

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PRELIMINARY PLANNING CRITERIA FOR THE RAWLINS RMP**

Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that are developed to guide and direct the planning review for the Great Divide RMP. The planning criteria serve to:

- Ensure that the planning effort follows and incorporates legal requirements, provides for management of all resource uses in the planning area, is focused on the issues, and is accomplished efficiently;
- To identify the scope and parameters of the planning effort; and
- Inform the public of what to expect of the planning effort.

Planning criteria are based on standards prescribed by laws and regulations; guidance provided by the BLM Wyoming State Director; results of consultation and coordination with the public, other agencies and governmental entities, and Indian tribes; analysis of information pertinent to the planning area; public input; and professional judgment.

The planning criteria focus on the development of management options and alternatives, analysis of their effects, and selection of the Preferred Alternative and the Proposed RMP. Additional planning criteria may be identified as the planning process progresses.

Criteria for specific resource programs - All program specific guidance that apply, as noted in land use planning manual 1601 and handbook H-1601-1, Appendix C.

#### **1. Criteria for Use of Mitigation Guidelines**

The Wyoming BLM has developed "mitigation guidelines" for use in determining the types and levels of mitigation needed to protect important resources from actions involving surface-disturbing and other human-presence disturbance or disruptive activities. These guidelines are used in the planning/NEPA process for (1) developing management options and alternatives and analyzing their impacts; and (2) as part of the planning criteria for developing the options and alternatives and for determining mitigation requirements. The "Wyoming BLM Mitigation Guidelines for Surface-disturbing and Disruptive Activities" are detailed in Appendix C, which also contains further information on how they are used in the planning/NEPA process.

#### **2. Criteria for Coal Screening Process**

The previously conducted coal planning/screening process (including application of the coal unsuitability criteria) under 43 CFR 3461 will be revisited and conducted, as necessary, for the planning effort. The Notice of Intent to conduct a planning review and modification of the Great Divide RMP will include a call

for any available coal and other resource information for the planning area. The planning review and coal screening process will be consistent with the Federal Coal Management Program, policies, environmental integrity, national energy needs, and related demands. Conducting the environmental analysis and developing the environmental impact statement will serve as a mode for public input to the coal screening/planning process. The coal screening process will be conducted for the Great Divide RMP planning area to determine if existing RMP coal planning decisions are still appropriate in light of changes to the Federal coal regulations and changes in resource conditions since the Great Divide RMP was approved (1990). After identifying areas of coal occurrence potential and coal with any degree of development potential in the planning area, the remainder of the coal screening/planning process will be conducted on those federal coal areas with development potential to determine what federal coal is acceptable for further consideration for leasing.

3. **Criteria for Healthy Rangelands**

The Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Wyoming (S&Gs) were approved by the Secretary of the Interior on August 12, 1997. They have been included in this document as appendix D.

The Secretary of the Interior approved the Wyoming BLM S&Gs to aid in achieving the four fundamentals of rangeland health outlined in the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4180.1). These four fundamentals are: (1) watersheds are functioning properly; (2) water, nutrients, and energy are cycling properly; (3) water quality meets state standards; and, (4) habitat for special status species is protected. The standards apply to all resource uses on public lands while the guidelines apply specifically to livestock grazing practices. The S&Gs are used to aid in developing alternatives for analysis and in considering appropriate management actions necessary to implement the S&Gs.

4. **Criteria for Multiple Use Considerations**

Multiple use is defined in the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) 1976, as “the management of public lands and their various resource values so they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the America people and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output. “ BLM policy requires that BLM-administered lands be managed under this multiple-use concept. As appropriate, management objectives and actions described for each alternative addressed in the planning/NEPA process will consider all resources and resource uses in the planning area (physical, biological, and socioeconomic).

