



The Grand Junction RMP Newsletter

Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement Available

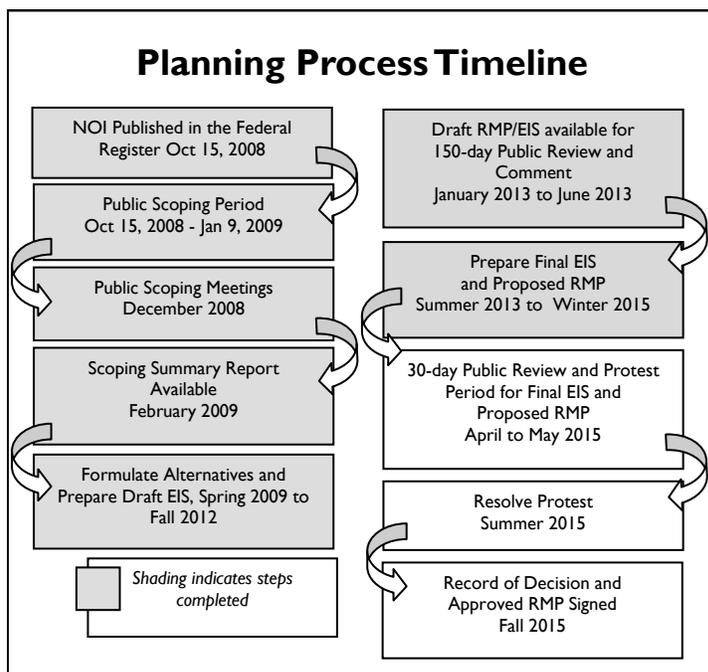
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) for a 30-day protest period and 60-day Governor's consistency review. The BLM expects to release a final decision later this year.

Proposed RMP

The BLM developed the Proposed RMP with close coordination from local and state government, regional interest groups and public input. It carries forward the same theme as the Preferred Alternative found in the Draft RMP/EIS, but also includes elements of the other four alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS. Key decisions in the proposed plan include managing five areas for specific recreation opportunities, including the Grand Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Special Recreation Management Area for cross-country riding and adventure. The RMP also identifies 10 areas where wildlife habitat will receive focused emphasis and priority, along with a 908,600-acre Shale Ridges and Canyons Master Leasing Plan with oil and gas restrictions ranging from limiting visual impacts to no surface disturbance and timing limitations to protect wildlife.

Greater and Gunnison Sage-Grouse

The BLM is also considering management of Greater and Gunnison Sage-Grouse in the Grand Junction planning area in two separate, concurrent plan amendment processes. In one amendment process, the BLM is preparing the NW Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse land use plan amendment and associated EIS, which includes a full analysis of all applicable Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation measures as directed by BLM Instruction Memorandum No, 2012-044. The BLM expects to issue a comprehensive set of management decisions for Greater Sage-Grouse in the Grand Junction district when it issues the final NW Colorado GRSG Amendment. In the other amendment process, the BLM is preparing a land use plan amendment and associated EIS for Gunnison Sage-Grouse. BLM Colorado will lead the effort to evaluate existing and potential measures for protecting occupied and potential Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical habitat on behalf of BLM Colorado and BLM Utah. Conservation measures from the Greater and Gunnison Sage-Grouse land use plan amendments will be incorporated into applicable BLM land use plans, including the new GJFO RMP.



Travel Management

The proposed plan also includes travel management decisions that provide public access to quality recreational opportunities and commercial use of public lands while protecting sensitive resources. The BLM will defer route-by-route decisions on the North Fruita Desert and DeBeque areas for further analysis and input from cooperators. More information on travel management and route designations, including maps, can be found on the RMP website at www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/rmp.html. Paper copies of all maps can also be reviewed at the Grand Junction Field Office.

How to Learn More

To learn more about the GJFO Proposed RMP and Final EIS, or to view a copy of the plan, visit www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/rmp.html or contact Christina Stark, RMP Project Manager, at (970) 244-3027 or cstark@blm.gov. To minimize printing costs, the BLM encourages you to review the document electronically. Paper copies will be available for review by April 10 at the Grand Junction Field Office.

How Does the Protest Process Work?

A protest is a filing to the BLM Director requesting a review to determine if the State Director followed established procedure, considered relevant information in reaching proposed decisions and whether the proposed decisions are consistent with BLM policy, regulation, and statute.

Any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed RMP has status to protest:

- Individuals or groups that provided written comments during scoping or during the draft
- Individuals or groups that attended RMP Open House meetings
- Individuals or groups that provided oral comments at hearings, meetings, or by phone call

Protests must be received within 30 days from the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. This deadline cannot be extended. A fact sheet with additional details and answers to common questions about the protest process is available on the RMP website at www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/rmp.html.

What Happens Next?

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be made available electronically on the BLM website. The BLM expects to issue the Approved RMP and ROD in Fall 2015.

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