

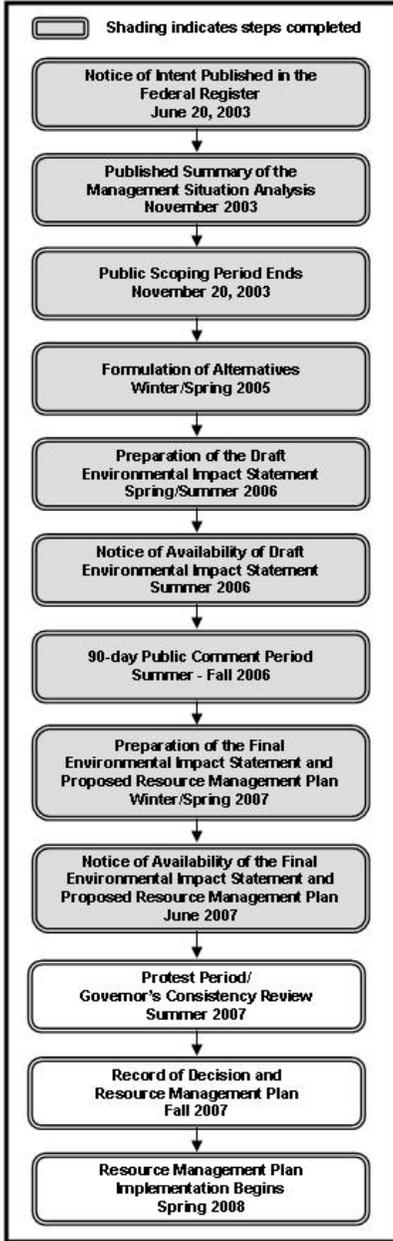


# Casper Resource Management Plan Revision Newsletter

2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604-2968  
(307) 261-7600 www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/

May 2007

Where do we go from here?



## Letter from the Field Manager

Dear Friends,

This is the fourth newsletter in a series designed to provide you with information on what is happening in the Casper Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision process.

The Proposed RMP and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be available mid June 2007, starting the 30-day protest period. Members of the public with standing have the opportunity to protest the content of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS during the specified 30-day protest period. The 60-day Governor's consistency review starts the end of May 2007.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is also providing an additional 60-day review and comment period on supplemental information regarding proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) that were considered in the Draft RMP and EIS, but only partially described in the original *Federal Register* notice announcing the release of the document on July 21, 2006.

The Proposed RMP and Final EIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The Proposed RMP and Final EIS is largely based on Alternative E, the preferred alternative in the Draft RMP and EIS. This Proposed RMP and Final EIS contains the proposed plan, potential impacts of the plan, summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public comment period of the Draft RMP and EIS, and responses to these comments. To aid the reader, substantive changes made after the Draft RMP and EIS are shaded grey in the Proposed RMP and Final EIS.

Your continued participation on the content of this document is critical to the success of this planning effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Murkin, Casper Field Office Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
Casper Field Office

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### Commonly Used Acronyms

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
NOI	Notice of Intent
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision

## **What's in the Proposed RMP and Final EIS?**

The Casper Draft RMP and EIS was made available to the public in July 2006. During the 90-day public comment period, a total of 1,339 individual comments were identified in the 123 public response documents received. Respondents voiced a range of concerns relative to the revision process and land management issues. The most frequently discussed topics were special status species, land tenure adjustments, a Citizen's Wilderness Proposal, and Special Designations/Other Management Areas.

After careful consideration of both public and internal comments received on the Draft RMP and EIS, adjustments and clarifications have been made to Alternative E. While public comments resulted in the addition of clarifying text, proposed land use decisions were not significantly changed. As modified, Alternative E is now presented as the Proposed Casper RMP in the Final EIS. The major issues addressed include:

- Energy and mineral resource exploration and development
- Vegetation and habitat management
- Landownership adjustment, access and transportation
- Special designations

The Proposed RMP and Final EIS contains five alternatives and identifies the environmental impacts of these alternatives.

