



Resource Management Plan

Fluid Minerals Leasing

The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 authorizes the development and conservation of oil and gas resources. It provides that all public lands are open to oil and gas leasing unless a specific order has been issued to close an area. Leasing procedures for oil and gas are the same irrespective of the formation from which the gas is extracted (i.e., coal, sandstones, etc.).

Based on the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, all leases must be exposed to competitive interest. Lands that do not receive competitive interest will be available for noncompetitive leasing for a period not to exceed 2 years. Competitive sales will be held at least quarterly and by oral auction. Competitive leases are issued for a term of 5 years and noncompetitive leases are issued for a term of 10 years. If the lessee establishes hydrocarbon production, the competitive and noncompetitive leases can be held for as long as oil or gas are produced. The Federal Government receives yearly rental fees on non-producing leases. Royalty on production is received on producing leases, one-half of which is returned to the State of Wyoming.





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Rawlins Field Office Overview

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) RFO administrative area is located in south central Wyoming. The RFO includes approximately 11.2 million acres of land in Albany, Carbon, Laramie, and Sweetwater Counties. Within that area, the RFO administers approximately 3.4 million acres of public land surface and mineral estate, 0.1 million acres of public land surface where the mineral estate is private, and 1.2 million acres of federal mineral estate where the surface is privately owned or state owned and. The area includes the larger communities of Cheyenne, Laramie, Rawlins, and Saratoga and the smaller communities of Arlington, Baggs, Bairoil, Dixon, Elk Mountain, Encampment, Hanna, McFadden, Medicine Bow, Pine Bluffs, Riverside, Rock River, Savery, Sinclair, and Wamsutter.

The public lands and federal mineral estate within the Rawlins Resource Management Plan (RMP) administrative area are the subject of this RMP effort. Neither this RMP nor the RFO's current land use planning efforts apply to lands or minerals within the Rawlins Resource Management Plan Planning Area (RMPPA) that are administered by federal agencies other than BLM, such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Air Force.



Overview of the Wyoming State Area





Resource Management Plan

Rawlins Field Office

Mineral Occurrence and Development

This Mineral Occurrence and Development Potential Report was prepared in order to support the process of amending the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rawlins, Wyoming Field Office. It is intended that the RMP encompass the area described herein as the Resource Management Plan Planning Area (RMPPA).

The Mineral Occurrence and Development Potential Report ("the report") provides an intermediate level of detail for mineral assessments as prescribed in BLM Manual 3031. Information contained in the report has been incorporated into the Management Situational Analysis as part of the RMP amendment process and will be similarly incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared in conjunction with the RMP amendments.

The report is available for review and download on the Rawlins RMP website at www.rawlinsrmp.com.

The report provides a general geologic description of the RMPPA to include physiography, stratigraphy, structural geology, and historical geology. In addition, the report includes a description of mineral resources that are present, and a discussion of the development potential over the 20-year planning period for the various mineral resources that are identified as being present in the RMPPA.

In summary, the primary mineral occurrence and development potential within the RMPPA is associated with oil and natural gas, coal, uranium, aggregates, and decorative stone. The RMPPA is a proven hydrocarbon producing area for over 80 years, and estimates of undiscovered resources indicate that the area will provide abundant supplies of hydrocarbons (especially natural gas) through the end of the 20-year planning period and beyond. While coalbed methane (CBM) is still an unproven resource, the RMPPA currently has several proposed CBM development projects and others in initial development stage. It is anticipated that hydrocarbon development projects will drive the exploitation of aggregate resources (to supply infrastructure development needs). Because of abundant supplies of coal in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming, coal development within the RMPPA may occur only to a limited degree. Although there was past mining of uranium and mineable grades of uranium remain in several areas, world market prices of the commodity will probably preclude development in the foreseeable future. Iron, titanium, vanadium, and copper are



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present as demonstrated resources, but development of those materials is also subject to world market conditions and not likely to occur in the near future. Diamonds have been found in the RMPPA, but no commercially developable deposits have been discovered to date.

A number of other minerals are present within the RMPPA; however, noted occurrences are typically sub-economic or development potential is “low”, based on varying demand parameters (generally dependent on the mineral being considered).

