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News Release

BLM Colorado Royal Gorge Field Office

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BLM seeks public input on camping and travel management in Chaffee County

CANON CITY, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management Royal Gorge Field Office is accepting public comments on dispersed camping and travel management planning on BLM public lands in Chaffee County.

“Recreation use, especially dispersed camping, has increased dramatically in recent years,” said Royal Gorge Field Office Manager Keith Berger. “This increase in use has resulted in a multitude of issues, such as vegetation and habitat loss, erosion, and sanitation impacts, which all affect people’s recreation experiences and our ability to meet our multiple use mandate.”

Input is being sought on alternatives for camping and travel management on approximately 38,000 acres of BLM public land in Chaffee County where camping demand has increased in the past decade. The alternatives outline various scenarios, based on both public and BLM resource specialist input, for managing camping within the planning area. These alternatives include monitoring as well as various adaptive management strategies that the agency can employ if demand and issues continue to increase.

The most useful comments would provide the BLM with input on the alternatives outlined in the document and identify resources and issues of concern that should be considered for detailed analysis in the environmental assessment. The BLM is initiating this effort based on concerns identified by BLM resource specialists, public land users and neighbors to public lands. This planning effort is in alignment with Chaffee County’s Recreation in Balance” group and is also being coordinated with the U.S. Forest Service and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Additional information is available and public input will be accepted through the project’s ePlanning website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2012291/510>. Additional questions can be directed to Kalem Lenard, Assistant Field Manager at 719-433-8486 or jlenard@blm.gov. Comments will be accepted through January 31, 2022.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 11 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$111 billion in economic output across the country in fiscal year 2020—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 498,000 jobs.