

To: Christopher McAlear[cmcalear@blm.gov]; Sally Butts[sbutts@blm.gov]; Nikki Moore[nmoore@blm.gov]; Peter Mali[pmali@blm.gov]; Robert Wick[rwick@blm.gov]; Salt, Deborah A[debsalt@blm.gov]; Cohen, Ilana R[icohen@blm.gov]; Rachel Wootton[rwootton@blm.gov]; James Sippel[jsippel@blm.gov]; Mara Alexander[malexander@blm.gov]; Timothy Fisher[tjfisher@blm.gov]; Bailey, Cathi M[c1bailey@blm.gov]; Cindy Osorto[cosorto@blm.gov]; Anne (Annie) Ebbers[aebbers@blm.gov]

From: Nelson, Britta

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[FY2017 Tracking Spreadsheet.xlsx](#)

[Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot for week of April 24.docx](#)

Hi Chris and Sally (acting), the Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot for the Week of April 24 is attached. The tracking spreadsheet is also attached. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks.

Britta Nelson, M.P.A., Program Analyst
National Conservation Lands (WO-410)
Bureau of Land Management
303.236.0539



**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

**April 2017
Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot
WO-410 RMP and EIS Review**
Updated 04/24/17

Chris McAlear
Assistant Director (WO-400)

RMPS AND PROJECTS WITH ISSUES TO ELEVATE/DIRECTORS PRIORITIES

- **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument administrative draft MMP-A/DEIS. Utah.**
 - **No issues.**
 - **Update:**
 1. WO410 coordinated with the UTSO and WO210 about the use of "in balance" language and agreed the notice briefing paper and section 2.6.1 of the EIS would be updated to change the words "in balance" to "consistent with".
 2. GSENM clarified that per the MMP, nothing in the land use plan amendment prevents the use of livestock as a vegetation management tool.
 - WO410 surnamed DTS# 1471, NOA for the GSENM MMP-A/DEIS, on April 14. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
- **Craters of the Moon National Monument Proposed RMP Amendment/FEIS. Idaho.**
 - **No issues.**
 - **Update:** It was agreed to move the amendment forward as-is.
 - **DTS# 1515. NOA of the Craters of the Moon National Monument PRMP-A/FEIS has not reached WO410.**
- **DTS# 1542. NOI to Amend the RMP for the Ukiah Field Office, California and Prepare an Associated Environmental Assessment for the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. California.**
 - DTS received on April 21. **NOI package under WO410 program review (DD: April 27).**
- **DTS# 1397. NOI to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft RMP for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument. Nevada.**
 - **Update:** Surnamed by WO410 on April 24 (with edits). **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
 - WO410 met with the NVSO and WO210 on March 22 to discuss the combining of the plans and agreed the NOI package materials would be revised to include a specific section highlighting the public scoping and overall engagement process with a focus on parties interested in GBNM and will note the WO410/WO210/Nevada meeting held to discuss the planning approach.
- **DTS# 1527. NOA of the DRMP and DEIS for the Cedar City Field Office Planning Area. Utah.**
 - **Update:**
 1. Received DTS on April 17. **The WO410 programs are reviewing the NOA package.**
 2. Received the response to WO comment on the Cedar DRMP/DEIS on April 19. Provided feedback to WO210 on April 24 re: establishing WSA as ROW avoidance areas.
- **DTS# 1560, Notice of Temporary Closure and Temporary Restrictions for the Burning Man event. Nevada.**
 - 1) **Update:** Surnamed by WO410 on April 18. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
 - 2) **Comments:**