**Alternative A** is a continuation of the existing management (No Action Alternative). Under this alternative, use of public lands and resources continue to be managed under the 1985 Platte River RMP as amended.

**Alternative B** emphasizes conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources, while providing for the smallest level of development.

**Alternative C** provides more conservation and less resource development than current management and is in between alternatives B and D relative to resource conservation and resource development.

**Alternative D** emphasizes resource development, while providing for the smallest level of conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources.

**Alternative E** (Proposed Casper RMP) is the BLM's Proposed Plan because it reflects the best combination of decisions to achieve BLM goals and policies, meets the purpose and need, addresses the major planning issues, and considers public comments and the recommendations of cooperating agencies and BLM specialists.

Alternative E retains the existing Jackson Canyon ACEC, eliminates the Salt Creek Hazardous ACEC, and designates the Alcova Fossil Area ACEC for paleontological resources. Alternative E also establishes three MAs (Bates Hole, Sand Hills, and South Bighorns/Red Wall) with an emphasis on resource conservation and two MAs (Salt Creek and Wind River Basin) with an emphasis on oil and gas development. Alternative E manages intact, contiguous blocks of native vegetation to minimize habitat fragmentation, although over a smaller area than alternatives B or C. Relative to current management, Alternative E places more restrictions on OHV use, livestock grazing, wind-energy development, and leasing for oil and gas and other solid leasable minerals.

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## **Timeline: Where We Are and Where We Are Going**

- **Release of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS.** The Proposed RMP and Final EIS will be released to the public mid June 2007.
- **30-Day Protest Period.** The protest period begins mid June 2007 and allows the public with standing an opportunity to protest the BLM's proposed land use plan decision.
- **60-Day ACEC Comment Period.** The 60-day ACEC comment period begins mid June 2007. See page 4 for details and instructions to comment on the proposed ACECs.
- **60-Day Governor's Consistency Review.** The Governor will have 60 days to review the proposed plan, identify inconsistencies between the proposed plan and state programs, and provide written recommendations to the BLM State Director. This review begins the end of May 2007.
- **Prepare Record of Decision.** Once any protest issues are resolved and the Governor's consistency review is complete, the State Director approves the plan by signing the Record of Decision (ROD), scheduled for late 2007.

### 30-Day Protest Period

Any person who participated in the planning process for the Proposed RMP, and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected, may protest approval of this Proposed RMP and land use planning decisions contained within it (see 43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1610.5-2) during the 30-day protest period. Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process leading to the Proposed RMP may protest. The protesting party may raise only those issues submitted for the record during the planning process leading up to publication of the Proposed RMP. These issues may have been raised by the protesting party or others. New issues may not be brought into the record at the protest stage.

**30-Day Protest Period Instructions:** Protests must be filed with the Director of the BLM in writing.

**Regular mail protests:**

Director (210)  
 Attention – Brenda Williams  
 P.O. Box 66538  
 Washington DC, 20035

**Overnight mail protests:**

Director (210)  
 Attention – Brenda Williams  
 1620 L Street, NW, Suite 1075  
 Washington DC, 20036