BLM Manual 3031 (Energy and Mineral Assessment) specifies that minerals be classified according to mineral potential (utilized to rank the potential for presence or occurrence, as opposed to the potential for development or extraction). This classification system rates potential for the occurrence of mineral resources in categories of high (H), moderate (M), low (L), and no potential (O). The potential classification is followed by a rating of the level of certainty of the data ranging from A to D indicating increasing degrees of confidence in the evidence regarding the presence of a particular mineral occurrence. An A rating indicates insufficient data while a D rating indicates a high degree of certainty regarding the data.

The mineral resources that were reviewed in this report have been classified accordingly:

Mineral	Classification	Mineral	Classification
<u>Leasable Minerals</u>		<u>Locatable Minerals</u>	
Oil	H/D	Uranium	H/D
Natural Gas	H/D	Iron	H/D
Coalbed Methane	H/C	Titanium	H/D
Coal	H/D	Gold	H/C
Oil Shale	M/C	Copper	H/C
Phosphate	L/C	Diamonds	H/C
Sodium	M/C	Rare Earths	H/C
Geothermal	L/C	Bentonite	L/C
		Zeolites	M/C
<u>Saleable Minerals</u>			
Aggregates	H/D		
Baked Shale	H/D		
Silica Sand	H/D		
Dimension Stone	H/D		
Vermiculite	H/C		
Pumice and Scoria	H/C		
Common Clay	H/C		
Gypsum	H/D		
Decorative Stone	H/D		
Epsomite	H/D		
Aluminum	M/C		
Jade	M/B		
Petrified Wood	M/B		



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National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 USA 4321) establishes the national environmental policy and goals for the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the environment. NEPA requires Federal agencies to use a multidisciplinary process to provide environmental impact information to Federal, State, local, and Indian Tribal officials as well as citizens before making decisions on major Federal actions that may significantly affect the environment. Federal agencies are required to obtain public input and to study, develop, and describe impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures on decisions that may impact the environment. The NEPA process is an all-inclusive process, which incorporates socioeconomic, historic, and a broad spectrum of environmental values into its review criteria.

Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA requires agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS is a report that outlines the predicted environmental effects of a particular action or project in which the federal government is involved. An EIS highlights the significant effects of a proposed project and describes alternative actions to that proposed project. A "no-action" alternative must also be considered.

**Mitigation Measures
are techniques
designed to minimize
the impacts of
development on the
environment.**

NEPA requires the following areas to be addressed in land management planning:

- The environmental impact of the proposed action
- Any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided
- Alternatives to the proposed action
- The relationship between short-term use and long-term productivity
- Any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources

NEPA procedures must ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and actions taken.





Resource Management Plan

The Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR A NEW RAWLINS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Rawlins Field Office (RFO) within BLM is responsible for preparing and modifying, when necessary, the RMP for the RFO administrative area. An RMP is a set of comprehensive long-range decisions concerning the use and management of resources administered by the BLM. The RMP—

- Provides an overview of goals, objectives, and needs associated with public lands management
- Resolves multiple-use conflicts or issues associated with those requirements that drive the preparation of the RMP.

The BLM land use (or RMP) planning process, explained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1600, BLM 1601 Manual, and *BLM Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1), falls within the framework of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) environmental analysis and decision making process described in the Council on Environmental Quality regulations of 40 CFR 1500-1508, the Department of the Interior NEPA Manual (516 DM 1-7), and BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1.

MANDATES AND AUTHORITIES FOR PREPARATION OF THE RAWLINS RMP EIS

BLM's land use planning process (as described in 43 CFR 1600) intertwines requirements from two important laws:

- **Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976.** "The Secretary shall, with public involvement...develop, maintain, and when appropriate, revise land use plans." FLPMA sets the overall tone and policy concerning the management of BLM lands.
- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.** "Utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and environmental design arts in planning and in decision making which may have an effect on man's environment." Because the implementation of a new RMP could cause significant impacts, NEPA requires the analysis and disclosure of potential environmental impacts in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).



PURPOSE AND USE OF THE MANAGEMENT SITUATION ANALYSIS (MSA)

The MSA provides information that describes the physical and biological characteristics and condition of the resources within a planning area and how these resources are being managed. An analysis of the resource conditions, capabilities, and effects of current management provides a reference for developing land use plans. The MSA represents a critical early component of BLM's land use planning process. The land use planning process ultimately results in an RMP.

CONSTRAINTS/CONSISTENCY REQUIREMENTS

BLM land use plans and amendments must be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans of Indian tribes, other federal agencies, and state and local governments to the extent practical. BLM land use plans must also be consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of FLPMA and other federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands (see 43 CFR 1610.3-2 (a)). If these other entities do not have officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, then BLM land use plans must, to the extent practical, be consistent with their officially approved and adopted resource-related policies and programs.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The process for developing an RMP EIS begins with identifying issues. Issues express concerns, conflicts, and problems with the existing management of public lands. Frequently, issues are based on how land uses affect resources. Some issues are concerned with how land uses can affect other land uses, or how the protection of resources affects land uses. The following preliminary planning issues for the Rawlins RMP have been identified and are presented below with no emphasis on priority.

- Development of Energy Resources and Minerals Related Issues.
- Land Tenure Adjustment.
- Vegetation Management.
- Recreation, Cultural Resources (Including National Historic Trails), and Paleontological Resources Management.
- Wildland/Urban Interface.
- Special Status Species Management.
- Water Quality.
- Special Management Designations.
- Wildlife Habitat and Wild Horses

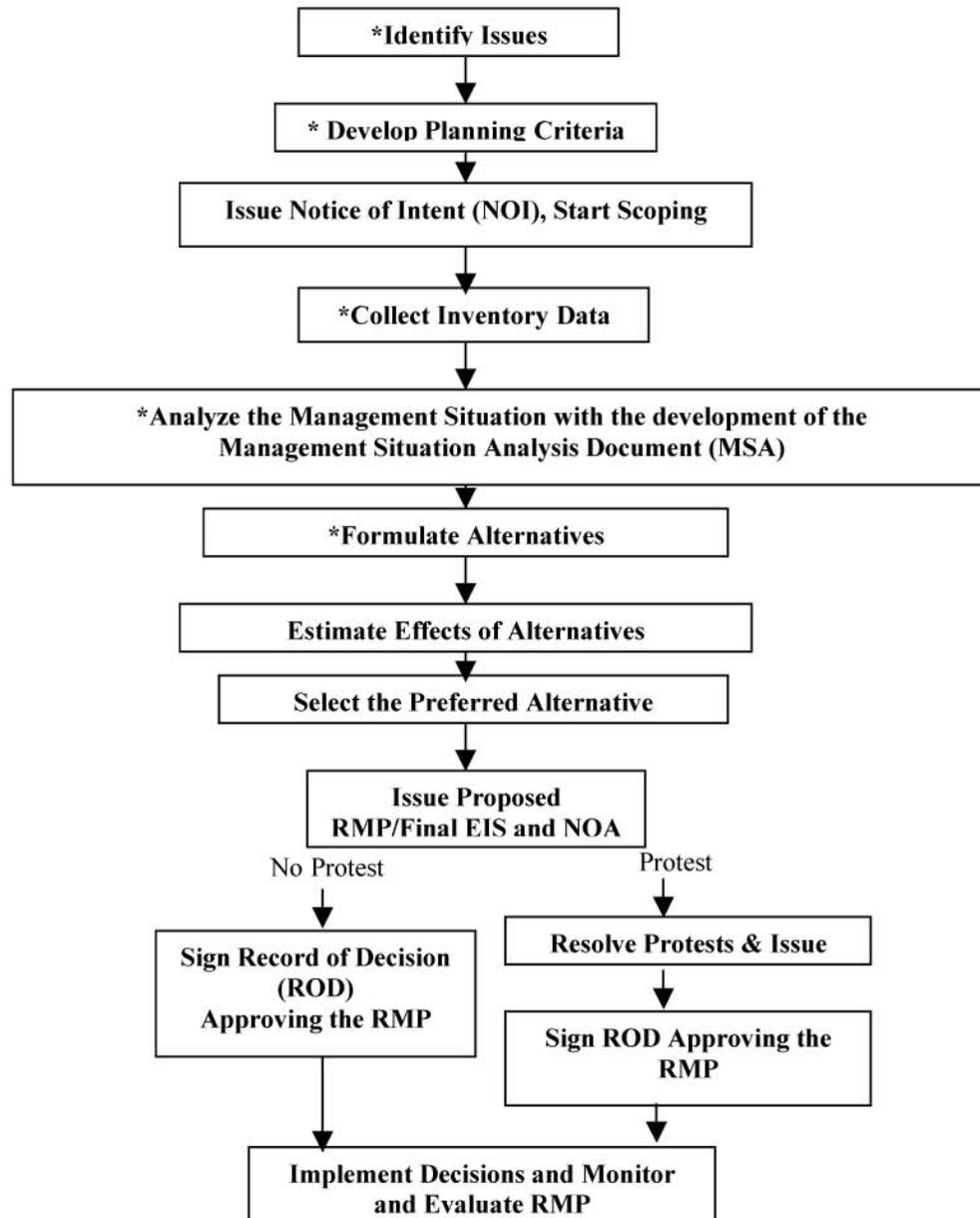


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Rawlins Field Office

THE RMP PROCESS

The following chart depicts the planning steps as well as the NEPA documentation requirements for the EIS-level planning process. This process is used for the development of new RMP's, plan revisions and EIS-supporting documents.



* These steps may be revisited throughout the planning process and may overlap other steps.



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***Identify Issues:** Identify issues or land use problems that need to be resolved. This is an ongoing process that ties to the NEPA scoping process.

***Develop Planning Criteria:** Planning criteria establish constraints and guides for the planning process; streamline the process; establish standards, rules and measures; set the scope of inventory and data collection; identify the range of alternatives; and estimate the extent of analysis. Preliminary planning criteria developed by the BLM can be modified through public comment.

***Issue Notice of Intent (NOI)/Scoping:** Publish the NOI in the *Federal Register*, local media, mailings, etc. The NOI identifies the preliminary issues and planning criteria and provides for a 30-day public review and comment period. This is also the start of the formal NEPA scoping process inviting the public to identify issues or land use problems that need to be resolved. In addition to the *Federal Register* notice, solicit ideas through mailings, newspaper articles, public meetings, and workshops. Gather, screen and evaluate ideas from public, private and internal sources. Summarize the issues to guide the planning process.

