

# LEWISTOWN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVISED



## SCOPING REPORT



United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Lewistown Field Office, Montana  
Butte Field Office, Montana



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AMS	Analysis of the Management Situation
APA	Administrative Procedures Act
AUM	Animal Unit Month
BFO	Butte Field Office
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
CE	Corps of Engineers
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMR	Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
CSGD	Cooperative State Grazing District
CWA	Clean Water Act
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
DNRC	Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FS	US Forest Service
FWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
JVP	Judith-Valley-Phillips
LFO	Lewistown Field Office
MFWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSU	Montana State University
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPS	US National Park Service
NRCS	US Natural Resources and Conservation Service

NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
ONA	Outstanding Natural Area
RAC	Resource Advisory Council
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
UMRBNM	Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument
US	United States
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDI	United States Department of the Interior
WO	Washington Office

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.0.1 Project Overview

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Lewistown Field Office (LFO) and Butte Field Office (BFO) are preparing a resource management plan (RMP) for the Lewistown RMP planning area which encompasses lands administered by LFO and the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County administered by BFO. The Lewistown RMP will not include lands within the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument (UMRBNM). The BLM will analyze the effects of proposed management decisions under one environmental impact statement (EIS) for the planning area which was previously referred to as the Headwaters North planning area and the Judith Resource Area.

Land use decisions developed through this RMP process will be based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); however, not all lands may be available for all uses. Some uses may be excluded on some of the lands to protect resource values either by law, regulation, or decision reached through the planning process. The RMP will be prepared using the most current and best available information and with public involvement. The new RMP will establish appropriate land uses and constraints to attain desired resource condition goals and objectives, as well as provide a framework to guide subsequent management decisions.

The land area to be covered under the Lewistown RMP is located in the central part of the State of Montana in Cascade, Chouteau, Fergus, Judith Basin, Meagher, Petroleum, Pondera and Teton Counties, and the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County. The Lewistown RMP planning area comprises approximately 654,025 acres of BLM-managed surface. Of the 3,598,988 acres of federal mineral estate in the planning area, 1,399,880 acres or 38.9 percent are BLM-managed minerals.

Management decisions are currently based on the *Headwaters RMP*, approved in July 1984 and the *Judith RMP*, approved in September 1994, as amended. Preparation of a new resource management plan will facilitate public understanding and provide consistent and integrated land use plan decisions for the area of jurisdiction. A revision to this plan is necessary due to changes, both on the landscape and in the resource uses. The revised RMP will evaluate the effectiveness of the decisions in these plans and provide new management direction where needed.

**Table 1. Planning Documents and Decisions within the Lewistown RMP Planning Area**

Document Title	Year
<i>Petroleum Management Framework Plan</i>	11/1977
<i>Fergus Management Framework Plan</i>	01/1978
<i>Headwaters RMP and Environmental Impact Statement</i> Final EIS	11/1983
Record of Decision (ROD)	07/1984
<i>Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States: Final Environmental Impact Statement*</i>	07/1991
<i>Montana Statewide Wilderness Study Report</i>	09/1991

Document Title	Year
<i>Judith RMP and EIS</i> Final EIS ROD	10/1992 09/1994
<i>Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota</i> Final EIS ROD	05/1997 08/1997
<i>Off-Highway Vehicle Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota</i> Final EIS ROD	01/2001 06/2003
<i>Fire/Fuels Management Plan Environmental Assessment/Plan Amendment for Montana and the Dakotas (Statewide amendment)</i> EA Decision Record	07/2003 09/2003
<i>Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States</i>	06/2005
<i>Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States*</i> Final EIS ROD	06/2007 09/2007
<i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> Final EIS	2008

\* The Final EIS and ROD disclosed and analyzed the effects of vegetation treatments, as well as provided decision guidance on standard operating procedures on the use of such treatments, and established the research and demonstration plots for offices; however, the Final EIS/ROD did not amend these RMPs.

### **1.0.2 Purpose and Need for the Plan Revision**

An RMP is a land use plan that provides broad, multiple-use direction for managing public lands administered by the BLM. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs the BLM to develop such land use plans to provide for appropriate uses of public land. Decisions in land use plans guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. The RMP establishes goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resource management and the measures needed to achieve them. These measures are expressed as management actions and allowable uses (e.g., lands that are open or available for certain uses [including any applicable restrictions] and lands that are closed to certain uses).

The purpose of the RMP is to establish guidance, objectives, policies, and adaptive management actions. The proposed RMP will be comprehensive in nature and will discuss the current management situation, desired future conditions to be maintained or achieved, and management actions necessary to achieve objectives. The RMP will fulfill the needs and obligations set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), FLPMA, and other applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Following the completion of the RMP process, separate implementation and monitoring plans will be developed.

The *Headwaters RMP* and *Judith-Valley-Phillips (JVP) RMP* have guided BLM's management of the public lands for the past 20 to 30 years. Resource conditions, public demands, and policies have changed sufficiently to warrant revisiting these decisions. Past plan evaluations (5- and 15-year plan evaluations for *Headwaters RMP* and 8-year plan evaluation for the *Judith RMP*) indicated a need for a plan revision.

Although the *JVP RMP* was approved in 1994 to guide management of all resources within the LFO, it did not make any specific decisions relative to leasing of fluid minerals due to a protest on the 1992 *Final JVP RMP/EIS*. Since that time, the LFO has deferred fluid mineral leasing of nominated parcels that would require special stipulations to protect important wildlife values until a new RMP is completed for the planning area (the leasing of nominated parcels not requiring special wildlife stipulations has continued in LFO through reliance on the leasing decisions made in previous land use plans and programmatic analyses).