5. **Criteria for Hydrocarbon Potential**

To aid in the planning review, criteria will be developed for leasing and development of hydrocarbon-based minerals (oil and gas, and coalbed methane). Using available geologic information, reports of past production, and information from the minerals industry, areas of high, moderate, and low potential for the occurrence and development of hydrocarbons in the planning area will be identified. Estimates of reasonably foreseeable oil and gas (including coalbed methane) exploration and development activity will be developed from analysis of past activity and production. These estimates will be used to aid in the analysis of environmental consequences. Because they are general, these occurrence and development potential classifications and production estimates are appropriate for planning purposes, but they are not appropriate for, nor are they intended to predict, future specific activity or the specific locations of new discoveries.

6. **Criteria for Other Leasable Minerals**

Other leasable minerals (phosphates, geothermal, etc.) will not be addressed in this planning review. There is no known development potential in the planning area for other leasable minerals.

7. **Criteria for Salable Mineral Potential**

Information on salable mineral (sand, gravel, decorative stone, etc.) occurrence potential and records of past minerals activities will be used to estimate what types and amounts of future salable mineral development would take place in the planning area. Estimates of reasonably foreseeable mineral development will be used to aid in the analysis of environmental consequences.

8. **Criteria for Locatable Minerals Potential**

Criteria will be developed for location and development of locatable minerals such as gold, diamonds, uranium and bentonite. Areas of high, moderate, and low occurrence and development potential will be determined to facilitate analysis of the effects that the variety of other land and resource uses and management actions would have on locatable minerals development and vice versa. This will only be based on a representative analysis by inference and does not imply that there may or may not be undiscovered locatable minerals of economic value in the planning area.

9. **Criteria for Withdrawals and Classifications**

Under sections 202(d) and 204(l) of the FLPMA, any classification or withdrawal on BLM-administered public land is subject to periodic review to determine whether or not it is serving its intended purpose and is still needed. These reviews will be conducted during the planning effort and may result in determining that some classifications and withdrawals should be modified or terminated. During

the planning effort, the need for new withdrawals may also be identified. Where the need for new withdrawals is identified that overlap existing withdrawals that should be terminated, the new withdrawals will be put in place before terminating old withdrawals on the same areas. The criteria for conducting these reviews in the course of the planning effort are presented below.

For purposes of providing an adequate comparison of impacts, for the planning effort, all existing withdrawals and classifications and their segregative effects will be assumed to continue in effect in the description of the continuation of existing management direction.

- a. **Withdrawals Under Other Agency Jurisdiction.** The withdrawal review requirement of the FLPMA has not yet been completed on those federal lands withdrawn for purposes of other federal agencies (i.e., those under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense or Bureau of Reclamation). For the purposes of this planning effort, it must be assumed that these withdrawals will remain in effect, and that the planning and management authorities for these withdrawn lands will remain with those agencies. Thus, the planning effort will not include consideration of any planning or management decisions for either the federal land surface or federal minerals within these withdrawn areas. These lands will be considered in conducting the environmental analysis for the planning effort in terms of cumulative impacts and in terms of how they may be affected by management in the planning area or vice versa.
- b. **Withdrawals and Classifications Under BLM Jurisdiction.** The review of withdrawals and classifications on any lands under BLM jurisdiction may result in a determination withdrawals or classifications are no longer serving their intended purposes and should be terminated (either all or in part). This review will include consideration of whether new withdrawals or classifications, for other purposes, are needed and should be put into place before terminating old withdrawals on the same areas.

#### 10. **Criteria for Wild Horse Management**

There are three wild horse herd management areas (HMAs – Adobe Town, Lost Creek, and Stewart Creek) on BLM-administered public land within the planning area. These HMAs were established in accordance with the requirements of Section 3 of the Wild, Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act, as amended. These HMAs will continue to be managed under existing policy and guidance which emphasizes multiple-use management.

Three Herd Areas (HAs) in the planning area were not established as HMAs. Significant amounts of private land and lack of landowner consent to allow wild horses to occupy private property precluded consideration of these HAs as HMAs.

