

Appendix D

Planning Newsletters

Planning Update

South Coast Resource Management Plan Revision

Welcome

Welcome to the planning process for the South Coast Resource Management Plan Revision!

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and our cooperating agency partners are working together to develop a revised Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the South Coast Planning Area. This updated plan will guide management and stewardship of public lands in the coastal region of Southern California for many years to come.

Developing the new RMP offers the BLM and the Southern California community a unique opportunity to produce a comprehensive long-range plan to address current needs and guide us into the future.

Inside This Update

- Why we are revising the plan
- Public involvement
- Next steps in the process

Conserving Natural Diversity in the Wildland-Urban Interface

Southern California is a unique and diverse landscape with over 20 million people while also containing some of the most varied, sensitive, and rare ecosystems in North America. Many of these natural landscapes occur on the scattered parcels of public lands managed by the BLM in the South Coast Planning Area. Over 300 parcels of public land provide protection and refuge for plants and animals, open space for recreation and enjoyment, watersheds for community water supplies, and other resources needed by the millions of residents in the region.

The BLM is revising the South Coast RMP which provides guidance for the management of approximately 300,000 acres of BLM administered public lands in portions of five Southern California counties: San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange, and Los Angeles.

Since completion of the original South Coast RMP in 1994, new circumstances have prompted the need for a revision of the plan. These include continued population growth and urban development, the creation of multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plans in San Diego and Riverside Counties, designation of the Otay Mountain Wilderness, land acquisitions to support habitat conservation by the BLM and other agencies, and the changing needs and interests of the public.

Actions required under BLM policy and planning requirements include land use allocations and designations of areas requiring special management. Examples of these would be Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Recreation Management Areas, off highway vehicle (OHV) management areas, utility corridors, grazing allotments, wildlife management areas, and land disposal categories.

Public Participation and Scoping

The BLM held public scoping meetings to gather public comment on the proposed RMP revision in San Diego, Riverside, and Los Angeles Counties in 2007. A total of 75 people attended the meetings. The BLM received 53 comments by letter, fax, or e-mail. The majority of letters were from individuals. Comments were also received from the California Wilderness Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, the San Diego Off-Road Coalition, the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency, the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve, the City of Temecula, the San Bernardino Valley

Water Conservation District, and the Navy Region Southwest.

The issues most commented on were:

- **public access and recreation,**
- **controlling off road vehicles and target shooting,**
- **protecting habitat and open space,**
- **fire management,**
- **wilderness designation, and**
- **management for habitat protection and conservation.**

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office
PO Box 581260 – 690 West Garnet Ave.
North Palm Springs, California 92258

Next Steps in the Planning Process

The BLM has released a Scoping Report that summarizes the public comments received so far. This report is available on our website or from our office.

The BLM is currently developing alternatives based on the issues and comments identified in the public scoping process. Along with the alternatives for management of the public lands, the plan revision will include an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will analyze the impacts to the human environment from each of the alternatives.

A draft RMP/draft EIS will be released for public review and comment in early winter 2009. Public review workshops will provide the public an opportunity to become familiar with the plan and ask questions of BLM specialists regarding the plan. The draft RMP/EIS will be available for a formal 90-day public comment period. The BLM will use these comments to prepare the Proposed RMP/Final EIS (PRMP/FEIS). The PRMP/FEIS will be available for a 30-day protest period. After any protests are resolved, a Record of Decision (ROD) and Final Resource Management Plan will be published.

More Information

- Visit the BLM Palm Springs-South Coast website for updated information on the process:
www.blm.gov/ca/palmsprings
- Visit the BLM Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office
690 West Garnet Ave.
PO Box 581260
N. Palm Springs, CA 92258 (760) 251-4800 FAX (760) 251-4899
- Visit the BLM San Diego Project Office:
Located in Cleveland National Forest Supervisor's Office
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92127 (858) 451-1767 FAX (858) 676-9934