The purpose of the Lewistown RMP is to: (1) respond to resource conditions that have changed, (2) respond to new issues and policies, and (3) prepare a comprehensive framework for managing public lands administered by the LFO and BFO (for the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County). This RMP will result in the development of new land use planning decisions for those issues identified through public scoping and, where appropriate, will incorporate decisions from the existing *Headwaters* and *JVP RMPs*. When completed, the revised RMP will replace the existing RMPs.

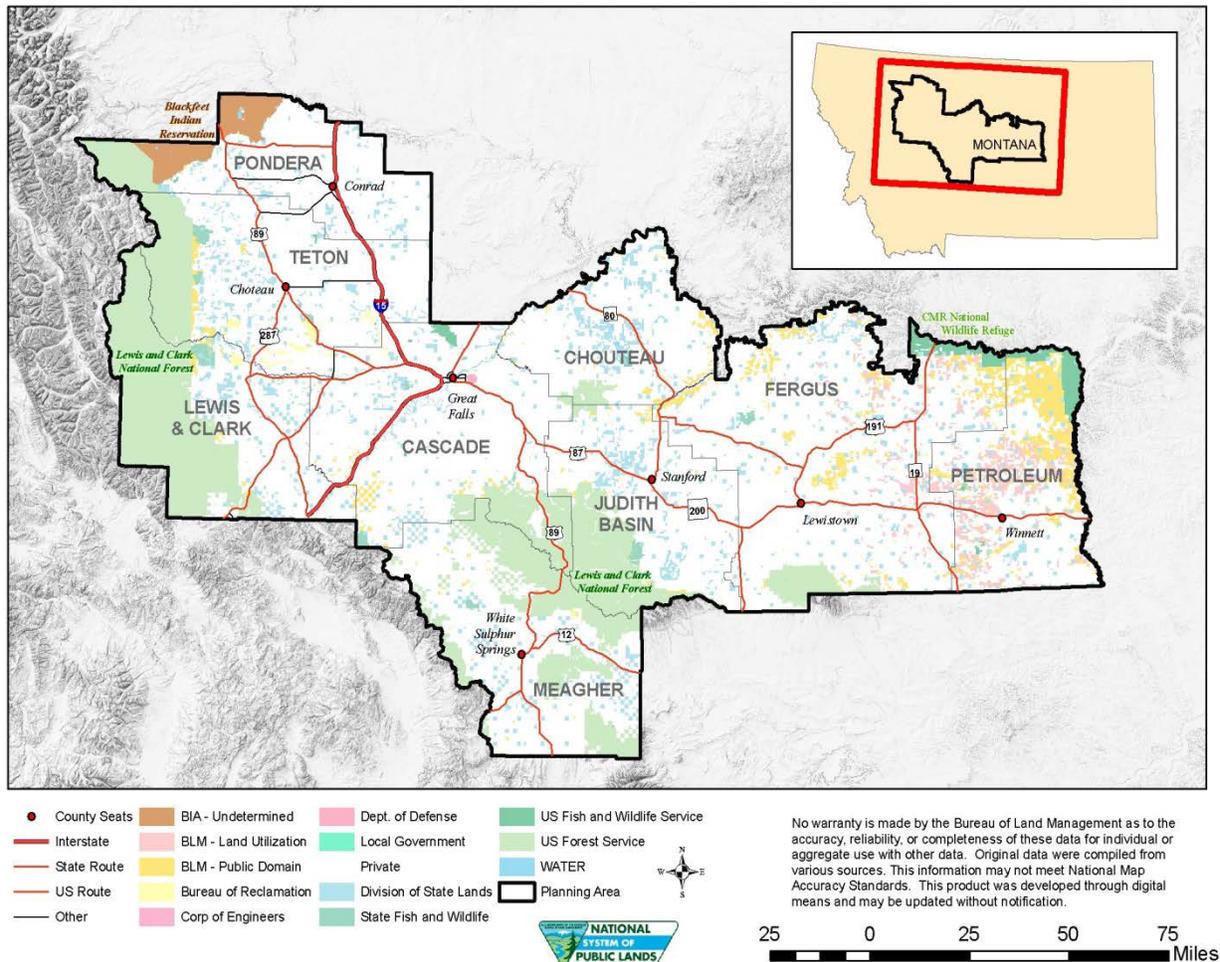
The Lewistown RMP will provide a comprehensive plan to enhance or maintain resource conditions and provide for the economic needs of local communities over the long term. The land use planning process is the key tool used by the BLM, in coordination with state and local government, tribes, land users, and the interested public, to manage resources and provide for their use on public lands. The EIS developed with the RMP will include analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of all proposed management actions in the RMP. Future site-specific NEPA documents will be tiered to the RMP/EIS, eliminating repetitive discussions of issues.

Under NEPA (Public Law 91-190) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA, federal agencies are required to consider the environmental impacts of their proposed actions before implementing these actions. Major federal actions are subject to NEPA. The Lewistown RMP is considered a major federal action and is subject to the requirements of NEPA; therefore, the BLM will prepare an EIS that provides a comprehensive evaluation of the environmental issues and impacts. In addition, NEPA requires the BLM to consider a reasonable range of alternatives and to analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of those alternatives. In this case, each alternative represents an alternative RMP. The NEPA process also provides opportunities for participation by the public, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and tribal governments during the RMP revision process.

### **1.0.3 Project and Planning Area Description**

The Lewistown RMP planning area is located in central Montana (see Figure 1). The BLM manages numerous blocks of BLM public lands within the planning area, ranging in size from less than 40 acres to a large, contiguous block of BLM lands totaling approximately 215,575 acres. These BLM-managed public lands are located in nine counties: Fergus, Petroleum, Chouteau, Judith Basin, Cascade, Teton, Pondera, Meagher, and the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County.

