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**From:** Nelson, Britta  
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[Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot for week of August 7.docx](#)

Hi Nikki and Tim (acting), the Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot for the week of August 7 is attached for us to go over at check in. The call number and passcode are:

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**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

**August 2017  
Monthly Hot Topic Snapshot  
WO-410 RMP and EIS Review**  
Updated 08/07/17

**Chris McAlear**  
Assistant Director (WO-400)

#### **RMPS AND PROJECTS WITH ISSUES TO ELEVATE/DIRECTORS PRIORITIES**

- **DTS# 1685. NOA for Craters of the Moon Monument Management Plan Amendment and ROD. Idaho.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on July 31. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
- **DTS# 1663. NOI to Prepare a Project EIS with a Proposed Plan Amendment to the 1998 Las Vegas RMP and Notice of Segregation for the Crescent Peak Wind project. Nevada.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on July 20. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
  - **Update:** Noted in DTS that communications with WO-210 and Nevada indicate that Nevada will incorporate information in the NOI documents about lands with wilderness characteristics and NLCS components that are located in the project area.
- **DTS# 1545. NOA of the DRMP and DEIS for the BLM Carlsbad Field Office, New Mexico.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on June 8. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
- **DTS# 1527. NOA of the DRMP and DEIS for the Cedar City Field Office Planning Area. Utah.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on May 2. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
- **DTS# 1471. NOA for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument administrative draft MMP-A/DEIS. Utah.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on April 14. **NOA package has not reached WO400.**
- **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.**
  - Surnamed by WO410 on May 2. **NOI package has not reached WO400.**
  - **Update:** the BLM Federal Register Notices update indicates the NOA is on hold at California's request.
- **WO Review of Eastern Washington DRMP/DEIS. Oregon/Washington.**
  - **Update:** This WO review has been postponed until after the Sage-Grouse review under Secretarial Order 3353 has been completed. The postponement will help ensure that the RMP is consistent with the results of the review before commencing WO review. The Sage-Grouse report under SO 3353 is due August 4 and the WO review will be rescheduled shortly thereafter. **Per WO210, review is anticipated to be kicked off the week of August 14.**
  - There are lands with wilderness characteristics, WSR, and NSHT in the planning area.
- **WO Review of Carson City PRMP/FEIS. Nevada.**
  - **Review period runs from July 26-August 16.**
  - There are lands with wilderness characteristics, WSA, WSR, and NSHT in the planning area.

- **Challis, Salmon, Upper Snake RMP Prep Plan.** Idaho.
  - **Update:** WO410 provided follow up comments to the responses to WO feedback (May 19), requesting data and GIS funding needs for National Trails be identified in the prep plan and following up on a WSR comment that was not responded to re: if USFS and BLM coordination on joint WSR studies would be considered. **WO410 has not received the response to comments.**
- **Appalachian Basin RMP Prep Plan.** Eastern States.
  - **Update:** WO410 provided feedback on the prep plan on March 10, 2017 (NSHT and WSR should be addressed if located in the planning area). **WO410 has not received the response to comments.**
- **Boardman to Hemmingway ROD.** Oregon, Idaho.
  - **Update:** The last update was provided for the Renewable Energy and Transmission dashboard on June 28, 2017 and indicates that coordination is continuing with the WO on the NOA for the ROD and incorporating compliance discussions with the Executive Order of March 28, 2017 and Secretarial Order 3349 of March 29th, as it relates to mitigation. **It is unknown if WO410 will participate in the process.**
- **Environmental Assessment to Reconsider the ROD Approving Segments 8 and 9 for the Gateway West Transmission Line Project.** Idaho.
  - **Update:** The BLM is directed, through the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey NCA Boundary Modification Act, 2017, to issue a ROW for the lands described in Sec. (b)(2) of the Modification Act for portions of Gateway West segments 8 and 9. The Modification Act moved the lands for this ROW from NCA status, stipulated that the mitigation framework presented in the Final Supplemental EIS will apply to the authorized segments, and stipulated a timeframe for issuance of the ROW. **It is unknown if WO410 will participate in the process.**
- **Section 368 Energy Corridor Region 1 draft review report.** Southern California, southern Nevada, and western Arizona.
  - **Issues:** Outdated policy that categorized National Trails as 'medium potential for conflict' was used in the original draft review report. Updated solar and wind policy now categories National Trails as 'high potential for conflict'. This was addressed with WO301. WO301 indicated no further follow up needed at this time.
  - **Update:** Revised draft Region 1 Report sent to WO100 for review prior to release for 30-day stakeholder input.
- **Section 368 Energy Corridor Region 2 review.** Eastern Arizona, southern Utah, and New Mexico.
  - **Update:** A schedule is being developed for the Region 2 review.
- **Lake Powell Water Project.** Arizona, Utah.
  - **Issues:** Potential hydro-power station located in and plan amendment for the GSENM.
  - **Update:** WO410 has reached out to BLM Utah and the project manager regarding this project. This is a water removal and transportation project including a proposed hydro-power station located on GSENM. The BLM is working with Utah to perfect the License Application to FERC and to discuss the need for one or two plan amendments in the Arizona Strip FO and GSENM. This would be a new license for a proposed pipeline and is a discretionary authorization.

- **Donlin Natural Gas Pipeline PFEIS. Alaska.**
  - **Issues:** Iditarod NHT is located on some State Patent lands which are proposed for the project.
  - **Update:** The PFEIS is under review by the Alaska State Office with the review period ending August 25. It is unknown if the WO will review the PFEIS. A 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:** The schedule is being revised because the public scoping period was extended. Approval of the revised project schedule is pending.
- **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.

<b>UPCOMING BRIEFINGS (NEXT 30 DAYS)</b>
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- **Kick-off Briefing for WO Review of Eastern Washington DRMP/DEIS. Oregon/Washington.**
  - Review kick-off briefing is anticipated to be held the week of August 14.
- **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument administrative draft MMP-A/DEIS. Utah.**
  - **AD Brief TBD.** Staff pre-brief was held 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.

- **Lewistown DRMP/DEIS.** Montana.
  - **TBD.**
  - **No issues.** 202,730 acres contain wilderness characteristics.
    - 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.
    - 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 GRS).
    - 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.**
  - **Update: Carlsbad FO is revisiting the alternatives.**
  - **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.
    - Prioritize other uses on 1,663 acres (4%) while not protecting wilderness characteristics.
    - 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.
    - 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.