

RECORD OF DECISION

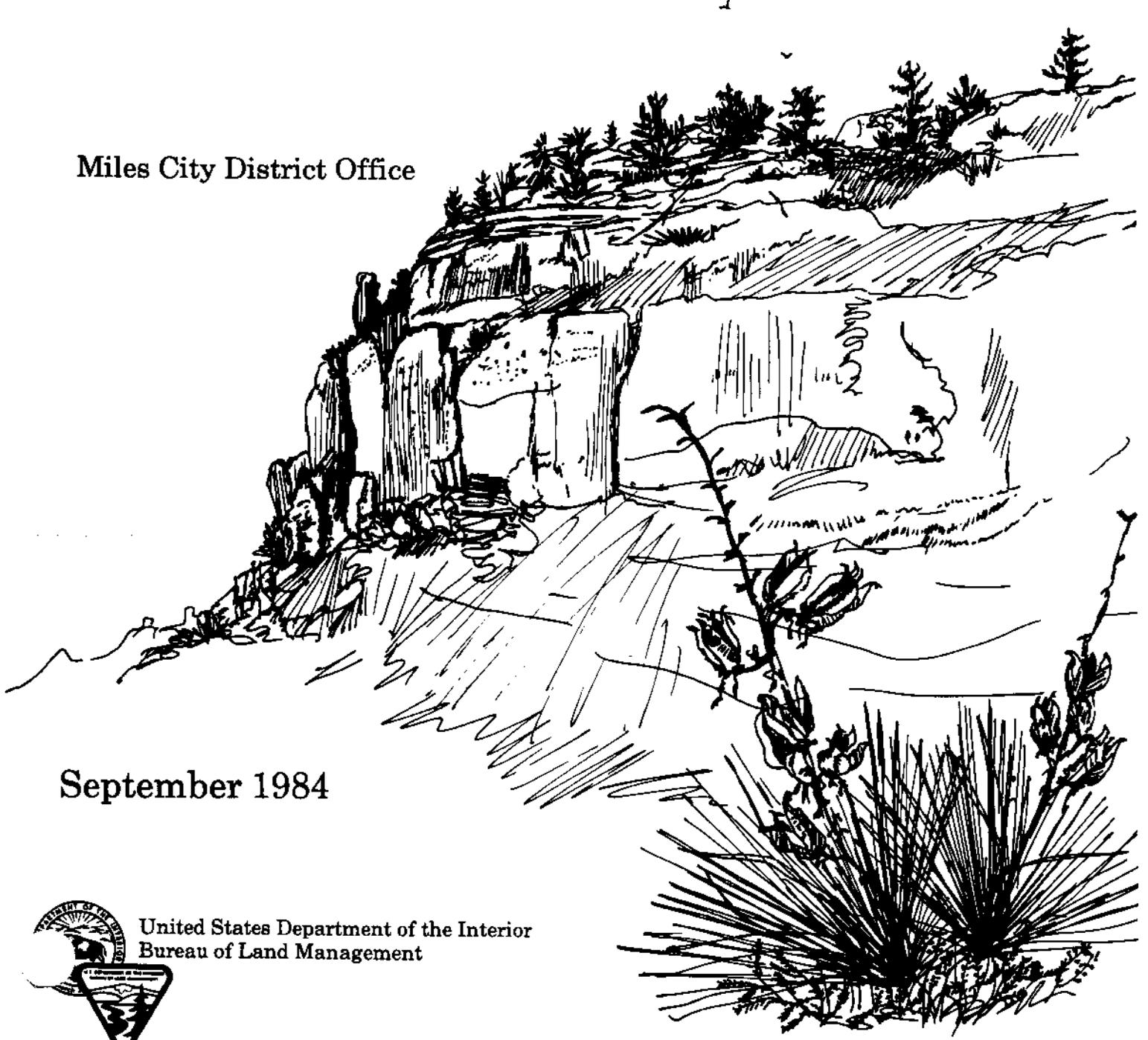
for the
Billings Resource Management Plan
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Miles City District Office

September 1984



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



BLM-MT-PT-84-022-4340

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

RECORD OF DECISION
for the
Billings Resource Management Plan
Final Environmental Impact statement

SEPTEMBER 1984

Prepared By
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Miles City District Office
Miles City, Montana



Edwin Zaldiez
State Director

**RECORD OF DECISION
BILLINGS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
BILLINGS RESOURCE AREA
BILLINGS, MONTANA**

This document identifies the decisions reached by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for managing 431,676 surface acres of public land and 906,084 acres of mineral ownership in the Billings Resource Area. Major decisions are presented in Chapter Two of this document.

Special Note

In May, 1983, the administrative responsibility for public land in Carbon, Big Horn, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweetgrass, Wheatland and Yellowstone Counties, Montana and 6,340 acres in Big Horn County, Wyoming, within the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range was transferred from the Lewistown District Office to the Miles City District Office. This action will not affect this resource management plan in any manner.

Public Availability of this Document

This Record of Decision has been sent to all recipients of the final Billings Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. Additional copies are available upon request at the Bureau of Land Management Billings Resource Area Office, 810 East Main, Billings, Montana, 59105; telephone (406) 657-6262. Copies may also be obtained from the BLM, Montana State Office, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana, 59107; telephone (406) 657-6561 and the BLM Miles City District Office, P.O. Box 940, Miles City, Montana, 59301; telephone (406) 232-4331.

Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed

In the Grazing Management issue, the no grazing alternative was considered and analyzed during the scoping phase of developing the resource management plan (RMP). This alternative was felt to be neither feasible nor legally implementable and was not further analyzed in that document. The scattered nature of the public land pattern in the Billings Resource Area and the cost of fencing public lands precluded implementing a no grazing alternative on an economically feasible basis. In addition, current range conditions did not warrant total removal of livestock, and in fact, such a policy would have degraded the ecological range conditions. This does not preclude elimination of grazing by livestock on an individual allotment basis if range conditions warrant such eliminations or other uses warrant priority.

Alternatives Analyzed

Four land use alternatives were analyzed to provide readers and decision-makers with a means of examining alternative actions and resulting impacts, using a combination of proposals. The four alternatives described in the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) were: BLM's Proposed Land Use Plan Alternative; the Continuation of Existing Management Alternative; the Low Level Management Alternative; and the High Level Management Alternative.

Decision

The decision is hereby made to approve the Proposed Land Use Plan Alternative described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), as the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Billings Resource Area.


Montana State Director
Bureau of Land Management
September 28, 1984