

NEPA HOTSHEET

March 2020

BLM Wyoming Land Use Plans and Proposed Projects

Resource Management Plans (RMP)

RMP planning areas include all lands, regardless of jurisdiction; however, the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under the BLM's jurisdiction.

- 1. Rock Springs RMP Revision EIS:** The planning area includes lands within the Rock Springs Field Office administrative boundary in Sweetwater, Lincoln, Uinta, Sublette, and Fremont counties in southwestern Wyoming. The decision area consists of 3.5 million acres of BLM-administered surface and 3.6 million acres of federal mineral estate. The revised RMP will replace the 1997 Green River RMP. Main issues include energy and mineral development, rangeland health, vegetation and habitat management, wild horse and burro management, cultural resources management, lands and realty management, and management of recreational uses of the BLM-administered surface. A Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Plan for the entire field office, as well as an additional socioeconomic modeling effort coordinated with cooperating agencies are being incorporated into the RMP Revision.

NOI Issued: Feb. 1, 2011

Estimated Publication of Proposed RMP/Final EIS: Third quarter 2020

Estimated Publication of ROD: Fourth Quarter 2020

Contact: Kimberlee Foster, Rock Springs Field Manager, Rock Springs Field Office, (307) 352-0201

Website: <https://go.usa.gov/xQw2Z>

- 2. Wild Horse Management for the BLM Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices Plan Amendment EIS**

In April 2013, the Department of the Interior, the BLM and the Rock Springs Grazing Association signed a consent decree requiring the BLM to initiate NEPA analysis to consider the environmental effects of modifying management levels of wild horses in specified herd management areas. An NOI was issued, initiating public scoping to amend the 2008 Rawlins RMP in conjunction with the Rock Springs RMP revision. Prior to Spring 2019, the wild horse management decisions were being evaluated through the ongoing Rock Springs Resource Management Plan revision, with included amendment to the Rawlins RMP for the Adobe Town HMA. However, due to delays in the ongoing RMP revision related to expansion of energy development opportunities, the decision was made to expedite a separate EIS document specific to wild horse management actions.

NOI Published: 8/16/2013

DEIS NOA: Tentative January 2020

DEIS Published: Tentative January 2020

FEIS NOA: Tentative July 2020

FEIS Published: Tentative July 2020

Contact: Kimberlee Foster, Rock Springs Field Manager, Rock Springs Field Office, (307) 352-0201

- 3. (Complete) Buffalo RMP Coal Supplemental EIS and Amendment:** On March 26, 2018, the U.S. District Court in Montana found that the BLM did not adequately address concerns regarding climate change, and violated the NEPA by failing to consider any alternative that would decrease the areas and amount of extractable coal available for leasing and failing to consider the environmental consequences of the downstream combustion of the coal, oil, and gas resources in the 2015 Buffalo RMP. The Court also ruled that the BLM was arbitrary and capricious for failing to justify the use of a global warming potential calculated over a 100-year time horizon, and for not acknowledging the relevant evolving science. The Buffalo Field Office is addressing these deficiencies through the preparation of a Draft Supplemental EIS that considers climate change and downstream combustion, and analyzes alternatives that reduce the amount of coal available for leasing. The BLM published a Draft EIS on May 17, 2019; the public comment period will end on August 15, 2019.

NOI published: November 28, 2018

DEIS published: May 17, 2019

Estimated NOA Publication Date: May 17, 2019

ROD Publication Date: November 22, 2019

FEIS Published: 10/04/2019

Contact: Tom Bills, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, Buffalo Field Office,
(307) 684-1133

Website: <http://go.usa.gov/x9PT8>

Oil and Gas Development Projects

1. Converse County Oil and Gas Project EIS: Converse County Oil and Gas Project EIS: The Casper Field Office received a proposal from a group of companies to develop up to 5,000 new oil or gas wells on 1,500 well pads in northern Converse County, Wyoming. The project area encompasses roughly 1.5 million acres of split estate mixed surface ownership lands. The operators propose to develop the wells over 10 years, with the life of the project anticipated to be 20 to 30 years. The project includes all or parts of three different Sage-Grouse Core Areas.

NEPA Status: The NOI published on May 16, 2014. Public scoping concluded on June 30, 2014. A DEIS was released for public comment on Jan. 26, 2018. The FEIS is scheduled for the spring of 2020 and a ROD anticipated in the summer of 2020.

Contact: Mike Robinson, Project Manager, Casper Field Office, (307) 261-7520

Website: <https://go.usa.gov/xnRAN>

2. Moneta Divide Natural Gas and Oil Development Project EIS: Aethon Energy and Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company LP have proposed to develop up to 4,250 natural gas and oil wells and associated infrastructure within the proposed Moneta Divide Project area. The project area is located in Fremont and Natrona counties and encompasses approximately 265,000 acres of land. The life of the proposed project is estimated to be 40 years. Additional potential development, which would require additional NEPA analysis, include pipelines to transport treated, produced water from the production areas west to Boysen Reservoir and a pipeline transporting natural gas from the production areas to Wamsutter, Wyoming, in the Rawlins Field Office. The untreated and/or by-product brine from treated produced water may be transported via pipelines to two underground disposal areas. The EIS also analyzes amendments to the Casper RMP.

