophysics

1.6 Topics Not Addressed in This Resource Management Plan Revision

Laws, regulations, policies, and EOs require specific resource topics be examined during the NEPA process. In some instances, initial evaluation reveals topics that are not relevant to the planning area or do not require further analysis. Examples of these topics are listed below.

- Prime and Unique Farmlands – Prime or unique farmlands and farmland of statewide or local importance are more common in Midwestern states and not found in western Wyoming. In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the local county NRCS determined that no prime or unique farmlands or farmland of statewide or local importance occur on public lands in the planning area (Lewis 2007; Granby 2007). Therefore, impacts on prime and unique farmlands were not analyzed further in this RMP revision.
- Wild Horses and Burros – Herd areas are limited to areas of the public lands identified as being habitat used by wild horses and burros at the time of passage of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. No herds or horse areas have been identified in the planning area. Wild horses and burros, therefore, are not discussed in this RMP revision.

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