- Suggested adding to the Departmental briefing paper, Notice, and FRN briefing paper that the temporary closure and restrictions were developed with input from local/state law enforcement as applicable.
 - Added to the closure order notice that since this is an international destination the closure order should use both feet/gallons/etc and metric units of measurements.
- **DTS# 1401. NOA of the Boardman to Hemingway ROD. Oregon.**
 - **NOA package has not reached WO400.** NOA not routed at Division level.
 - WO410 provided updated language for NSHT for the ROD to the Project Manager and WO210 (Jan 12, 2017).
 - **Section 368 Energy Corridor Region 1 draft review report.** Southern California, southern Nevada, and western Arizona.
 - **Issues:** The draft review report addresses National Trails in accordance with outdated policy. This issue has been addressed with WO301 with follow-up occurring.
 - **WO410 comments on the draft review report were submitted to WO301 on April 14, 2017:**
 - Wilderness program
 1. WO410 requested revisions to describe that BLM will address impacts to citizens proposed inventory units in project level NEPA and will also consider protection in appropriate plan revisions and amendments.
 2. Added reference to M6320, in addition to M6310.
 - National Trails program
 1. Report places National Trails under “medium potential for conflict” in accordance with WO IM 2011-06 but should be listed as “high potential for conflict” in accordance with 43 CFR 2804.35 (a)-(c).
 2. Add “Trails under study or recommended as suitable for congressional designation” in the “medium” category and include in the mapping tool.
 3. For transmission corridors that intersect or parallel National Trail system components, add as an Interagency Operating Procedure (IOP) to require the National Trail Administrator, Regional/State Program Leader, and National Trail partner organization to attend pre-authorization/pre-application meetings.
 4. Added NTSA language to corridor abstract for NSHT re: substantial interference and avoidance of incompatible activities.
 - **National Trails Issue Discussion.** WO410 met with WO301 on April 6 to address questions raised for how National Trails were addressed in the draft review report (medium potential for conflict). Clarification was provided that the draft review report uses ROW pre-application screening criteria from WO 2011-061. The screening criteria is used to assess level of conflict and to help prioritize applications. The IM identifies National Trails within the “medium potential for conflict” category. Since the 2011 IM, National Trails policy (2012) and the final Solar and Wind Rule (Dec. 2016) were issued. Per the NTSA and National Trails M6280 policy, the BLM may permit uses that will not substantially interfere with the nature and purpose of the National Trails. The final Solar and Wind Rule (43 CFR 2804.35) provides screening criteria for categorizing solar and wind applications. The final rule does not specifically include National Trails within the categories but identifies “lands near or adjacent to the National Conservation Lands which may be adversely affected” as criteria for low-priority applications (lower priority for processing due to resource conflicts). National Trails falls under the low-priority for processing category in the final Solar and Wind rule as units of the National Conservation Lands.
 - National Trails Issue Follow-up: 1) The Section 368 project team (WO301) will revise the 368 conflict maps to be in accordance the categories under the final rule. WO301 will contact 410 is challenges are identified with the revision. 2) The WO410 National Trails program reviewed the 368 corridor abstracts sent by WO301 for consistency with M6280 and submitted feedback as part of the April 14 WO410 comments to WO301.

- **Donlin Natural Gas Pipeline. Alaska.**
 - **No update.**
 - Meeting with BLM Alaska was held on February 27 to discuss State Patent lands of concern within the Donlin project, specific to the Iditarod National Historic Trail. Although it is not feasible to get a ROW reservation for affected townships, BLM Alaska is working to get comments into NEPA for the project, including mitigation for impacts to the NHT.
- **Verde Transmission ADEIS. New Mexico.**
 - **Issues:** Potential impacts to WSR and National Trails.
 - Proposed route crosses Rio Grande River. Eligible and suitable WSR streams in area including additional segments of the Rio Grande WSR.
 - Project would cross the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT and Old Spanish NHT.
 - **Next milestone is review of ADEIS (TBD). Any review is to be coordinated through New Mexico as amendment is not on WO210 priority list for WO review.**
 - **Update:** Scoping Report is being prepared. Scoping indicates opposition to project.
- **Mancos Shale RMP-A NOI, Farmington, New Mexico.**
 - **Issues:** **Unknown** but WO410 is tracking because the RMP-A proposes to amend four decision types including lands with wilderness characteristics and will analyze potential impacts from oil and gas decisions to the Old Spanish NHT (RMP decisions for the NHT will not be made).
 - **As the RMP-A/EIS moves forward (alts development, impact analysis, etc.). WO410 will participate to ensure that the National Conservation Lands units are adequately considered.**
 - **Update:** draft alternatives will be completed this summer. Public release of the DRMP/DEIS is not anticipated until calendar year 2018. NMSO will coordinate with WO210 on WO review.