NEPA Status: The NOI published on Jan. 17, 2013. The DEIS published on April 19, 2019 and the comment period ended on July 18, 2019.

Contact: Ben Kniola, Assistant Field Manager, Lander Field Office, (307) 332-8419

Website: <https://go.usa.gov/xQwT3>

3. Buffalo & Casper Oil and Gas Leasing EA and RMP Amendment: Economically recoverable amounts of coal and fluid mineral resources overlap within the designated coal development potential area in Campbell and Converse counties. The current RMPs require BLM to defer oil and gas lease nominations located within coal lease by application and coal lease modification areas or to apply a Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulation to oil and gas lease nominations within federal coal leases. The CSU restricts oil and gas surface use and occupancy unless a mitigation plan is developed between the oil and gas and the coal lessees, and the plan is approved by the BLM. The RMPs' oil and gas stipulations within the coal development potential were suitable at the time. However, technological developments in oil and gas drilling (e.g. horizontal drilling) provide an opportunity for evaluating new or modified oil and gas stipulations or lease notices within the coal development potential area.

NEPA Status: NOI estimate: April 2020

Draft RMP & EA estimate: June 2020

Proposed RMP amendment & EA estimate: August 2020

Final RMP amendment & DR estimate: October 2020

Contact: Tom Bills, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, Buffalo Field Office, (307) 684-1133

Website: <http://go.usa.gov/xdmVD>

4. Upcoming Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sales (Online sales held at www.energynet.com)

Oil and Gas lease sales are dynamic; individual EAs are listed on the website: <https://go.usa.gov/xn9Cw>

Water Development Projects

1. (Complete) Alkali Creek Reservoir Project EIS: The Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC) proposes to construct a 294-acre reservoir on Alkali Creek and ancillary facilities across public and private land near Hyattville, Wyoming. The reservoir would impound approximately 7,994 acre-feet of water under normal conditions, and 9,872 acre-feet when under flood conditions. The reservoir would provide late-season irrigation water for portions of the Nowood River Watershed. The irrigation pool (currently modeled at 5,996 acre-feet) would be available either directly or through exchange for irrigation water.

NEPA Status: The NOI published on Oct. 11, 2017. The DEIS published on Aug. 31, 2018, with the public comment period ended on October 15, 2019. An FEIS published on 05/03/19.

ROD signed on 10/18/2019.

Contact: Holly Elliot, Project Manager, Wind River/Bighorn Basin District, (307) 347-5193

Website: <https://go.usa.gov/xUsam>

2. (Complete) Leavitt Reservoir Expansion Project EIS: The WWDC proposes to expand the existing Leavitt Reservoir near Shell, Wyoming, from a pool of 643 acre-feet to 6,404 acre-feet. As proposed, a new 1,800-foot earthen dam will result in a reservoir surface of 193 acres. The purpose of the project is to provide late season irrigation for agriculture in the Shell Valley.

NEPA Status: The NOI published Sept. 29, 2017. The DEIS published on Aug. 31, 2018, with the public comment period ending on October 15, 2017. An FEIS published on 05/03/2019.

ROD signed: 10/18/2019.

Contact: Holly Elliot, Project Manager, Wind River/Bighorn Basin District, (307) 347-5193

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Other

1. Wyoming Pipeline Corridor Initiative (WPCI)

The Wyoming Pipeline Corridor Initiative is a proposal from the State of Wyoming to designate almost 2,000 miles of pipeline corridors across private, state and BLM-managed lands in Wyoming. Approximately 1,150 miles of the proposed corridors are located on BLM managed lands. The project would designate a statewide pipeline corridor network for future development of pipelines associated with carbon capture, utilization and storage, as well as pipelines and facilities associated with enhanced oil recovery. The project will not authorize any new pipelines or construction but will amend several BLM Resource Management Plans across the state to make future analysis of project specific proposals more efficient.

One of the primary purposes of the pipeline corridor network is to connect existing oil fields suitable for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) with anthropogenic and natural carbon dioxide (CO₂) sources. The CO₂ will be injected into existing, often “played-out” oil fields, thereby increasing oil production beyond conventional recovery methods with little additional surface disturbance.

NEPA Status:

Estimated NOI published: 11/15/2019

Estimated DEIS published: 4/17/2020

Estimated NOA Publication Date: 4/17/2020

Estimated ROD Publication Date: 11/13/2020

Estimated FEIS Published: 9/11/2020

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