Figure 1. Lewistown RMP Planning Area



The BLM public lands to be addressed in this RMP revision include lands managed by both the Lewistown Field Office and Butte Field Office which total approximately 654,000 surface acres in nine counties. (Note: based on a recent administrative boundary realignment effective October 1, 2011 (and published in the *Federal Register* Notice of Administrative Boundary Change, Volume 76, Number 237, 12/9/2011), about 14,537 surface acres and 749,733 acres of subsurface federal mineral estate within the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County are managed by the Butte Field Office. However, for purposes of this planning effort, that portion of Lewis and Clark County will be addressed as part of this RMP revision and will be included in the Lewistown planning area.)

The area is bordered to the west by the Lewis and Clark National Forest along the Rocky Mountain Front, to the east by the Musselshell River, to the north by the UMRBNM, and to the south by the Butte and Billings BLM Field Offices. Within the Lewistown planning area, land ownership is mixed (Table 2). The public lands managed by the BLM are adjacent to national forest, national wildlife refuge (NWR), state, private, and tribal lands. Table 2 identifies the acreage of the various land ownerships within the planning area. Table 3 identifies the acreage of mineral estate within the planning area. Other major federal land systems in the planning area include national forest system lands; Blackfeet Indian Reservation; NWRs and waterfowl production areas; National Park Service (NPS); United States (US) Corps of Engineers (CE); and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) lands scattered throughout the planning area.

**Table 2. Land Ownership within the Lewistown RMP Planning Area**

County	Land Ownership (Surface) within the Planning Area			
	BLM	Other Federal	State	Private
Cascade County	24,732	196,340	89,796	1,414,710
Chouteau County	25,720	32,976	113,913	745,699
Fergus County	217,189	144,264	147,004	2,077,463
Judith Basin County	11,560	299,365	108,279	778,025
Lewis and Clark County*	14,537	685,795	101,832	538,844
Meagher County	7,899	471,892	93,425	959,433
Petroleum County	331,680	62,524	63,929	608,186
Pondera County	1,170	266,470	58,117	718,605
Teton County	19,538	263,975	126,215	1,057,399
Total	654,025	2,423,601	902,510	8,898,364

\* Includes only the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County.

**Table 3. Mineral Ownership within the Lewistown RMP Planning Area**

County	Mineral Ownership within the Planning Area	
	Federal Minerals	Other
Cascade County	274,223	1,445,852
Chouteau County	85,900	832,408
Fergus County	660,670	1,925,250
Judith Basin County	351,149	846,080
Lewis and Clark County*	749,733	591,170
Meagher County	480,546	1,052,103
Petroleum County	442,314	624,006
Pondera County	179,568	864,837
Teton County	374,885	1,091,773
Total	3,598,988	9,273,479

\* Includes only the northern portion of Lewis and Clark County.

The Lewistown RMP is being prepared for all public lands and federal minerals managed by the BLM LFO and the northern half of Lewis and Clark County which is managed by the BLM BFO. The Lewistown RMP does not address US Forest Service-administered lands (FS) or federal mineral estate within national forest units. Oil and gas leasing decisions for federal mineral estate under lands administered by other federal and state agencies within the planning area will be considered in the Lewistown RMP in cooperation with those agencies.

Recently, the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (CMR) completed a land use plan revision. Coordination between the BLM, CMR, and other agencies will continue during the planning process, especially for those resources and issues such as fire management, roads and trails, and rights-of-way that share administrative boundaries.

Major topographic features in the planning area include the Rocky Mountain Front; the Judith, North Moccasin, South Moccasin, Snowy, Highwood, Castle, Crazy, and Belt Mountains; and Square Butte. The planning area is part of the Missouri River basin, with some of the major tributary systems of the Missouri River including the Judith, Musselshell, and Sun Rivers. Each of these large drainage systems has dissected the land, forming cliffs, broad valleys, or badlands-type topography. The topography is very diverse and provides for a unique transitional environment between the Rocky Mountains of the western portion of the planning area to the vast plains and river breaks of eastern Montana, with island mountain ranges punctuating the landscape. The vegetation is also diverse, from prairie grasslands and shrublands, timbered breaks, and high elevation forest types. Livestock grazing, commercial and noncommercial recreation, rights-of-way, and utilization of forest products are among the most important uses of BLM lands in the planning area.

Except for several contiguous blocks of land in Fergus and Petroleum Counties, most of the BLM public lands in the planning area are scattered tracts, intermingled with private and state lands. Private lands are usually located along the drainage bottoms and more productive uplands. The BLM manages a variety of public land parcels in the area and, as mentioned above, many of these parcels are widely scattered and often pose multiple resource management challenges. Lands managed by the LFO include public domain (lands which have never left federal ownership), acquired lands and/or mineral interests (lands and/or minerals which left federal ownership and were later returned to federal ownership through purchase, donation, or condemnation), and federal mineral estate (subsurface) lands beneath private or state lands or lands administered by other federal agencies. The Lewistown RMP will not make decisions for the surface or mineral estates of private- or state-owned lands and minerals. The Lewistown RMP, however, will provide management decisions for split estate situations involving federal minerals managed by the BLM overlain by private- or state-owned surface.

## **1.1 SCOPING**

### **1.1.1 Public Involvement in the Plan Revision**

Public involvement, which includes the scoping process, is a vital component of FLPMA and NEPA. Through the public involvement process, the public is able to participate in planning. The NEPA requirements for public involvement are set forth in CEQ regulations 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500–1508. Additional BLM guidance and direction for public involvement is provided in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1601-1) and the BLM NEPA Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1790-1).

### **1.1.2 Scoping Process**

The purpose of the public scoping process is to identify issues and planning criteria that should be considered in the RMP and EIS and to initiate public participation in the planning process. The BLM follows the public involvement requirements according to the CEQ regulations set forth in 40 CFR 1501.7 which states, “there should be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed during the planning process.” During the scoping process, the BLM solicits comments from relevant tribes, agencies, and the public; organizes and analyzes all of the comments received; and then distills the comments to identify the issues, which are called planning issues or significant issues, that need to be addressed during the planning process. The BLM and cooperating agencies consider comments provided during scoping and refine the issues and planning criteria, formulate alternatives, and run impact analyses.