This decision will be revisited to determine whether current conditions warrant retaining these three HAs in non-HMA status.

The current appropriate management levels (AMLs) for wild horses were based on an 1994 evaluation of wild horse HMAs in the planning area. The evaluation analyzed and interpreted extensive monitoring data collected over a number of years. Management actions to support the current AMLs will continue until additional monitoring data supports a need to modify the AMLs. It is assumed that any wild horses within the planning area that are above the current AMLs are “excess”, in the meaning of the Act, and are subject to removal.

Removal methods, transportation of wild horses, handling/preparation, adoption, and long-term care arrangements are beyond the scope of this analysis and will not be addressed in this planning review.

11. **Criteria for Wilderness Management**

There are five wilderness Study Areas (WSA – Adobe Town, Ferris Mountains, Prospect Mountain, Bennett Mountains, and Encampment River Canyon) on BLM-administered public lands in the planning area. These WSAs were established in accordance with the requirements of Section 603(c) of FLPMA and section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964. These WSAs will continue to be managed under the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (IMP) until Congress either designates all or portions of the WSAs as wilderness or releases the lands from further wilderness consideration. There may be instances where resource values within WSAs will require RMP management decisions or prescriptions that are more stringent than the IMP.

While there have been no other areas with wilderness characteristics identified on public lands in the planning area, such additional lands could be identified during the planning effort (per the general provisions of Section 202 of FLPMA).

12. **Criteria for Wild and Scenic Rivers**

In the course of conducting the management situation analysis (MSA) for the planning effort, BLM-administered public land along waterways in the planning area will be reviewed, under separate contract, to determine their eligibility and suitability to be considered for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. In preparing and analyzing options and alternatives for the planning effort, interim management prescriptions will be developed for any public land waterway segments determined to be suitable for further consideration. However, for purposes of providing an adequate comparison of impacts for the planning effort, the description of continuation of existing management direction (no action alternative) will not include any consideration of wild and scenic rivers.

13. **Criteria for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

The relevance and importance criteria for ACEC designation, found in BLM Manual 1613, will be applied to BLM-administered public lands in the planning area to determine if any areas have the potential for ACEC designation. An ACEC designation alone does not change the allowed uses of public lands involved (FLPMA-Sec.201(a) and 43 CFR 1601.0-5a). An ACEC designation is not a substitute for a WSA or wilderness suitability recommendation (BLM manual 1613.06). Protective measures for ACECs are not applied or required simply because of the designation, rather, the nature of the values, resources, or natural hazards they contain are the basis for determining the appropriate types and levels of management needed. The only automatic requirement due to an ACEC designation is that a “plan of operations” must be submitted for any degree of mining claim development in the area (43 CFR 3809.1-4).

This planning effort will recognize valid existing rights.

Actions must comply with laws, executive orders and regulations.

Lands covered in the EIS for the planning effort include any/all lands that may affect, or be affected by, the management occurring on the BLM-administered public lands in the planning area. However, the planning decisions in the RMP will apply only to the BLM-administered public lands and federal mineral estate in the planning area. This includes decisions on the BLM-administered federal minerals that underlie non-federal lands (split estate) in the planning area. Within the planning area, there will be no RMP decisions made on non-federal land surface or mineral estate, on federal lands administered by other federal agencies, or the federal mineral estate underlying federal lands administered by other federal agencies.

A collaborative and multi-jurisdictional approach will be used, where possible, to jointly determine the desired future condition and management direction for the public lands.

To the extent possible and within legal and regulatory parameters, BLM management and planning decisions will complement the planning and management decisions of other agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes, with jurisdictions intermingled with and adjacent to the planning area.

Planning and management direction will be focused on the relative values of resources and not the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or economic output.

Where practicable and timely for the planning effort, current scientific information, research, and new technologies will be considered.

