

# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Miles City Field Office  
111 Garryowen Road  
Miles City, Montana 59301-0940  
<http://www.mt.blm.gov/mcfo/>



June 2015

Dear Reader:

Enclosed is the *Miles City Field Office Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS)*. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared the PRMP/FEIS in consultation with cooperating agencies, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. The PRMP/FEIS provides a framework for future management direction and appropriate use of the Miles City Field Office area, located in the following eastern Montana counties: Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, McCone, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Treasure, Wibaux and portions of Big Horn and Valley. The document contains both land use planning and implementation decisions to guide the BLM's management of the BLM Miles City Field Office.

The PRMP/FEIS is 1 of 15 sub-regional planning efforts being conducted as part of the BLM's National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy. The PRMP/FEIS identifies conservation measures to conserve, enhance and/or restore Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) habitat in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) March 2010 "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act listing petition. The USFWS found that the inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms was a significant threat to GRSG in their finding on the petition to list the GRSG. RMP conservation measures were identified as the BLM's principal regulatory mechanism.

The PRMP/FEIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. The PRMP/FEIS is largely based on Alternative E, the preferred alternative in the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft RMP/EIS), which was released on March 8, 2013. The PRMP/FEIS contains the Proposed Plan (Alternative E), a summary of changes made between the Draft RMP/EIS and PRMP/FEIS, impacts of the Proposed Plan, a summary of the substantive written and verbal comments received during the public review period for the Draft RMP/EIS, and responses to the comments.

Pursuant to BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this PRMP/FEIS and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decisions within 30 days from date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability of the PRMP/FEIS in the Federal Register. For further information on filing a protest, please see the accompanying protest regulations in the pages that follow (Attachment # 1). The regulations specify the required elements of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g. meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.)

**Emailed protests will not be accepted as valid protests** unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular mail or overnight delivery postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, the BLM will consider the emailed protest as an advance copy and will afford it full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, please direct emailed protests to: protest@blm.gov.

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail:

Director (210)  
Attn: Protest Coordinator  
P.O. Box 71383  
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383

Overnight Delivery:

Director (210)  
Attn: Protest Coordinator  
20 M Street SE, Room 2134LM  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior on each protest. Responses to protest issues will be compiled and formalized in a Director's Protest Resolution Report made available following issuance of the decisions.

Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be mailed or made available electronically to all who participated in the planning process and will be available on the BLM website [http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/miles\\_city\\_field\\_office/rmp.html](http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/miles_city_field_office/rmp.html).

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions included in the PRMP/FEIS are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process, through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals pursuant to 43 CFR, Part 4 Subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations. The Approved RMP and ROD will identify the implementation decisions made in the plan that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals.

Sincerely,



Todd D. Yeager  
Field Manager

**Protest Regulations**

[CITE: 43CFR1610.5-2]

TITLE 43--PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR  
CHAPTER II--BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PART 1600--PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING--Table of Contents  
Subpart 1610--Resource Management Planning  
Sec. 1610.5-2 Protest procedures

- (a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.
- (1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.
- (2) The protest shall contain:
- (i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;
  - (ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
  - (iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;
  - (iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
  - (v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.
- (3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest.
- (b) The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

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