

Fort Carson Public Meeting

August 2, 2011

Q&A

What is the public meeting on?

The U.S. Army applied for an extension on a current withdrawal for federal land and mineral estates in the Fort Carson and Piñon Canyon area for an additional 15 years. The Army's existing withdrawal is set to expire on September 22, 2011, unless extended. Their application is solely to continue their current withdrawal and is not a proposal for expanding any areas at the Fort Carson and Piñon Canyon military sites, nor does it propose changes to the land involved.

How many acres and what areas are involved?

The proposed withdrawal extension includes 5,650 acres of surface public lands and 141,554 acres of subsurface federal minerals within the Fort Carson and Piñon Canyon military sites to protect federal public lands and minerals from leasing and development. The application for extension does not seek additional lands beyond the existing withdrawal. Most of the surface estate has been acquired by the Department of the Army and most of the withdrawal is for mineral rights only. The public lands and minerals are in El Paso, Pueblo, Fremont, and Las Animas counties in Colorado.

What are the uses of the public land in this area?

The lands would continue to be used for military training and maneuvering, weapons firing and other defense-related purposes. A withdrawal protects the lands from being redirected for other uses, either public or private which include: mining, mineral leasing, geothermal leasing and mineral material sales.

What is the Army's role in this process?

The Army held three public meetings to discuss the Fort Carson and Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site Transformation in 2006. After the public meetings, the Army produced a Final Environmental Impact Statement and filed an application with the BLM to continue the withdrawal. The application is meant to demonstrate a continue need for the withdrawn lands and minerals.

Why is the BLM holding a public meeting?

The BLM is holding a public meeting in order to gain public input into the process. The meeting is also being held in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), which requires the BLM to hold a public meeting if the application to withdraw land exceeds 5,000 acres.

When will a final decision be issued?

The final decision will be made before September 22, 2011 when the existing extension is set to expire. The Secretary of the Interior makes the final decision on extending the withdrawal, not the BLM. The BLM's role is to provide the Secretary with a recommendation.

Will public comments be accepted?

The meeting includes an opportunity for written comments. Comments will be accepted before, during and after the meeting; however they must be received by September 6, 2011. Any comments made that don't directly apply to the withdrawal extension will not be considered.

How do I submit a public comment?

Written comments will be accepted only, verbal or online comments will not be accepted. Written comments made after the public meeting must be submitted to:

Bureau of Land Management
Colorado State Office (CO-923)
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80215

BLM

Colorado State Office