Reasonably Foreseeable Action or Activity (RFA) scenarios for all land and resource uses (including minerals) will be developed and portrayed based on historical, existing, and projected levels for all programs.

Existing endangered species recovery plans, including plans for reintroduction of endangered species and other species, will be considered. Consultation, coordination and cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service will be in accordance with the 2000 BLM/FWS Interagency Memorandum of Understanding regarding Section 7 Consultation. All existing biological assessments and biological opinions regarding areas within the planning area will be reviewed for adequacy and possible consolidation and update.

### **PLANNING CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES**

If the Great Divide RMP is to be amended or revised, the following will be considered in one or more of the alternatives to be developed.

1. Special or other management areas and their potential management
2. Intensive Management of significant cultural, historic, and paleontological resources including Native American respected places
3. The use of prescribed fire to improve natural resources.
4. The reduction of hazardous fuels on BLM-administered lands near wildland/urban interface communities that are at high risk from wildfire.
5. Fire suppression management options.
6. Management options for the protection and enhancement of riparian and wetland areas.
7. Management options for reducing the spread of noxious weeds.
8. Management options for the protection of habitat for threatened, endangered, sensitive, and other important wildlife and plant species.
9. Management options for protection of wild and scenic river values.
10. Various types of vegetation uses, including wildlife habitat, watershed protection, livestock grazing, etc.
11. Various levels of livestock grazing.

12. Identification of lands suitable for minerals exploration and development, off-highway vehicle use, rights-of-way construction, and other activities that may result in surface disturbance.
13. Identification of rights-of-way concentration areas, exclusion areas and avoidance areas to provide for development needs and protection of resource values.
14. Opportunities for enhancing recreation.
15. Opportunities for land exchanges that could be useful in meeting goals for resource manageability and public access.
16. Providing or improving access for reasonable levels of public use and for resource development and manageability.
17. Management of recreational use and designation of Special Recreation Management Areas.
18. Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications will be evaluated and modified, as necessary, to reflect present conditions and future needs. Areas where specific land uses need to be modified or restricted to resolve conflicts will be identified.
19. Watersheds and watershed needs will be considered in the development of management options and alternatives for all resource and land.
20. Vegetation management objectives or objectives for desired future condition will be included in all alternatives. Mitigation of surface disturbing activities will also be considered.

#### **PLANNING CRITERIA FOR ANALYZING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

The following potential effects will be addressed.

1. Effects of opening or closing BLM-administered lands to some uses or activities.
2. Effects of resource protection measures on land and resource uses and activities.
3. Effects of surface-disturbing uses and other disruptive human activities on air quality, cultural resources, recreational opportunities, watershed, and wildlife resources.
4. Effects of land tenure adjustments, livestock grazing, and OHV use.

5. Economic effects of management options on livestock grazing, minerals exploration and development, and recreation.
6. The effects of mineral development on other resources and land uses.
7. Effects of all types of land and resource uses on the diversity of plant and animal species.
8. Effects on land and resource uses from retention or termination of existing withdrawals and classifications.
9. Effects of all types of land and resource uses on the vegetation, water, soil, and air resources.

#### **PLANNING CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

The following considerations will guide selection of the preferred alternative.

1. Levels of land use restrictions needed to protect resources and keep lands and resources available for public use.
2. The potential for the occurrence of mineral resources.
3. Consistency with the land use plans, programs, and policies of other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes.
4. The potential for sustaining the productivity and diversity of ecosystems while providing for human values, products, and services.
5. Social and economic values.
6. Existing law, regulations, and BLM policy.
7. Public input, welfare and safety.
8. Environmental impacts.

