

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This document was prepared in consultation and coordination with interested public individuals and organizations, Federal and State of Wyoming agencies, and local municipal and county governments. Involvement and input from all of these entities is a vital component of the Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) process and Environmental Assessment (EA) preparation.

Public involvement for the Fortification Creek RMPA/EA was conducted in two phases:

- Public scoping; and
- Public review and comment on the Draft RMPA/EA.

A summary of the public scoping process is available in Chapter 1 and is not reproduced here. This chapter summarizes and responds to public comments submitted on the Draft RMPA/EA as well as information on the extended Cooperating Agency consultation process.

5.1 AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT RMPA/EA

The BLM released the Draft Fortification Creek RMPA/EA on September 17, 2010. The Draft RMPA/EA was made available for public comment for 60 calendar days. The comment period started on September 17, 2010 and ended on November 19, 2010. Three informational public meetings were held in the vicinity of the FCPA. These informational meetings were announced on the project website and in local papers and were held in the communities of Gillette, Buffalo, and Sheridan, Wyoming October 19, 20, and 21 of 2010, respectively. Major points for the Draft RMPA/EA were presented at these meetings and questions regarding the planning process and the FCPA were answered by BLM representatives.

5.2 Public Comment Collection and Analysis

Only written comments on the Draft RMPA/EA were accepted. No verbal comments were accepted at the informational meetings, although BLM provided attendees the opportunity to clarify their understanding of the planning process and the project area. Attendees were also provided with information on how to submit written comments to the BLM.

The majority of comments were submitted electronically. Hard copy comments that were received by the BLM BFO were converted to an electronic format and entered into the comment database. Comments from the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC) were delivered to BLM in spreadsheet format. Names, addresses, and comments were imported into word processing and PDF formats for entry into the comment database.

A total of 22,571 comment submissions were received by BLM at the close of the extended public comment period on midnight, November 19, 2010. The large majority of these submissions were received via e-mail. Less than 1 percent of the comment submissions were received via the U.S. Postal Service as hard copy letters.

The number of comment letters by interest group are summarized in Table 5-1.

| Interest Group | Number of Comments |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Individuals | 22,553 |
| Federal Government Agencies | 2 |
| State Government Agencies | 1 |
| County and Local Government Agencies | 0 |
| Civic Groups | 1 |
| Non-governmental Organizations | 7 |
| Other | 3 |

All substantive comments were entered into a comment database. Comments were assigned to an issue category. BLM responded to all substantive comments. All comment submissions are available for public review at the BLM BFO and are registered into the project Administrative Record (AR).

Comment submissions are summarized by type of comment in Table 5-2. Because the form letters covered a number of topics (ACECs, EIS, elk, overhead power lines, steep slopes, and WSA) they are counted in Protection of Fortification Creek.

| Issue | Number of Comments |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| ACECs | 34 |
| Air Quality | 5 |
| Alternatives | 176 |
| CBNG | 1 |
| Complete EIS | 17 |
| Cultural Resources | 1 |
| Cumulative Impacts | 5 |
| Editorial | 5 |
| Elk | 120 |
| Endorses Development | 80 |
| Energy and Minerals | 7 |
| Geology | 1 |
| Land Owner Rights | 8 |

| Table 5-2 Public Comment Issues | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Issue | Number of Comments |
| Land Use | 10 |
| Mitigation | 7 |
| NEPA | 4 |
| Noise | 1 |
| Overhead Power Lines and VRM | 26 |
| Phased Drilling | 31 |
| Protection of Fortification Creek | 22,288 |
| Purpose and Need | 5 |
| Reclamation | 65 |
| Recreation | 1 |
| Regulatory Process/Public Involvement | 3 |
| Socioeconomics | 19 |
| Steep Slopes | 40 |
| Transportation | 6 |
| Water | 29 |
| Wildlife | 31 |
| WSA | 22 |

Concerns included how the phased approach would work, protection of the elk herd, and socioeconomic impacts. Restricting or eliminating hunting of the FCPA elk herd was suggested during the comment period. However, this was not analyzed in this RMPA/EA.

5.3 Other Outreach and Consultation

Following closure of the public comment period, BLM met with several interested parties including landowners, development companies, and NGOs. These groups had attended the public meetings and had provided written comments on the FCPA Draft RMPA/EA during the comment period.

List of Preparers

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>BLM Buffalo Field Office Manager</p> <p>Duane Spencer BLM Buffalo Field Office 1425 Fort Street Buffalo, Wyoming 82834</p> <p>BLM Project Manager:</p> <p>Thomas Bills BLM Buffalo Field Office 1425 Fort Street Buffalo, Wyoming 82834</p> | <p>Primary Contractor to BLM:</p> <p>Ecology and Environment, Inc. (E & E) 4888 Pearl East Circle Boulder, CO 80301</p> <p>Technical Subcontractors to E & E</p> <p>Cultural Resource Associates, Inc. – Cultural Resources</p> |
|--|---|

The following BLM staff and individuals from Cooperating Agencies contributed to this document:

| Name | Resource | Affiliation |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Diane Adams | Visual Resources | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Julianne Alley | Range | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Allison Barnes | Visual Resources, Recreation, Transportation, Special Designations | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Thomas Bills | BFO Project Manager | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Paul Christian | GIS | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Buck Damone | Archaeology/Paleontology | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Amber Haverlock | Lands and Realty | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Steve Hannan | Fire and Vegetation | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Arnie Irwin | Soils | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Mike McKinley | Hydrology | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Ken Peacock | State Planner/Contracting Officer's Representative | BLM Wyoming State Office |
| Duane Spencer | Field Office Manager | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Jim Verplancke | Wildlife and Surface Use | BLM Buffalo Field Office |
| Lynne Boomgaarden | State Lands | WY Office of State Lands and Investments |
| John Emmerich | Wildlife | Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WDGF) |
| Scott Gamo | Wildlife | WGFD |
| Lynn Jahnke | Wildlife | WGFD |

| Name | Resource | Affiliation |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Heather O'Brien | Wildlife | WGFD |
| Bud Stewart | Wildlife | WGFD |
| Dave Finley | Air | WY Department of Environmental Quality |
| Leah Kraft | Hydrologist | WY Department of Environmental Quality |
| Ryan Lance | State Liaison | WY Governor's Office |
| Terry Cram | Sheridan County | Sheridan County Commissioners |
| Gerald Fink | Johnson County | Johnson County Commissioners |
| Smokey Wildeman | Johnson County | Johnson County Commissioners |
| Randolph J. Moses, M.S. | Paleontology | South Dakota School of Mines and Technology |

The following Ecology and Environment, Inc. individuals contributed to this document:

| Name | Discipline | Qualifications and Experience | Area of Participation |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Melody Bourret | Biology | M.S., 9 years | Vegetation and Document Control |
| Barbara Critchlow | Editing | B.A., 39 years | Technical Editor |
| Tom Dildine | Landscape Architecture | M.S., 20 years | Visual Resources |
| Carolyn Dunmire | Natural Resource Economics and Planning | M.S., 20 years | Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice |
| Phil Evans | GIS | M.S., 3 years | GIS |
| Alana Gay | Biology | B.A., 1 year | Document Control Administrative Record |
| Cary Hudson | Environmental and Petroleum Engineering | M.S., 19 years | Fluid Minerals |
| Ashley LaForge | Soil and Water Resources | B.A., 11 years | Soil |
| Howard Levine | Planner | MPS, 29 years | E & E Project Manager, Lands and Realty |
| Erin Lynch | Hydrogeologist | M.S., 22 years | Water Resources |
| Kevin Magner | Graphic Design | BFA, 22 years | Graphics |
| Carron Meaney | Wildlife Ecology | Ph.D., 31 years | Wildlife and Special Status Species |
| Maureen O'Shea-Stone | Plant Ecology | M.A., 22 years | Rangeland, Vegetation, Special Status Species, Noxious Weeds |
| Jen Perry | GIS | B.S., 2 years | GIS |

| Name | Discipline | Qualifications and Experience | Area of Participation |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Jay Rauschenbach | GIS | B.S. | GIS |
| William Richards | Environmental Management | B.S., 23 years | Transportation/Recreation |
| Chrissy Ringo | Editing | B.A., 12 years | Technical Editing |
| Jim Robb | GIS | B.A., 27 years | GIS |
| Richard Rudy | Geology | M.A., P.G., C.P.G., 28 years | Principal in Charge |
| Susan Serreze | Geology | M.A., 23 years | Geology and Paleontology Resources, Administrative Record |
| Scott Severs | Wildlife | B.S., 20 years | Wildlife and Special Status Species |
| Paul Smith | Soil and Water Resources | B.S., 25 years | Soil and Water Resources |
| Joe Tessitore, P.E. | Air Quality | M.S., 49 years | Climate and Air Quality |
| Danielle Thomas | Graphic Design | A.A.S., 6 years | Graphics |
| E & E Technical Subcontractors | | | |
| Ted Hoefer III Cultural Resource Associates | Archaeology and Historic Preservation | M.A., 25 years | Cultural Resources |