

The BLM Battle Mountain District Office (BMDO) is revising the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the BMDO planning area. The BMDO RMP will provide detailed information about the current state of resources on public lands within the planning area, and set forth a plan of action for managing those resources for the next twenty or so years under the BLM's dual mandate of *multiple use* and *sustained yield*.

Soils Resources

The extreme combinations of climate, relief, aspect and geologic type combine for a wide variety of soil types throughout the Battle Mountain District. The variation in soil is a result of differing parent materials, position on the landscape (landform), elevation, slope, aspect and vegetation. Soils range from those on the valley floors that are frequently deep, poorly drained and alkaline to shallow mountain soils which formed over bedrock and have pH levels near neutral. Of the ten soil orders, the most common within the BMD are Aridisols, Mollisols, and Entisols.

Order 3 soil surveys have been completed for the BMD. The information obtained from these surveys is used for evaluating management decisions, land-use potential and potential natural plant communities.

The soils in the valleys are mainly mineral soils of two types: those which do not have water continuously available for three months when the soil is warm enough for plant growth (Aridisols); and soils showing little evidence of the soil forming process, the development of horizons or layers (Entisols).

In the mountains there are Aridisols and Entisols and some deeper mineral soils with grass cover and a brown surface horizon (Mollisols). Generally Entisols occur on steep

mountain slopes where erosion is active. They also occur on flood plains and alluvial fans where new material is deposited. Aridisols and Mollisols are older and occur on more stable alluvial fans, and terraces.

The Importance of Soil

Soils are an important natural resource because they influence various aspects of rangeland health and functionality. One of the more apparent attributes influenced by soils is vegetative communities. The type and productivity of a vegetative community greatly depends upon the soils in which they grow.

Properly functioning vegetative communities are essential to minimize wind and water erosion. Minimizing erosion helps retain important nutrient rich soil required for vegetation to grow, reduce sedimentation into streams and springs and maintain the habitat of terrestrial and aquatic species.

BLM wants your input...

1. What solutions or treatments are needed to reduce erosion and stabilize soils?
2. How will soils be managed to protect biological crusts?
3. What actions should BLM authorize to protect and stabilize soils?



Vegetation and Healthy Rangelands

Healthy rangelands provide forage for herbivores, habitat for wildlife, reduced erosion, streams and springs protection from sedimentation, enhanced recreational opportunities and resilience to human and natural disturbance.

To promote healthy rangelands, the Department of Interior organized Resource Advisory Councils (RAC) throughout the State of Nevada to develop Standards and Guidelines. Two RACs occur within the Battle Mountain District, the Northeastern Great Basin and the Mojave-Southern Great Basin.

These councils developed standards and guidelines to ensure the BLM adheres to mandates requiring multiple use management. The following is a list of the Standards by RAC.

Northeastern Great Basin Area RAC

1. Upland Sites
2. Riparian and Wetland Sites
3. Habitat
4. Cultural Resources
5. Healthy Wild Horse and Burro Populations

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area RAC

1. Soils
2. Ecosystem Components
3. Habitat and Biota
4. Wild Horses and Burros

If you would like more information on the RAC Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs), please go to

http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/res/resource_advisory.html

Furthermore, the Northeastern Great Basin Area Resource Advisory Council developed "Vegetation Guidelines" to supplement the S&Gs. These guidelines provide direction for the management of non-indigenous annual grasslands, salt-desert shrublands, sagebrush/bunchgrass rangelands,

noxious weeds, Pinyon-Juniper woodlands and rehabilitation/revegetation strategies.

Vegetative Communities

There are eleven basic vegetative communities within the Battle Mountain District.

1. Greasewood
2. Salt Desert Shrub
3. Big Sagebrush
4. Black Sagebrush
5. Low Sagebrush
6. Mountain Brush
7. Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands
8. Riparian
9. Annuals
10. Hot Desert
11. High Mountain Alpine

The BLM would like your input...

1. Should annual or ephemeral vegetation areas be designated and how would they be managed?
2. How should forage be allocated for multiple use between wildlife, livestock, wild horses and burros?
3. What criteria should be used to determine if the allocation of forage to wild horses, wild burros, livestock or wildlife should be increased or decreased?
4. Under what conditions, if any, should non-native plants be used in place of native plants for restoration activities?
5. What criteria should be used to develop Desired Plant Communities?

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BMDO Planning Webpage:

www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field/blm_information/rmp.com

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