



Kemmerer Resource Management Plan Revision Newsletter

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August 2006

Where do we go from here?



Letter from the Field Manager

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued interest in the Kemmerer Resource Management Plan Revision (RMP revision) process. This is the second newsletter in a series designed to provide you with information on what is happening in the Kemmerer RMP revision process. These newsletters should keep you current on issues and events.

During 2005 and 2006, BLM continued to meet with our cooperators on the formulation of the alternatives. Three alternatives and the preferred alternative have been developed and will be presented in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Currently, we are preparing the Draft EIS which analyzes each alternative to determine the potential impacts on the environment and management of public lands in the planning area. The Draft EIS is scheduled for publication this winter. Following publication of the Draft EIS, a series of public hearings will be held during the 90-day public comment period. After careful consideration of your comments, a Final EIS and proposed RMP will be published in the winter of 2007.

When completed, the RMP will provide a set of comprehensive, long-range decisions for (1) managing resources throughout the planning area, and (2) identifying uses or allocations allowed on the public land surface and mineral estate administered by the BLM.

A successful RMP revision depends on your involvement. I encourage you to review the Draft EIS available this winter, attend the public hearings, and submit your comments.

Mary Jo Rugwell, Kemmerer Field Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Kemmerer Field Office

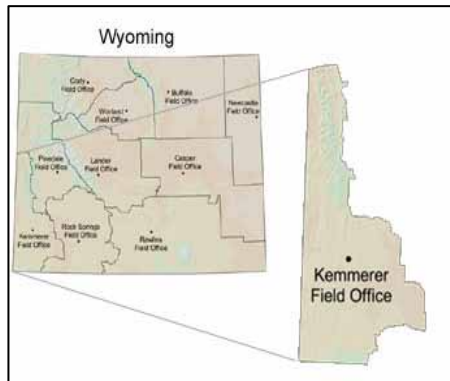
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Commonly Used Acronyms

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ID	Interdisciplinary
NOI	Notice of Intent
RMP	Resource Management Plan
NOA	Notice of Availability

Purpose and Need for the Resource Management Plan Revision



The purpose for revising the existing 1986 Kemmerer RMP is to address emerging resource issues, new information, and changing laws. The RMP revision aims to

address the growing needs of the planning area and select management strategies that define the highest and best use of public lands, while considering current and future values of the land and associated resources. The major topics addressed in the RMP revision are:

- Energy exploration and development
- Access to and transportation on BLM-administered lands
- Recreation and off-highway vehicle management
- Wildlife habitat and special status plant and wildlife species
- Invasive nonnative species
- Management of cultural and paleontological resources, including National Historic Trails
- Landownership adjustments
- Fire management and ecology
- Livestock grazing
- Visual resource management
- Potential special designations or special management areas
- Air and water quality

The Draft EIS will (1) present four alternative RMPs to address planning issues, and (2) analyze the effects of each of the alternatives.

Issue Identification and Initiation of Public Involvement

The scoping process began on June 16, 2003, when a Notice of Intent (NOI) to revise the Kemmerer RMP and prepare a supporting EIS was published in the Federal Register. The NOI identified the preliminary planning issues and planning criteria. BLM staff collected pertinent resource information for the planning area and identified issues and opportunities for the public lands in the planning area (see Final Summary of the Management Situation Analysis November 2003 and Final Scoping Report January 2004 available at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer/docs.htm>).

In addition, the public provided comments and identified issues during scoping that the BLM considered during the subsequent alternative development process.

Collaboration with Cooperating Agencies

The BLM invited local, state, and federal government agencies and tribes to participate as cooperating agencies in the planning process because they either had jurisdiction by law or could offer special expertise on economic, social, and local interests and values. Those agencies accepting cooperating agency status worked with the BLM Interdisciplinary (ID) Team during a series of workshops to develop a reasonable range of alternatives to address key planning issues.

Alternatives to be Considered in Detail

The BLM, in collaboration with cooperating agencies, developed four alternatives (Alternatives A through D). Each alternative provides a different emphasis for managing the public lands and resources within the planning area and represents a possible land use plan.

Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, is the continuation of current management direction. This alternative continues existing decisions, considers new policy direction, and maintains existing land allocations.

Alternatives B and C were developed with input from the cooperators and the BLM ID Team. Alternatives B and C represent alternatives emphasizing resource conservation and resource development respectively.

