

## HiLine District Planning Criteria

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require planning criteria to guide preparation of the RMP. Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that guide and direct the preparation of the plan. They ensure the plan is tailored to the identified issues and that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. The following criteria were developed based on applicable laws and regulations, agency guidance, and the result of public comment.

- The RMP will address public lands and federal minerals managed by the BLM. Decisions will not be made in the RMP relative to the management of lands not managed by BLM.
- The RMP will be in compliance with FLPMA and all other applicable laws, regulations and policies. Management is based on the principles of multiple use within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology.
- Impacts from the management alternatives considered in the RMP will be analyzed in an EIS developed in accordance with regulations at 43 CFR 1610 and 40 CFR 1500.
- Broad-based public participation will be an integral part of the planning and EIS process.
- Decisions in the plan will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state and federal agencies as long as the decisions are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal law, and regulations applicable to public lands.
- The RMP will recognize the State of Montana's responsibility and authority to manage wildlife. The BLM will consult with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks as necessary. The RMP will incorporate statewide or regionwide planning efforts for wildlife to the fullest extent possible.
- The National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy (BLM 2004) requires that impacts to sagebrush habitat and sagebrush-dependent wildlife species (including greater sage-grouse) be analyzed and considered in BLM land use planning efforts for the public lands with sage-grouse/sagebrush habitats.
- The RMP will recognize valid existing rights.
- The RMP will incorporate management decisions brought forward from existing planning documents.
- Based on the assumptions of adequate funding, this plan will be periodically reviewed and would be amended if necessary. Plans would be evaluated every 5 years per 43 CFR 1610.4-9. Information gathered from the 5-year evaluation would be used to determine planning needs and priorities for plan revisions and/or amendments.

- The planning team will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the State of Montana, tribal governments, county and municipal governments, other federal agencies, the Central Montana Resource Advisory Council (RAC), and all other interested groups, agencies and individuals.
- The planning process will provide strategies for the protection of recognized traditional and cultural uses.
- The BLM and cooperating agencies/governments will jointly develop alternatives for resolution of resource management issues that are within the authority of the BLM.
- The planning process will incorporate Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management developed in accordance with regulations in 43 CFR Subpart 4180 and approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
- The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will be invited to participate throughout the planning process as per the State Protocol developed between the BLM and the Montana SHPO.
- Areas with special environmental qualities will be protected and, if necessary, designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), Wild and Scenic Rivers, or other appropriate designations.
- The RMP will emphasize the protection and enhancement of the planning area's biodiversity while, at the same time, providing the public with opportunities for compatible activities on public lands.
- The RMP will recognize local, statewide and national concerns and lifestyles.
- Lands acquired by the BLM will be managed in the manner the RMP prescribes for adjacent public land, subject to any constraints associated with the acquisition.
- The RMP will provide management direction for lands returned to BLM management through revocation of withdrawals. The plan will also address lands acquired through other means.
- Forest management strategies will be consistent with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the Tribal Forest Protection Act where appropriate.
- Fire Management strategies will be consistent with the Federal Wildland Fire Policy, National Fire Plan, Fire/Fuels Management Plan for Montana and Dakotas, Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide with BLM supplemental guidance, Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Redbook), and other BLM handbooks.

- GIS and metadata information will meet Federal Geographic Data Committee standards, as required by Executive Order 12906, signed April 11, 1994. Other applicable BLM data standards will be followed. The goal is to develop an RMP with spatial and temporal data that can be easily accessed for use in subsequent environmental review. At times, GIS analysis may result in acres that are different than other published data sources for BLM lands and minerals.
- All proposed management actions will be based upon best available scientific information, research and technology, as well as existing inventory and monitoring information.