#### **PLANNING CRITERIA FOR USING THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PROCEDURE TO DEVELOP LAND USE PLAN (RMP) PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DECISIONS**

1. The Management Situation Analysis (MSA) procedure and documentation consist of a detailed evaluation and description of (1) the Continuation of Existing Management Direction (or “No Action”) Alternative (this alternative will have a 20 year projection or analysis period); (2) the description of the affected or

existing environment; and (3) the description of the impact analysis of the No Action Alternative (including the input of both informal and formal public scoping conducted to that point). The results of this analysis and scoping provide (4) the basic determination of the problems, concerns, conflicts and issues associated with continuation of existing management direction in the planning area, upon which the remainder of the planning effort will be focused. The MSA procedure and documentation also includes (5) the planning criteria for conducting the planning effort; (6) a record data/information compiled and new data/information gathered or specifically needed for the planning effort; and (6) a record of resource management options, opportunities, and limitations to respond to and resolve the issues, concerns, etc. At this point in the process, a determination will be made on whether the RMP modification will be an amendment, or a complete revision. Regardless of that determination, the environmental analysis level for the Great Divide RMP modification will be an EIS (rather than an environmental assessment or EA).

2. Upon completion of the MSA, alternatives (i.e., alternatives to existing management direction, or alternatives to the No Action Alternative) will be developed for detailed impact analysis (as with the MSA, all alternatives will have a 20 year projection or analysis period). An alternative is a comprehensive and complete “alternative RMP” and is made up of resource and land use “management options” among the various programs of resource and land uses occurring in the planning area. In compliance with NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and the BLM planning regulations and guidance, alternatives must be reasonable and must be capable of implementation. Two basic alternative “themes” will be used to formulate the first two alternatives – one that emphasizes development and intensive management and de-emphasizes environmental protection (within the parameters of law and regulation), and one that emphasizes environmental protection and de-emphasizes development and intensive management (within the parameters of law and regulation). The basic objectives of these alternatives is to try to resolve the issues, concerns, problems and conflicts associated with the No Action Alternative; to provide an adequate range of alternatives to analyze in detail; and to provide a good basis for comparative impact analyses. A detailed analysis of each of these alternatives is conducted and documented. It is possible that other alternative themes could be identified as a result of these analyses. Other management options and alternatives that are “considered”, but not analyzed in detail, are also documented, along with the reasons and rationale for not conducting a detailed analysis on them.
3. Based upon the analyses of the above alternatives, the Preferred Alternative (i.e., the BLM’s preferred alternative) will then be selected and analyzed in detail. Usually, none of the above alternatives can, individually, represent the BLM’s preferred alternative and another alternative is formulated as the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is usually made up of a combination of management options from the other alternatives that provide the best mix and

balance of multiple land and resource uses to resolve the issues with existing management in the planning area.

4. The draft EIS for the RMP will then be prepared. The descriptions of all the alternative RMPs analyzed in detail (including the Preferred Alternative) make up Chapter 2 of the EIS. The description of the affected or existing environment is Chapter 3 of the EIS, and the descriptions of the environmental consequences of the alternatives is Chapter 4 of the EIS. Chapter 1 is an introductory Chapter describing the planning issues and planning criteria, and Chapter 5 is a description of the public involvement and coordination occurring to this point in the planning process.
5. Following the public review and comment period on the draft EIS, the final EIS will be prepared. The final EIS will be a complete, stand-alone document (not an abbreviated document). The final EIS has the same basic outline and content as the draft EIS. The primary difference between the draft and final EISs is that the focus of the final EIS is on the “Proposed RMP Decisions or Proposed RMP Modification”, which is included in Chapter 2 of the final EIS. Based upon public comment, any new information and correction of errors in the draft EIS, the final EIS will present the Proposed RMP Decisions or Proposed RMP Modification (which is usually a refinement or modification of the Preferred Alternative in the draft EIS), along with the other alternatives.
6. Following a concurrent 60 day Governor’s consistency review and a 30 day protest period on the Proposed RMP and final EIS, any protests submitted will be resolved and both the Record of Decision (ROD) for the EIS and the Approved RMP Decisions, or RMP Modification, will be prepared in one document and issued to the public.