As required by BLM's planning guidance, a preferred alternative (Alternative D) was developed through extensive collaboration with cooperating agencies and consideration of issues determined to be within the scope of the RMP revision. The preferred alternative does not substantially change management for issues such as livestock grazing; protection of threatened, endangered, and special status species; geophysical exploration; areas available for solid mineral development; protection of watersheds and riparian areas; and fire and fuels management. Instead, changes in management are proposed to address issues relating to soils, water quality, wildlife habitat, vegetation, fluid minerals development, cultural resources, National Historic Trails, visual resources, areas considered for special designation, wind energy development, and travel management. In BLM's opinion, the preferred alternative best addresses the key planning issues and purpose and need of the RMP revision. A final RMP decision will not be made until the 90-day comment period following publication of the Draft EIS.

Kemmerer RMP Revision and Draft EIS Alternatives

Alternative A – Continuation of Current Management (No Action). Continues the existing management and use of public lands and resources, at approved levels in the planning area.

Alternative B – Resource Conservation. Emphasizes conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources with greater constraints on resource uses than Alternative A.

Alternative C – Resource Development. Emphasizes resource development, with fewer constraints on resource uses than Alternative A. Conservation of environmental and cultural resources is still provided, but the major emphasis is on resource development.

Alternative D – Preferred Alternative. Allows for continued use and development of resources within the planning area while refining critical areas for natural resource protection. Alternative D consists of a combination of management actions from alternatives A through C.

Special Designations

During the land use planning process, determinations are made for whether specific public lands warrant special management (special management areas [SMAs]). In addition, nominations for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) were considered. ACECs are areas where management is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important resources and resource values, or to protect life and provide safety from natural hazards.

The BLM preferred alternative considers designations of ACECs for some special status plant species habitat, cushion plant communities, and Bridger Butte (727 acres) for cultural, historical, and Native American values. The preferred alternative also proposes SMAs for the Rock Creek/Tunp and Bear River Divide areas. Huff and Raymond Creeks are proposed for further consideration for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and Emigrant Springs is proposed as a National Back Country Byway.

Opportunities for Public Involvement

Your comments are welcome anytime. However, at this stage in the RMP revision your comments and participation are most helpful during the 90-day public comment period (including public hearings) for the Draft EIS. Opportunities for public involvement include:

Kemmerer RMP Revision Web Site

The RMP revision web site is regularly updated with information, documents, and announcements. We encourage you to submit your concerns electronically via the comment link at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer>. While you are there, be sure to indicate your preference for receiving a paper or electronic copy of the Draft EIS.

90-Day Public Comment Period

The public comment period for the Draft EIS will begin when the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS is published in the Federal Register. Three public hearings will be held during the 90-day public comment period. The BLM encourages your participation. For more information on how to obtain a copy of the Draft EIS refer to the last page of this newsletter.

Public Mailing List

If you are already receiving information about the Kemmerer RMP revision, you will remain on the mailing list. If you would like to be added or deleted from the mailing list you may do so on the RMP revision web site (<http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer>), by contacting Michele Easley at (307) 828-4524, email Michele.Easley@blm.gov, or by mailing your request to 312 Hwy 189 N., Kemmerer, Wyoming 83101-9711.



*Johnston Scout Rock
Kemmerer, Wyoming*

Looking Ahead to the Kemmerer Resource Management Plan Revision and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Over the next several months, the BLM will be preparing the Draft EIS. When finished, the document will be available on the BLM's web site and at select libraries; however, this is your opportunity to let us know whether you would like to receive your own copy of this document.

Please indicate your preference for the Draft EIS on the Kemmerer RMP revision web site (<http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer>). If you do not have access to a computer, you can complete and mail in the form on the right-hand side of this page. Please mail or fax the form to:

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Requests should be received before September 15, 2006.

Reminder: This information can be submitted electronically on the Kemmerer RMP web site at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/kemmerer>.

I would like to be notified by email when the Draft EIS is available on the Kemmerer RMP revision web site

Mail me a CD of the Draft EIS
(preferred method of delivery)

Mail me a paper copy of the Draft EIS

Please print legibly and preferably in ink.

First Name

Last Name

Title

Organization/Agency

Address

City

State

Zip

Email

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