Formal scoping for the Lewistown RMP Revision took place from February 10, 2014, to April 11, 2014. Under CEQ regulations, the public comment period must last for at least 30 days. Although the formal, 60-day comment period has ended, the BLM will continue to review all comments received during the RMP process to ensure that no key issues or concerns have been missed or develop during the planning process.

### 1.1.3 Federal Register Notice of Intent

The scoping process for the Lewistown RMP Revision began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) (Appendix A) in the *Federal Register* on February 10, 2014. The BLM posted the NOI on the project website (available via <http://blm.gov/ngld>). The NOI served to notify the public of the BLM’s intent to revise the RMP for the Lewistown planning area, provided the location of the public scoping meetings, and identified the preliminary issues to be considered in the RMP revision process.

### 1.1.4 Public Notification of Scoping

#### News Release

The BLM issued a news release (Appendix B) to local media on February 13, 2014, describing the NOI and listing the time, date, and location of the public scoping meetings. Copies of the news release went out to numerous radio stations and newspapers within and outside the planning area (see Table 4). The news release was also posted on the Lewistown RMP Revision website.

**Table 4. Media Distribution List**

Media Outlet	Region
NEWSPAPERS:	
AgriNews/Western Livestock Reporter	Billings, MT
Associated Press	Helena, MT
Billings Gazette	Billings, MT
Blaine County Journal	Chinook, MT
Cascade Courier	Cascade, MT
Glasgow Courier	Glasgow, MT
Great Falls Tribune	Great Falls, MT
Havre Daily News	Havre, MT
Judith Basin Press	Stanford, MT
Lewistown News Argus	Lewistown, MT
Phillips County News	Malta, MT
Times-Clarion	Harlowton, MT
River Press	Fort Benton, MT
The Mountaineer	Big Sandy, MT
Herald News	Wolf Point, MT

<b>Media Outlet</b>	<b>Region</b>
RADIO:	
KEMC FM - Yellowstone Public Radio	Billings, MT
KOJM	Havre, MT
KXLO/KLCM	Lewistown, MT
KMMR	Malta, MT
KLTZ	Glasgow, MT
KCGM	Scobey, MT
KGVA FM	Ft. Belknap, MT
Northern Ag Network	Billings, MT
KTVQ-TV	Billings, MT
KULR 8-TV	Great Falls, MT
KRTV-TV	Great Falls, MT
KFBB-TV	Great Falls, MT
KMON FM	Great Fall, MT
KHEW FM	Rocky Boy, MT

### **Newsletters**

Another means of outreach prior to the public scoping meetings included a Spring 2014 *Lewistown RMP Update* newsletter mailing announcing the scoping meetings and providing information about the scoping and RMP processes. Newsletters were mailed and/or e-mailed to 1,391 individuals; industry; members of state and US Congress; cooperators, lessees, and permittees; Resource Advisory Council (RAC) members; educational institutions; city, county, federal, state agencies, and tribal governments; news media; organizations; and others requesting to be included on the general mailing list. The Spring 2014 RMP newsletter is included in Appendix C.

### **Additional Sources of Public Information about the Scoping Process**

In addition to news releases, members of the public received notification about the scoping process from a variety of sources. At least six local and regional articles and news bulletins regarding some aspect of the RMP process were published in newspapers, both within and outside of the planning area. Many of the articles listed the dates for the scoping period and the dates, times, and locations of the public scoping meetings. Most of the articles provided some background regarding the purpose of the RMP revision, information about the process, and reports about the scoping meetings. The BLM generated 8.5- x 11-inch flyers (Appendix D) providing a summary of the meeting agenda and announcing time and location of each scoping meeting. The flyers were posted in public locations such as libraries; post offices; courthouses; local, state and federal agency offices; and commercial buildings where bulletin board postings were available to the public prior to scoping meetings.

### **Website**

In February 2014, the Lewistown RMP Revision website was published online. The website provides background information about the project; preliminary issues; a description of the scoping process; meeting locations; contact information; instructions on how to submit comments; a map of the planning area; copies of relevant NEPA documents; and copies of public information documents such as the NOI,

newsletter, press release, and newspaper articles. The website is one of the methods used to communicate project news and updates to the public. The website can be accessed at <http://blm.gov/ngld> or can be navigated from BLM’s national homepage at [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov).

**1.1.5 Scoping Meetings**

The BLM hosted six scoping meetings to provide the public with an opportunity to learn and ask questions about the project, the planning process, and to submit their issues and concerns to the BLM. As previously described, the times and locations of public scoping meetings were advertised to the public using a variety of outreach methods.

During the weeks of March 4, 2014, and April 3, 2014, the BLM hosted scoping meetings in six locations across the planning area. All meetings ran from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM. Table 5 lists the scoping meeting locations, dates, and the number of members of the public in attendance. The BLM chose an open house format over a more formal public meeting format to encourage broader participation, to allow attendees to learn about the project at their own pace, and to enable attendees to ask questions of BLM representatives in an informal, one-on-one setting.

**Table 5. Schedule of Public Scoping Meetings**

Date and Time	Location	Number of Attendees
Tuesday, March 4, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Meagher County Courthouse 15 West Main White Sulphur Springs, MT 59645	2
Thursday, March 6, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Winifred Community Center 210 Main Street Winifred, MT 59489	21
Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Petroleum County Courthouse 302 East Main Street Winnett, MT 59087	18
Tuesday, March 18, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center 4201 Giant Springs Road Great Falls, MT 59405	23
Tuesday, April 1, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Yogo Inn 211 East Main Street Lewistown, MT 59457	26
Thursday, April 3, 2014 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Choteau Public Library 17 North Main Avenue Choteau, MT 59422	8

A total of 98 people attended the six scoping meetings. The BLM provided six handouts (Appendix D) and a series of eight display boards at each meeting (Appendix D).

