

## Preliminary Planning Criteria

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require the development of planning criteria to guide preparation of the resource management plan. Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that guide and direct the preparation of the plans. Planning criteria guide the development of the RMP, ensure that it is tailored to the identified issues, and help to avoid unnecessary data collection and analysis. Planning criteria also streamline the plan preparation; establish standards, rules, and measures to be used; guide and direct the resolution of issues through the planning process; and indicate factors and data that must be considered in making decisions. Planning criteria are based on applicable laws and regulations, agency guidance, the result of consultation and coordination with the public, other federal, state and local agencies, and Native American tribes.

The following preliminary criteria were developed and will be reviewed by the public during scoping; they will be included in the Federal Register Notice. After public comment analysis, the final planning criteria will be approved and distributed to all interested parties collaborating in the planning process.

1. The plan will be completed in compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and all other applicable laws.
2. The planning process will include an environmental impact statement that will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards.
3. The plan will establish new guidance and identify existing guidance upon which the BLM will rely in managing public lands within the Lewistown Field Office and the Butte Field Office (for the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County).
4. The RMP/EIS will incorporate by reference the *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management*; the *Off-Highway Vehicle EIS and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and Portions of South Dakota*; the *Montana/Dakotas Statewide Fire Management Plan*; *Best Management Practices for Forestry in Montana*; the *Montana Streamside Management Zone Law and Rules*, and the *Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides FEIS*.
5. The RMP/EIS will incorporate by reference all prior Wilderness Study Area findings that affect public lands in the planning area.
6. The planning process will include early consultation meetings with FWS during the development of the plan.
7. Native American Consultation and Coordination – the Blackfeet Indian Reservation is adjacent to the planning area (Pondera County). Also, other tribes located in Montana, North and South Dakota, and Wyoming will be contacted early during the scoping process to determine what level of participation they would like to have during the RMP process. Early consultation and close coordination will take place to see that the tribes' needs are considered, analyzed, and that the BLM fulfills its trust responsibilities.
8. Early consultation will be conducted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on any potential effect of the plan on cultural resources under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470f) and under the National Programmatic Agreement. Relevant/interested tribal governments and the SHPO should be invited as cooperating agencies.
9. The plan will result in determinations as required by special program and resource specific guidance as described in BLM Manual 6280 – Management of National Scenic and Historic Trails and Trails under Study or Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation.
10. The plan will incorporate the requirements of the BLM Handbook H-1624-1, *Planning for Fluid Minerals and/or updated manual/policy guidance*.
11. The RMP/EIS will incorporate the requirements of the interagency reference guide entitled Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenarios and Cumulative Effects Analysis developed by the Rocky Mountain Federal Leadership Forum on NEPA, Oil and Gas, and Air Quality.
12. The plan will recognize the State's responsibility to manage wildlife populations, including uses such as hunting and fishing, within the planning area.
13. To the extent possible, goals and objectives in the plan for plants and wildlife (including Special Status Species) will incorporate or respond to goals and objectives from established recovery plans, conservation strategies, strategic plans, etc.
14. Decisions in the plan will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, tribal, and federal agencies as long as the decisions are in conformance with legal mandates on

management of public lands.

15. The scope of analysis will be consistent with the level of analysis in approved plans and in accordance with Bureau-wide standards and program guidance.
16. Geospatial data will be automated within a Geographic Information System (GIS) to facilitate discussions of the affected environment, alternative formulation, analysis of environmental consequences, and display of the results.
17. Resource allocations must be reasonable and achievable within available technological and budgetary constraints.
18. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for oil and gas, road drainage, grazing, Water Quality BMPs for Montana Forests, fire rehab, fire management, wind energy, power lines, and sage grouse conservation will be added.
19. The BLM will coordinate with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, Nez Perce National Historic Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Administrators during the land use planning process regarding the establishment of the National Trail Management Corridors.