



US Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
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The Battle Mountain RMP Newsletter

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Battle Mountain District Office (BMD) is preparing a comprehensive Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to guide management of BLM administered land (surface lands and federal minerals) within the BMD. The RMP/EIS, which will replace the existing 1997 Tonopah RMP and 1986 Shoshone-Eureka RMP, will be a dynamic and flexible plan that updates management to reflect the changed needs of the planning area. For more background, see Issue 1 of this newsletter from December 2010 and Issue 2 from August 2011.

Scoping and Background Studies Completed

The official scoping period began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on December 13, 2010, and continued for 60 days through February 11, 2011. A scoping summary report was completed in July 2011 and is now publicly available on the RMP website. Additional background studies that have been completed and posted to the BMD RMP website include:

- Mineral Assessment report, completed/posted 10/24/2011
- Socioeconomic report, completed/posted 11/2011
- Air Quality Assessment, completed 1/2012
- Leasing Stipulation review, completed 2/2012
- Wild and Scenic River Report, completed on 3/2012
- Visual Resource Inventory, completed/posted in 4/2012
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Report, completed/posted in 11/2012 (28 areas evaluated, 13 meet relevance and importance criteria)
- Reasonably Foreseeable Development for Solar and Wind completed/posted in 4/2013.

Cooperating Agencies

The following agencies have signed a memorandum of understanding to become cooperating agencies (CAs): Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander, and Nye Counties, United States Forest Service (Humboldt-Toiyabe), National Park Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nellis Air Force Base, Duckwater-Shoshone Tribe, Timbisha-Shoshone Tribe, and

Yomba-Shoshone Tribe.

Background Studies Currently Underway

Several additional background studies on specific topics for resources and land uses in the BMD are currently underway. These studies will help provide the basis for the Affected Environment section of the RMP/EIS, which will describe the current conditions of these resources and uses. The studies currently in progress cover ethnography (draft report completed 4/2012), cultural resources (draft report completed 4/2012), and a review of areas with wilderness characteristics.

Next Steps

The next steps for the RMP/EIS are the Alternatives Development process, the preparation of the Affected Environment section, and impact analysis. The BLM has identified themes for three action alternatives to address the issues identified by BLM staff, from public comment, and through tribal consultation and coordination with cooperating agencies. The three themes (outside of current management) are resource use, resource conservation, and a balance of conservation and resource use. The three action alternatives developed based on these themes will offer a range of possible management approaches for responding to the BLM's multiple-use management mandate and planning issues and to resolve user conflicts. While the goals will be the same across alternatives, each alternative will contain a discrete set of objectives and management actions. Resource program goals will be met in varying degrees across the alternatives, with the potential for different long-range outcomes and conditions. Each alternative will contain a full suite of management goals, objectives, and management actions that would comprise the management direction for each of the resources and land uses. During Alternatives Development and once the background studies are completed, the Affected Environment section of the EIS will be developed. Once the Alternatives Development process is complete, the BLM will conduct impact analysis. The impact analysis will provide an estimation of how management under each alternative would affect the resources and uses that the BLM manages within the BMD.

How Can You Participate?

The BLM will provide the CAs the opportunity to review and comment on the Alternative Matrix once it has been finalized which is anticipated to be completed in May 2013. Subsequently, follow-up meetings/conference calls may be scheduled with CAs to discuss the alternatives and other components of the RMP/EIS that relate to the CAs recognized area of special expertise. An important milestone for CA involvement will be during the review period of the Preliminary RMP/Draft EIS, which is anticipated to be available for CA review in the summer of 2013. The 90-day public review and comment period for the Draft RMP/EIS is expected to occur during the fall of 2013 (see project schedule). Stay up to date on the project status by visiting the RMP website at: http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field/blm_information/rmp.html. The website will be updated with information, documents, and announcements throughout the RMP preparation. If you know someone who would like to be added to the project mailing list or e-mail list, let us know by sending an

email to BattleMountainRMP@blm.gov or contacting Christopher Worthington at (775) 635-4000.



The scoping meeting held at the Eureka Opera House, pictured above, was one of 8 scoping meetings held from January 20th through February 3rd of 2011. Collectively, the meetings drew an attendance of 117 members of the public, agencies and other organizations.

December 2010	Winter 2011	Spring 2011 - Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Winter 2013-2014	Fall-Winter 2014	Winter 2015
NOI Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Public Scoping	Complete Studies and Develop Alternatives	Prepare Preliminary RMP/ Draft EIS	Preliminary RMP/ Draft EIS Available for 90-day Public Review & Comment	Proposed RMP/ Final EIS Available for 30-day Public Review & Protest	Record of Decision & Approved RMP

How to contact us

If you have questions about the RMP, please contact:

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**BLM Battle Mountain District Office
 RMP/EIS Newsletter**

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