UPCOMING BRIEFINGS (NEXT 30 DAYS)
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- **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument administrative draft MMP-A/DEIS. Utah.**
 - **Staff pre-brief April 25.**
 - **No issues.** 471,700 acres contain wilderness characteristics. The draft MMP did not specifically address management of lands with wilderness characteristics, however these lands receive incidental management in the following zones:
 - The primitive zone (281,800 acres) allows for an undeveloped, primitive, and self-directed visitor experience without mechanized or motorized access.
 - The outback zone (149,600 acres) is intended for an undeveloped, primitive, and self-directed visitor experience, while allowing motorized and mechanized access on designated routes. Facilities are rare and are provided only when needed for resource protection.
 - The remaining lands with wilderness characteristics (40,300 acres) are in the front country and passage zones which contain more facilities and are the focal points for visitation.
- **Craters of the Moon National Monument Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS. Idaho.**
 - **Directors Brief TBD.**
 - **No issues.** 22,900 acres contain wilderness characteristics. This is a targeted amendment focused on grazing (no lands with wilderness characteristics decisions). Impacts to wilderness characteristics are addressed in the amendment.

- **Cedar City DRMP/DEIS.** Utah.
 - **TBD.**
 - **No issues.** 259,975 acres contain wilderness characteristics (16 areas).
 - 1) Prioritize other uses on 190,545 acres (73%) while not protecting wilderness characteristics based on mining claims with anticipated development and other resource management priorities, mainly multiple vegetation treatments for restoring habitat from pinion/juniper encroachment.
 - 2) 69,430 acres (27%) would be managed to protect wilderness characteristics as a priority over other multiple uses. Protective allocations include VRM class II, ROW exclusion, NSO for leasable minerals, recommended withdrawal for locatable minerals.
- **Lewistown DRMP/DEIS.** Montana.
 - **TBD.**
 - **No issues.** 202,730 acres contain wilderness characteristics.
 - 1) Prioritize other uses on 70,000 acres while not protecting wilderness characteristics. Underlying prescriptions include open to mineral material sales, non-energy leasables, cross-country mechanized travel, fluid minerals with minor constraints (CSU), and livestock; limited to designated routes yearlong; 400 acres of ERMA prescription (potentially); and mostly VRM III.
 - 2) 30,000 acres would be managed to minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics while managing for other uses (13,000 acres of ACECs and approximately 15,000-20,000 acres where actions are in place to protect GRSG).
 - 3) 100,410 acres (49%) would be managed to protect wilderness characteristics as a priority over other multiple uses.
- **Carlsbad Field Office DRMP/DEIS.** New Mexico.
 - **TBD.**
 - **Issue:** Discrepancies in acreages for lands with wilderness characteristics was found in DRMP/DEIS and range from 24,072 to 41,772 acres.
 - **WSR rationale:** The Delaware River segment was not included in the Preferred Alternative because this area has been identified as an area with high oil/gas development potential. Portions of the Delaware River segment are currently leased for oil and gas development and are surrounded by state lands. Much of the Delaware River segment carries protective allocations associated with the proposed Gypsum Soils ACEC which is included in the Preferred Alternative C.
- **Rio Puerco PRMP/FEIS.** New Mexico.
 - **TBD.**
 - **No issues.** There are seven areas totaling 37,524 acres of wilderness characteristics.
 - 1) Prioritize other uses on 1,663 acres (4%) while not protecting wilderness characteristics.
 - 2) 6,920 acres (18%) would be managed to minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics while managing for other uses. Travel limited to designated routes, closed to leasable minerals, avoid for saleable minerals and ROW, minimizing impacts and requiring use of existing routes for forest product removal, and VRM III.
 - 3) 28,941 acres (77%) would be managed to protect wilderness characteristics as a priority over other multiple uses. Travel would be closed except as authorized, closed to leasable and saleable minerals, no new ROWs, closed to forest product removal, and VRM II.