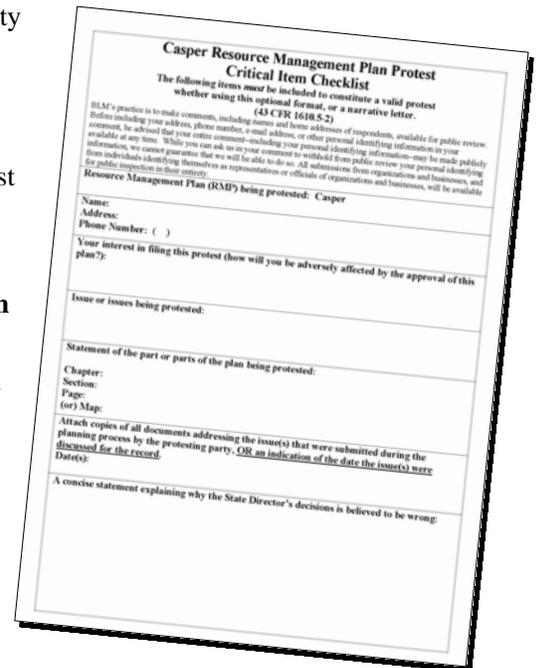
E-mail and fax protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, BLM will consider the E-mail or fax protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide BLM with such advance notification, please direct e-mails to [Brenda Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov](mailto:Brenda.Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov) and faxes to (202) 452-5112 (Attn: BLM Protest Coordinator).

**All protests must be postmarked on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the protest period.**

**IMPORTANT: In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2, the protest must contain the information described in the following critical elements checklist:**

- The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person filing the protest.
- The “interest” of the person filing the protest.
- A statement of the part(s) of the Proposed RMP, and the issue(s) being protested.
- A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process OR a statement or the date these issues were discussed for the record.
- A concise statement explaining why the protestor believes the BLM State Director’s proposed decision is incorrect.

*All of these elements are critical parts of your protest.*



### How Can You View the Proposed RMP and Final EIS?

The Proposed RMP and Final EIS will be released mid June 2007 and will be available for your review on the Casper RMP revision website at [www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/](http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/). A limited number of printed copies and compact disks (CDs) are available on request: e-mail [CRMP\\_wymail@blm.gov](mailto:CRMP_wymail@blm.gov) or call (307) 261-7600. Make sure to specify whether you would like a printed copy or a CD, along with your name and mailing address in your request. Printed copies can also be viewed at the following libraries:

- Library of Congress
- University of Wyoming Library
- Converse County Public Library
- Goshen County Public Library
- Natrona County Public Library
- Casper College Library
- Eastern Wyoming College Library
- Platte County Public Library



## **Opportunity to Comment on the Proposed ACECs**

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.7-2) require the BLM to notify the public of proposed ACECs in the *Federal Register* notice releasing the Draft RMP and EIS. While the Draft RMP and EIS, including the ACEC information, has been available for public review and comment, the BLM is providing an additional 60-day review period to ensure the procedural requirements contained in 43 CFR 1610.7-2 are met. Specifically, these regulations require BLM to specify in a *Federal Register* notice any resource use limitations that would occur if an ACEC is designated. The BLM can best use your comments on only the ACEC information presented in the Draft RMP and EIS and in the Notice of Supplemental Information if they are received on or before the end of the 60-day comment period following publication of this notice by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. If any comments received identify new and significant ACEC-related information that has not currently been raised in the planning process, then a Supplemental Proposed RMP and Final EIS may be issued and the Record of Decision on the Proposed RMP and Final EIS deferred.

**Comment Instructions:** Written comments on the proposed ACECs may be submitted as follows:

1. Online at the Casper RMP revision website ([www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/](http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/)). This website allows commenters to submit ACEC-related comments electronically into a comment form posted on the website under the Special Designations topic.
2. Written comments may be mailed or delivered to the BLM at:  
**Casper RMP/EIS**  
**Bureau of Land Management – Casper Field Office**  
**2987 Prospector Drive**  
**Casper, WY 82604-2968**

The BLM will only accept comments submitted by the methods described above and within the 60-day review period. To be given consideration by the BLM, comment submittals must include the commenter's name and street address. Whenever possible, please include reference to either the page or section in the Draft RMP and EIS to which the ACEC-related comment applies. To facilitate analysis of comments and information submitted, you are encouraged to submit comments in an electronic format through the website.

Electronic and mailed ACEC-related comments must be submitted and postmarked to the BLM on or before the 60<sup>th</sup> day of the comment period.

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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Casper Field Office  
2987 Prospector Drive  
Casper, Wyoming 82604-2968