***Collect Inventory Data:** Collect inventory data based on the planning criteria. Data are generally collected from existing sources. New data collection is limited to what is needed to resolve the planning issues identified.

***Analyze the Management Situation (MSA):** Gather information on the current management situation, describe pertinent physical and biological characteristics and evaluate the capability and condition of the resource. This analysis provides a reference for developing and evaluating alternatives.

***Formulate Alternatives:** Identify a range of reasonable combinations of resource uses and management practices. Develop reasonable alternatives that address issues identified during scoping and that offer a distinct choice among potential management strategies. Include a no action alternative.

Estimate Effects of Alternatives: Estimate the impacts of each alternative on the environment and management situation.

Select the Preferred Alternative: The Field Manager recommends to the State Director a preferred alternative that best resolves planning issues and promotes balanced multiple use objectives. The State Director approves the selection of the preferred alternative along with the other alternatives under consideration.

Issue Draft RMP EIS: Publish the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register*, media, mailings, etc. The NOA notifies the public of the availability of the Draft RMP EIS and provides for a 90-day public review and comment period.

Issue Proposed RMP EIS: Evaluate comments and make any modifications needed. Publish a second NOA and file a copy of the proposed RMP/Final EIS with the EPA. This initiates the 30-day protest period under 43 CFR 1610.5-2.

Governor's Consistency Review: Simultaneously initiate a 60-day Governor's review to identify inconsistencies with state or local plans.

Protests: The State Director may sign and implement that portion of the plan not under protest.

Notice of Significant Change: When a protest period or consistency review results in significant changes to the proposed plan, issue a Notice of Significant Change providing an additional 30-day comment period.

Plan Approval: Once protests have been resolved and the Governor's consistency review has been completed, the State Director approves the RMP by signing the record of Decision (ROD).

Monitor and Evaluate the RMP: Ensure that the plan is continually monitored and evaluated until it is replaced.

Bureau of Land Management - Scoping Meetings
Rawlins Resource Management Plan (RMP) - March 3, 4, 5 and 6th, 2003

Copies of this Registration will be available for public review at the local BLM office during regular business hours. **Individuals requesting that their address be withheld from public review** or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, **must check "YES" in the "Personal Information" column.** Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Add me to the Rawlins RMP mailing list	Do you want your personal information withheld?	Name	Organization	Mailing Address City, State Zip	Phone Number E-Mail Address
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
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Resource Management Plan

Rawlins Scoping Meeting

This scoping meeting is part of the overall scoping process required under NEPA. The scoping period officially started on February 3, 2003 and will last till April 7th.