The BLM encouraged meeting attendees to submit written comments either at the meetings, by standard mail, by fax (406) 538-1904, or by emailing [blm\\_mt\\_lewistown\\_rmp@blm.gov](mailto:blm_mt_lewistown_rmp@blm.gov). Comment forms (Appendix D) were available to attendees at all meetings.

### **Meeting Handouts**

The BLM made available six meeting handouts (Appendix D) to the attendees at the six scoping meetings.

The handouts provided the following information:

- A list of the interdisciplinary team members and contact information for the Lewistown RMP
- Anticipated planning issues, management concerns, and planning criteria for the Lewistown RMP Revision
- A hard copy of the Lewistown RMP Power Point presentation
- A Recreation and Special Designations information card
- Manual 6310 – Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands (Public)
- A written comment form containing conventional mail and email addresses for submission of comments.

### **Displays**

Eight (2- x 3-foot) display boards (Appendix D) guided meeting participants visually through the EIS process, action, and issues. A poster on the first display board welcomed the public to become part of the planning process while another display board provided an information sheet explaining the RMP process and the planning schedule. A map of the planning area was displayed on one of the boards to familiarize the public with the area involved in the Lewistown RMP. Two boards contained explanations of the potential issues related to wildlife and rights-of-way and the remaining boards contained recreation and special designation areas; locations of fluid minerals activity and projected fluid minerals activity; and areas currently being inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

### **Power Point Presentation**

A Power Point presentation of the entire Lewistown RMP process was presented to the public at each of the six scoping meetings.

### **Project Mailing List**

The BLM compiled a list of nearly 1,400 individuals; industry; members of state and US Congress; cooperators, lessees, and permittees; Resource Advisory Council (RAC) members; educational institutions; city, county, federal, state, and tribal government agencies; news media; organizations; and others requesting to be included on the general mailing list. Visitors to the scoping meetings were asked to sign in and provide their mailing address so that they could also be added to the mailing list. Other additions to the mailing list included those individuals who submitted subsequent requests to be added to the list. Updates to the general mailing list and e-mail list continue to be made as mailing requests are received or changes are identified (duplicate entries, deaths, changes of names or addresses, and return-to-sender mailings). Requests to be added to, or to remain on, the official mailing list will continue to be accepted throughout the planning process.

In addition to the six formal scoping meetings, BLM publically offered to schedule additional presentations or scoping meetings to groups, organizations, or tribes upon request. The BLM received five requests and made RMP presentations to the following five groups:

- Charles M. Russell Six County Working Group (Lewistown, MT; February 27, 2014)
- Central Montana Resource Council (Lewistown, MT; March 19, 2014)
- Conservation Roundtable (Billings, MT; April 15, 2014)
- Fergus County Mutual Issues (Lewistown, MT; May 15, 2014)
- Montana Farmer’s Union (Lewistown, MT; June 5, 2014)

### **1.1.6 Cooperating Agencies**

A cooperating agency is any federal, state, or local government agency or Native American tribe that enters into a formal agreement with the lead federal agency to help develop an environmental analysis. Cooperating agencies have jurisdiction by law or special expertise and “work with the BLM, sharing knowledge and resources, to achieve desired outcomes for public lands and communities within statutory and regulatory frameworks” as stated in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1).

The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in preparing NEPA analyses include disclosing relevant information early in the analytical process; applying available technical expertise and staff support; avoiding duplication with other federal, state, tribal, and local procedures; and establishing a mechanism for addressing intergovernmental issues.

The BLM invited local, state, federal, and tribal representatives to participate as cooperating agencies on the Lewistown RMP Revision based on their respective areas of expertise. As of August 1, 2014, the following agencies have all been contacted regarding cooperating agency status. Nine of the agencies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

#### **Counties:**

- Cascade County Commission
- Chouteau County Commission
- Fergus County Commission
- Judith Basin County Commission
- Lewis and Clark County Commission
- Meagher County Commission
- Petroleum County Commission
- Pondera County Commission
- Teton County Commission

#### **Conservation Districts:**

- Montana Association of Conservation Districts

**Cooperative State Grazing Districts (CSGDs):**

- Chain Buttes CSGD
- Crooked Creek CSGD
- Flatwillow CSGD
- Grass Range CSGD
- Indian Butte CSGD
- Weede CSGD
- Williams Coulee CSGD
- Winnett CSGD

**Montana State Agencies:**

- Montana Department of Agriculture
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Northeastern Land Office
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP); Helena, Lewistown and Great Falls Offices
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

**Federal Agencies:**

- US Air Force, Midwest Region Hill/Peterson Natural Resource Installation Support Team, Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Environmental Center of Excellence
- US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Rocky Mountain Regional Office
- US BOR, Montana Area Office, Great Plains Region
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 8 and Montana Operations Offices
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Helena Office
- US FWS, CMR NWR, Lewistown Office
- US FS, Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- US FS, Helena National Forest, Helena Office
- US FS, Lewis and Clark National Forest, Great Falls Office
- US FS, Nez Perce National Historic Trail Administrator's Office
- US Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Bozeman and Great Falls Area Offices

**Tribes:**

- Blackfeet Nation
- Blackfeet Tribal Business Council
- Chippewa Cree Tribe, Chairman and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)

- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Chairman and THPOs
- Crow Tribe, Chairman, Burial Preservation Officer and THPO
- Fort Belknap Indian Community; President, Environmental Protection Manager and THPO
- Fort Belknap Indian Community, President of Buffalo Chaser Society
- Fort Peck Tribes, Chairman and THPO
- Little Shell Tribe, Chairman
- Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, Chairman
- Nez Perce Tribal Business Council, Chairman
- Nez Perce Tribe, THPO and Tribal Archaeologist
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Acting President and THPO
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes; Chairman, Cultural Resources Coordinator and Environmental Program Manager

#### **1.1.7 Consultation with Tribes**

The BLM has formally initiated its consultation with tribal governments. Government-to-government consultation with the tribes will continue throughout the RMP process. The following 10 tribes were sent letters on February 14, 2014, requesting consultation:

- Blackfeet
- Chippewa-Cree
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai
- Crow
- Fort Belknap
- Fort Peck
- Little Shell
- Nez Perce
- Northern Cheyenne
- Shoshone-Bannock

On April 29, 2014, BLM staff met with representatives of the Salish-Kootenai Tribal Historic Preservation Office and Culture Committee in Pablo, Montana. Opportunities for participation in the Lewistown RMP and potential decisions to be made were among the topics of discussion.

