



United States Department of the Interior
LAND MANAGEMENT

Bishop Field Office
351 Pacu Lane Suite 100
Bishop, California 93514
www.blm.gov/ca/bishop



April 23, 2013

1610/4000 (P)
CA 17.50

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Bishop Field Office has completed our environmental review concerning future domestic sheep use authorizations for the Dog Creek and Green Creek allotments in Mono County, California. Upon review and in compliance with the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 (FLPMA) as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as amended, the BLM has selected Alternative 4 (No Domestic Sheep Grazing/Crossing Permit Only) as the preferred alternative for future domestic sheep use authorizations on these allotments. As described in the attached environmental assessment (EA CA 170-09-0002) and associated finding of no significant impact (FONSI), closing the Dog Creek and Green Creek allotments to domestic sheep grazing as proposed in Alternative 4 does not conform to the applicable terms and conditions of the Bishop Resource Management Plan (RMP) as required by 43 CFR 1610.5-3(b). The current mandatory terms and conditions for these allotments as prescribed by the Bishop RMP identify livestock kind as sheep only.

Therefore, the BLM California State Director is proposing to amend the Bishop RMP to eliminate domestic sheep as the kind of livestock that may be authorized under the applicable mandatory terms and conditions for term grazing permits for both the Dog Creek and Green Creek allotments. The allotments will remain available for permitted livestock use under the Bishop RMP; however, any future term grazing permit application(s) would require the completion of an environmental analysis under the NEPA to determine the suitability of the allotments for the proposed grazing use.

The authorization of any future term grazing permits for the Dog Creek and Green Creek allotments, or closure of the allotments to domestic livestock grazing, would be at the discretion of the Bishop Field Manager and subject to the Bishop RMP, as amended by the Central California Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management, and this proposed RMP amendment. No new term grazing permit authorizations for either allotment will be issued as part of the State Director's decision specific to the proposed RMP amendment.

A 30-day protest period for this proposed amendment to the Bishop RMP begins on April 23, 2013 and ends on May 22, 2013. Pursuant to BLM planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this proposed RMP amendment and has

CARING FOR THE LAST VESTIGE OF WILD CALIFORNIA
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, PARTNERSHIPS

an interest that is or may be adversely affected by the proposed amendment may protest the proposed amendment during this 30-day period.

For further information on filing a protest, please see Attachment 1 which outlines the regulations that specify the required elements in a protest. Protesting parties should take care to document all relevant facts and, as much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g., meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). To aid in ensuring the completeness of the protest, a protest checklist is also attached (Attachment 2). All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail:

Director (210)
Attention: Brenda Hudgens-Williams
BLM Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 71383
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383

Overnight Mail or Other Delivery:

Director (210)
Attention: Brenda Hudgens-Williams
BLM Protest Coordinator
20 M Street, S.E., Room 2134LM
Washington, D.C. 20003

The EA and associated FONSI for this proposed amendment to the Bishop RMP are available on the BLM Bishop Field Office website under Planning News at: www.blm.gov/ca/bishop. If you require a hard copy of the EA and FONSI, or have questions about the proposed resource management plan amendment, please contact Jeff Starosta, Rangeland Management Specialist, at 760-872-5032 or via email at jstarost@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Bernadette Lovato
Bernadette Lovato
Bishop Field Manager

Enclosure(s):

Attachment 1 - Protest Regulations
Attachment 2 - Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist

Attachment 1 - Protest Regulations

[CITE: 43CFR 161 0.5-2]

**TITLE 43--PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR CHAPTER II--BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR PART
1600--PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING--Table of
Contents Subpart 1610--Resource Management Planning Sec. 1610.5-2
Protest procedures.**

- (a.) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.
- 1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.
 - 2) The protest shall contain:
 - i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;
 - ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
 - iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;
 - iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
 - v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.
 - 3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested.
- (b.) The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Attachment 2 - Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist

Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist

The following items *must* be included to constitute a valid protest whether using this optional format, or a narrative letter (43 CFR 1610.5-2).

The BLM's practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Resource Management Plan (RMP) or Amendment (RMPA) being protested:

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Your interest in filing this protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of this plan?):

Issue or issues being protested:

Statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested:

Attach copies of all documents addressing the issue(s) that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, OR an indication of the date the issue's were discussed for the record.

Date(s):

A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong: