



Buffalo Resource Management Plan Revision



Where are we now?



Shading indicates steps completed

Dear Neighbor,

Welcome to the second Buffalo Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision newsletter. Thank you to all who participated in the Buffalo RMP scoping process and helped make it a great success. We received almost 200 comment documents from the public which have helped us identify important issues that should be addressed during the revision process.

The RMP scoping process began when the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Buffalo Field Office issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on November 14, 2008 to revise the Buffalo RMP and prepare an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The NOI also initiated a 53-day scoping period during which time the BLM solicited comments from members of the public, governmental agencies, and other interested parties. The reverse side of this newsletter provides a brief summary of the scoping process and the comments received during the scoping period.

What's next?

The BLM is currently preparing a Summary of the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) which summarizes the current management situation, identifies affected resources, and assesses the condition of resources in the planning area. The Summary of the AMS will be available for review on the RMP website around March 27, 2009. The Summary of the AMS, along with the issues identified in scoping, help the BLM formulate resource management alternatives for the RMP.

During the "alternative formulation" process the BLM will use your comments, the planning issues, and planning constraints identified to date to formulate a reasonable range of management alternatives for evaluation in the EIS. Management alternatives represent a complete and reasonable plan for managing the Buffalo planning area. To facilitate the development of these alternatives the Buffalo Field Office will be holding a series of workshops this summer to be attended by BLM specialists and local, state, and federal cooperating agencies.

March 2009

During the scoping process, the BLM initiated contact with numerous local, state, and federal agencies and offered them the opportunity to become cooperating agencies in the RMP revision process. Cooperating agencies are invited to participate in the planning process because they either have jurisdiction by law or could offer special expertise on economic, social, and local interest and values. The following agencies have committed to being cooperating agencies in the Buffalo RMP revision process:

Campbell, Crook, Johnson, and Sheridan County Commissioners; Campbell County, Lake DeSmet, and Powder River Conservation Districts; the State of Wyoming; the Office of Surface Mining, the Environmental Protection Agency, Thunder Basin Grasslands; and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. These agencies will work with the BLM Interdisciplinary Team during a series of workshops this summer to develop a reasonable range of alternatives.

Following the development of alternatives, we will conduct an in-depth analysis of each alternative to determine the impacts on the environment and planning area management situation. This analysis, referred to as the "effects analysis," will be incorporated into a Draft EIS, which is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2010. There will be a 90-day review and public comment period in the fall/winter of 2010/2011, during which you will have an opportunity to submit your comments on the Draft EIS. A Final EIS will be published in the winter of 2011/2012, which will take your comments into consideration.

Again, thank you for your participation and comments. I invite you to remain involved throughout the RMP revision process.

Sincerely,

Duane Spencer
Bureau of Land Management
Buffalo Field Office Manager

How can I get involved?

Now that the scoping period is complete, we will soon be moving on to alternatives formulation. Although the official scoping period is closed, we invite you to continue to submit comments and provide input. We will do our best to consider your comments and input during the next steps of the process. The RMP revision website, <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/buffalo.html>, will be updated with information, documents, and announcements. We encourage you to submit your additional input electronically via email.

For More Information Contact:

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RMP Revision Website: <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/buffalo.html>
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Purpose of The Scoping Process

Public involvement is an integral part of the Buffalo RMP revision. The public scoping process was designed to collect input from the public, local, state, and federal agencies, and other interested parties on issues of concern that should be addressed in the RMP. Issues identified during the scoping process will be used to help formulate management alternatives for the RMP.



Planning Issues

One of the purposes of the scoping process is to identify major planning issues that need to be addressed in the RMP. To that end, the BLM analyzed the scoping comments and identified the key planning issues. The table below displays the major issue categories identified during scoping and the number of comments received pertaining to each category. A more in-depth analysis of the scoping comments and a list of the key planning issues identified during scoping is available in the Final Scoping Report posted on the BLM website on March 18, 2009.

Planning Issue Category	Number of Individual Comments
Air Quality and Climate Change	43
Water Quality and Wetlands/Riparian Areas	52
Mineral and Energy Resources	143
Biological Resources: Vegetation, Fish, Wildlife, and Special Status Species	156
Invasive Species and Pest Management	13
Cultural and Paleontological Resources and Tribal Concerns	22
Lands and Realty and Rights-of-Way	42
Transportation and Access	69
Recreation	21
Livestock Grazing	43
Special Designations	82
Socioeconomic Resources	24
Total	710

Scoping Comments

The Buffalo scoping period began on November 14, 2008 and closed on January 5, 2009. During this time the BLM issued a news release describing the public scoping period and the time, date, and location of the public scoping meetings. The BLM hosted five scoping meetings across the planning area to give the public an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the RMP revision process. Approximately 129 people attended the scoping meetings held in Wright, Buffalo, Gillette, Sheridan, and Kaycee in December 2008.

At the close of the scoping period the BLM had received a total of 196 scoping comment documents, of which 101 were identical form letters. There was a wide range of commenters including individuals, businesses, private organizations, conservation districts, and local, state, and federal agencies. Most comment documents included multiple comments, and the BLM identified 710 individual comments from the 95 unique comment documents.

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