On May 20-22, 2014, the BLM met with tribal representatives in the 2014 THPO/SHPO/Agency Summit in Helena, Montana, to discuss tribal consultation and preservation issues facing tribes, federal, and state agencies. Geoff Beyersdorf, LFO Manager gave a presentation and answered questions specific to the Lewistown RMP. The following representatives were in attendance:

- Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation
- Chippewa-Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes;
- Crow Tribe
- Blackfeet Nation
- Fort Belknap Indian Community
- Nez Perce Tribe
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe

### **BLM Participants**

- Montana/Dakotas State Office  
Mark Sant – Tribal Coordinator  
Gary Smith – Deputy Preservation Officer
- Lewistown Field Office  
Geoffrey Beyersdorf – Field Manager  
Zane Fulbright – Archaeologist
- Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
Mark Baumler – Montana SHPO

## **1.2 COMMENT SUMMARY**

### **1.2.1 Comment Collection**

The formal scoping period ended on April 11, 2014. Comments were accepted 30 days from the date of the final scoping meeting which officially ended the scoping period on May 5, 2014. Seventy-five comment letters were received during the official scoping period and an additional 12 comment letters were received after the comment period ended for a total of 87 comment documents. All comments received as of August 1, 2014, are included in this report. The issues identified in this report will be considered in alternative formulation and the effects analysis. All comments received during the RMP process will be reviewed to ensure no key issues or concerns have been missed.

Comment documents were submitted at public scoping meetings, delivered in person, sent via email or standard mail, or faxed to the BLM's Lewistown Field Office. All comment documents received were entered onto a Scoping Comments Log upon receipt. Comment documents submitted at public scoping meetings and those that were delivered to BLM, either by standard mail, facsimile, or in person, were logged in, assigned unique comment numbers, and scanned into an electronic format. All comments received via email were also logged in and assigned unique comment numbers. Both electronic and paper versions of each comment have been preserved in the official RMP project file. Form letters received during the scoping process were also assigned a form letter unique number. Additional information was also recorded on the Scoping Comments Log for informational and statistical purposes.

The BLM received a total of 48 unique written comment letters and 5 form letters. The first form letter was submitted by 3 individuals; the second form letter was submitted by 28 individuals and organizations; the third was submitted by 4 individuals; the fourth was submitted by 2 individuals; and

the fifth form letter was submitted by 2 individuals. Three comment letters received during the comment period were duplicated (received by both email and standard mail) and one comment was received twice by standard mail. Three individuals submitted two separate comment letters. The most commonly used method of comment submission was email. The method of comment submission for all comments received is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Number of Comments Received by Document Type**

Comment Document Format	Number of Comment Documents Received During Official Comment Period	Number of Comment Documents Received After Official Comment Period Ended	Totals
Email	60 <sup>1</sup> (Including 32 form letters)	7 (including 4 form letters)	67 <sup>1</sup>
Standard Mail	16 (including 3 form letters)	4	20
Comments Received at Public Scoping Meetings	3 <sup>2</sup>		3 <sup>2</sup>
Facsimile		1	1

<sup>1</sup> Includes three duplicate, unique comment letters that were received in two different formats (email and standard mail) and one unique comment letter that was received twice via standard mail.

<sup>2</sup> Includes one comment submitted on an official comment form and two comments written on a map of the planning area.

The Scoping Comment Matrix, a complete, summarized list of comment documents by planning issue criteria, organization, and categorization of BLM responses is provided in Appendix E. The scoping comment documents resulted in approximately 526 separate comments; most comment documents contained multiple comments.

Once the official comment period ended, each comment document was reviewed and individual comments were listed and categorized by planning issue in a Scoping Comment Matrix to identify the type of comment (substantive or nonsubstantive) and make a determination on its disposition. This process will be discussed further in Section 1.3.

### 1.2.2 Submissions by Affiliation

Table 7 shows the affiliation of each entity that submitted comments during the scoping period. Individuals who did not identify an affiliation provided the largest number of total comment documents, submitting 60 comment documents during the scoping period.

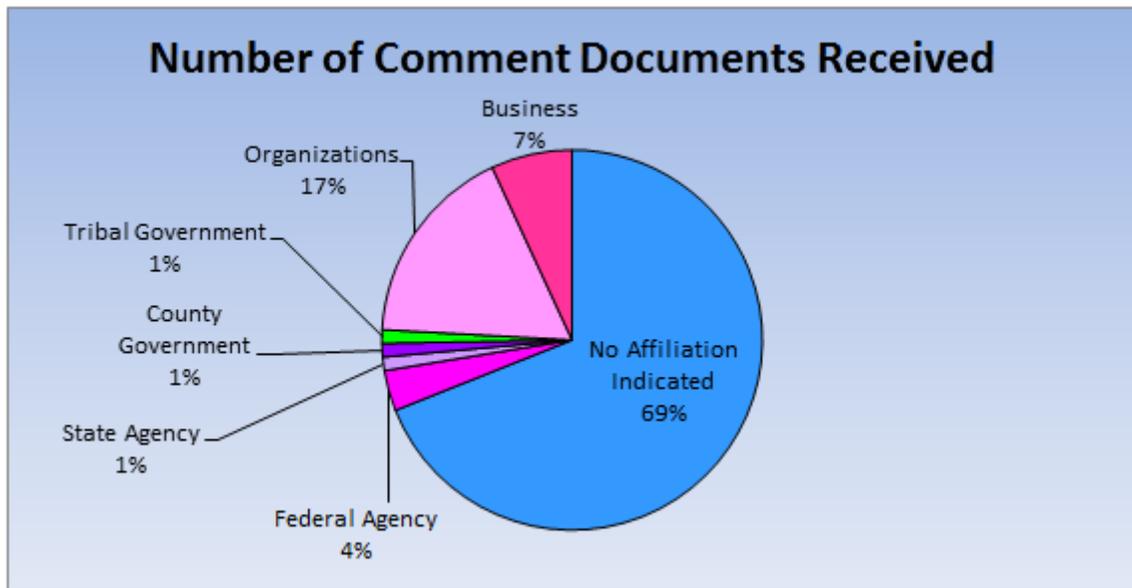
**Table 7. Number of Comment Documents Received by Affiliation**

