

BLM News Release

For Immediate Release

Cass Cairns

BLM 719-269-8553

February 19, 2009

BLM selects third-party contractor to prepare Environmental Impact Statement for Over The River project

Cañon City, Colo. – BLM Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) has selected EDAW-AECOM as the third-party contractor to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Christo and Jeanne-Claude's proposed *Over The River* (OTR) project. BLM's selection was based on EDAW-AECOM's superior understanding of this unique public land use proposal, their organizational and technical approach to the EIS Statement of Work, and their company's diverse qualifications and applied BLM experience. EDAW-AECOM was one of four companies that submitted high quality bids for competitive review.

The third-party contract was signed by both the artists and EDAW-AECOM, which commits the contractor to a specific Statement of Work developed by BLM. Funding for the contract will be the responsibility of OTR. Approval and acceptance of the completed EIS will be the responsibility of BLM in consultation with cooperating agencies that include the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Colorado Highway Patrol and Chaffee and Fremont counties.

Preparation of an EIS is the next step in the process required under federal law to determine the possible impacts to the human and natural environment of the proposed project. This analysis allows the BLM to make an informed decision on the potential land use permit for this proposed project. The findings of the EIS are likely to be valued by cooperating agencies that will also have to authorize the project before any work takes place on the ground.

Public involvement is also key to an informed decision making process. Substantive issues and concerns were brought forward during a 45-day comment period for the Notice of Realty Action in December of last year and they will be considered during the preparation of the draft EIS.

The BLM encourages any public comments on issues and concerns at any time throughout this process. A final EIS is expected to be completed by April 2011. For further information about this process contact Joe Vieira at 719-852-6213 or visit the BLM OTR Web page at www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/rgfo/planning/over_the_river_proposal.html.

##