Several stations have been set up to illustrate a variety of the important resources within the Rawlins Field Office. These stations include:

**FIELD OFFICE OVERVIEW
RMP & EIS PROCESS
RECREATION/OHV/CULTURAL/WSA/ACEC
LIVESTOCK GRAZING
MINERALS
WILDLIFE
WILD HORSES**

BLM resource specialists are available at each of the stations and throughout the scoping meeting to answer any questions you may have.

View Additional Maps

Although map exhibits are posted at the various stations, not all existing resource maps were made into posters. Additional maps are available electronically for public viewing. Please see a staff member for assistance.

Visit our Website

A Rawlins RMP website has been developed at www.rawlinsrmp.com. This website is your source of information for participating in the planning process. Visit the Comments Table for a live link to the website.

Submit Comments

The BLM welcomes your comments during the scoping period. Visit the Comments Table and either submit your comments electronically or in writing on the comment form provided.

Review RMP Documents

The BLM has provided copies of various RMP documents for your review during the scoping meeting. Please do not remove these documents.

Submit Evaluations

Please fill out our evaluation form to let us know how we have done or how we might better be able to improve upon these meetings in the future.





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Wild Horses

Wild horses are important in the Rawlins RMP Planning Area (RMPPA), providing a historic resource that is of particular interest to the public. This species is also of importance because it interacts with other species for forage within its range. Most of the wild horse herds are found on lands managed by BLM, which also manages the size and distribution of these herds. The goal of the BLM is to protect, maintain, and control a viable, healthy herd of wild horses, while retaining their free-roaming nature, and to provide adequate habitat for free-roaming wild horses through management consistent with environmental protection and enhancement policies. Wild horses are found in the western portion of the Rawlins RMPPA in an area bounded on the south by the Colorado state line, on the east by Wyoming State Highway 789 (SH-789), on the north by the Lander Field Office boundary, and on the west by the Rock Springs Field Office boundary.

Wild Horse Management

In 1971, Congress declared, "that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene...." With this act, (Public Law 92-195) BLM, through the Secretary of the Interior, and the Forest Service, through the Secretary of Agriculture, were given the authority to manage wild horses and burros on public lands of the United States.

Early efforts of BLM to comply with the inventory requirements of the 1971 act focused on identifying areas of use and population levels and in establishing the ownership of horses found running wild on public land. Wild horses on scattered public lands could not be managed effectively because the acreage on public parcels was insufficient to support a horse herd and surrounding landowners were unwilling to support wild horses without claiming ownership.

By 1978, policies and regulations were established that enabled BLM to manage specific populations in specific areas. The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-514) tied removal actions to restoration of "a thriving natural ecological balance to the range..." and protection of "the range from deterioration associated with overpopulation...." Agency efforts between 1978 and 1984 focused on identifying suitable habitat areas, establishing population objectives, and developing Herd Management Area Plans (HMAP).



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Wild horses in the Rawlins RMPPA are currently concentrated in the three Wild Horse Management Areas (WHMA):

- Stewart Creek
- Lost Creek
- Adobe Town

For each of the WHMAs, an appropriate management level (AML) has been established and horses exceeding the AML are considered excess, as are all horses outside the WHMAs. BLM's goal is to adjust wild horse populations in each WHMA to the AML and then to monitor the herds and their habitat so that the AML can be reevaluated and adjusted if necessary (Reed 2002).

In 1988, legal action by advocacy groups impeded the control of horse populations by BLM, resulting in changes in wild horse management policies that culminated in the 1992 Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands. Updates to this plan were made most recently in 1997 in response to an evaluation of BLM's wild horse management program by an emergency evaluation team convened in response to a severe drought in 1996. The team made more than 20 recommendations, including the establishment of a national advisory board, adoption program review, and greater focus on the long-term health of the land. These reforms continue to guide BLM's management of wild horses in the Rawlins RRMPA as it strives to "protect, maintain, and control a viable, healthy herd of wild horses while retaining their free-roaming nature and to provide adequate habitat for free-roaming wild horses through management consistent with environmental protection and enhancement policies..."