Commenter Affiliation	Number of Comment Documents
General Public	60 <sup>1</sup> (5 form letters)
Federal Agency	3
State Agency	1
County Government	1
City Government	0
County Conservation District	0
Elected Official	0
Organization	15 <sup>2</sup>
Business	6
Tribal Government	1
Total	87

<sup>1</sup> Includes two additional comment letters submitted by two different commenters.

<sup>2</sup> Includes one additional comment letter submitted by the same commenter.

**Figure 2. Number of Comment Documents Received**



### 1.2.3 Submissions by Geographical Area

Table 8 shows the number of submissions received from locations inside and outside of the planning area. Comments from residents within the planning area were submitted primarily by individuals and those who did not identify an affiliation. Twenty-six comment letters were received from commenters residing within the planning area, 29 were from commenters in Montana but outside of the planning area, 24 were from commenters residing outside of Montana, and 8 were from unknown locations.

**Table 8. Number of Comment Documents Received by Geographic Location**

City and State	Zip Code	Number of Comment Documents
<b>Locations Within the Planning Area:</b>		
Augusta, MT	59410	2
Choteau, MT	59422	4
Grass Range, MT	59032	1
Great Falls, MT	59405	9
Lewistown, MT	59457	4
Ulm, MT	59485	1
White Sulphur Springs, MT	59645	1
Winifred, MT	59489	1
Winnett, MT	59087	3
<b>Locations Outside the Planning Area in Montana:</b>		
City and State	Number of Comment Documents	
Billings, MT	4	
Bozeman, MT	1	
Clancy, MT	1	
Deer Lodge, MT	1	
Hamilton, MT	2	
Havre, MT	2	
Helena, MT	5	
Missoula, MT	6	
Park City, MT	1	
Poplar, MT	2	
Shelby, MT	1	
Shepherd, MT	1	
Sheridan, MT	1	
Townsend, MT	1	
<b>Locations Outside the Planning Area and Outside of Montana:</b>		
State	Number of Comment Documents	
California	1	
Colorado	3	
Idaho	2	
Maryland	1	
Michigan	2	
Minnesota	1	

<b>Locations Outside the Planning Area and Outside of Montana:</b>	
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Comment Documents</b>
Nebraska	1
New Jersey	2
Ohio	1
Oregon	2
South Dakota	2
Texas	2
Vermont	1
Wisconsin	2
Wyoming	1

Table 9 shows the geographical locations of those commenters who submitted form letter comments. For those within Montana, it also reflects whether they were inside or outside of the planning area.

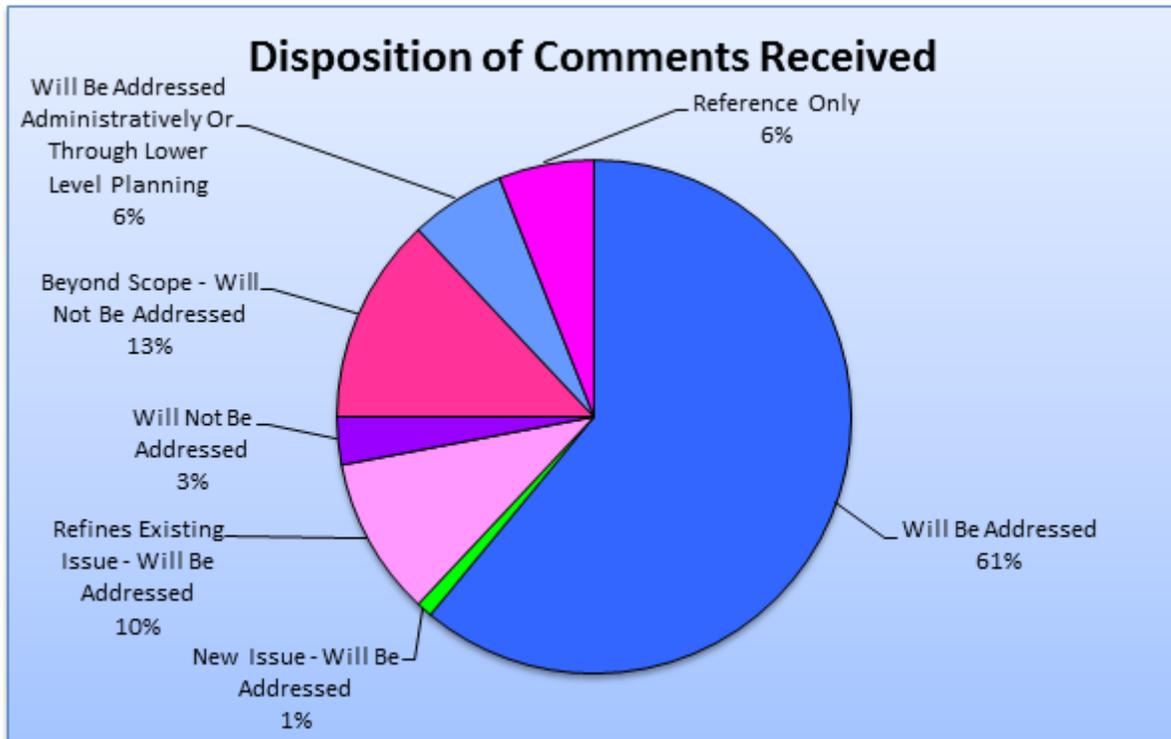
**Table 9. Number of Form Letter Comment Documents Received by Geographic Location**

