

Additional Clarification

Programmatic Environmental Assessment SLVFO Outfitting and Guiding – Hunting DOI-BLM-CO-F03-2014-004 EA

Proposed Action Only Applies to BLM-Managed Lands

The proposed change in use for BLM permitted big game and mountain lion hunting outfitters only pertains to BLM lands within a GMU and does not imply or authorize in any way permitted use on any other land ownership than BLM.

Big Game and Mountain Lion Hunting Outfitters

This analysis only pertains to outfitters that hunt big game (pronghorn, deer, elk, moose, and bear) and mountain lion. Hunting for waterfowl, small game, sheep and goat, turkey, fishing, etc. are not included in this analysis, and will be analyzed separately when these activities are proposed by an applicant.

Outfitter Camps/Concentrated Use Areas

No authorization is included in this analysis for outfitter camps, staging areas, trail construction, or other forms of concentrated use on BLM lands. Currently, no existing BLM-permitted hunting outfitters are permitted or authorized for that type of use, nor has any similar use been proposed by any of our existing outfitters. Any proposal for such activities would require a separate analysis.

Capacity

Capacity is determined by whether or not Special Recreation Permit (SRP) program goals and objectives are being met, and not by the number of permits issued, or number of outfitters, or any other numerical criteria. One program goal is to ensure that appropriate amounts and types of outfitters, operating in a diversity of locations and providing an array of services, can adequately meet the needs of the public who desire those services. No additional permitted outfitters are needed if BLM is comfortable that those desired conditions are being met in a GMU. On the other hand, if those desired conditions were not being met, then BLM could consider new proposals for permitted use in the GMU.

BLM Discretion with Recreation Permits

In all levels of planning and management, BLM has tremendous latitude in how it chooses to exercise the Special Recreation Permit program. In addition to the policy quoted below, BLM issues an “Annual Operating Authorization” to permittees that can define unique requirements or restrictions of any type for each operating season.

“SRPs are issued at the discretion of the authorized officer who may, at any time and without prior notice, choose not to issue permits for certain activities or use areas. Such decisions could be based on a variety of factors such as planning decisions, potential resource impacts, existing outfitters in the same area, overcrowding, past poor performance, climatic conditions and others.”