<b>Form Letter Number</b>	<b>Number of Letters from Inside of the Planning Area</b>	<b>Number of Letters from Outside of the Planning Area (Number Outside of Montana is in Parentheses)</b>	<b>Number from Unknown Location</b>	<b>Total Number of Form Letters Received</b>
DC-01		1 (1)	2	3
DC-02		24 (24)	4	28
DC-03	4			4
DC-04	2			2
DC-05	2			2

**1.2.4 Comments by Planning Issue Category**

The BLM received a total of 526 comments (370 unique comments and 156 duplicate comments). Of the total received, 381 comments (254 unique and 127 duplicate) pertained to existing or new planning issues and will be addressed during the RMP planning process. Thirty comments were categorized for reference only. The remaining 115 comments (86 unique and 29 duplicate) will not be addressed during the RMP process; 34 will be addressed administratively or at a lower planning level; 66 comments, predominantly relating to issues with existing oil and gas or grazing regulations, were beyond the scope of the RMP planning process; and 15 will not be addressed because they were either opinions, too vague, nonsubstantive, or unrelated to the planning area. Comments that will not be addressed in the RMP are discussed in greater detail in Section 1.3.5.

Figure 3. Disposition of Comments Received



Twenty-three planning issue topics were developed to further categorize the comments. One issue topic (Visual Resources) did not receive any specific comments. Because of the unstructured nature of the comment process (i.e., commenters were not answering specific questions, but rather speaking to their concerns), the BLM often received comments that touched on multiple issue categories. Each comment was then coded into one or more categories relating to each issue identified in the comment. Table 10 shows the number of comments (unique and duplicate) received for each planning issue category.

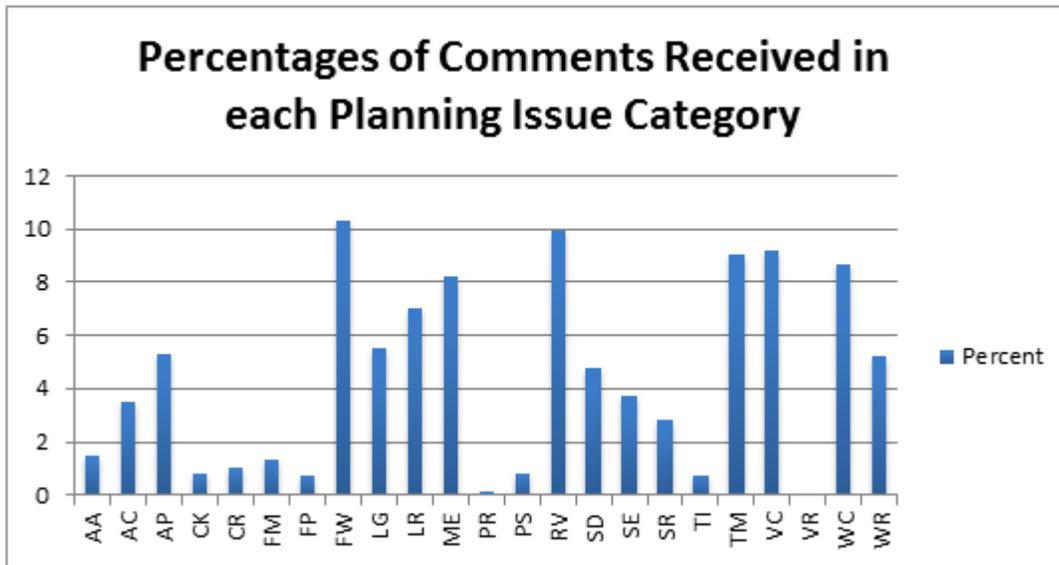
Each form letter was given a unique number (e.g., FL-02). Each comment in the form letter was then identified and given a duplicate comment number (e.g., DC-01). Appendix G provides a digest of the unique comments received for each category.

**Table 10. Number of Comments by Topic Category**

<b>Planning Issue Category</b>	<b>Number of Unique Comments</b>	<b>Number of Duplicate Comments</b>	<b>Total Number of Comments</b>
Access (AC)	6	40	46
Administrative Procedure (AP)	65	4	69
Air and Atmospheric Values (AA)	21	0	21
Cave and Karst Resources (CK)	10	0	10
Cultural Resources (CR)	12	0	12
Fire Management (FM)	17	0	17
Fish and Wildlife (FW)	112	23	135
Forest Products (FP)	9	0	9
Geology and Soil Resources (SR)	18	18	36
Lands and Realty (LR)	37	55	92
Livestock Grazing (LG)	71	1	72
Minerals and Energy (ME)	84	23	107
Paleontological Resources (PR)	1	0	1
Public Safety (PS)	10	0	10
Recreation and Visitor Services (RV)	99	31	130
Socio-economic (SE)	20	28	48
Special Designations (SD)	15	48	63
Travel Management (TM)	83	40	123
Tribal Interests (TI)	9	0	9
Vegetative Communities (VC)	73	48	121
Visual Resources (VR)	0	0	0
Water Resources (WR)	62	6	68
Wilderness Characteristics (WC)	30	83	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>1,312</b>

Note: The totals in the above table do not match the number of comments because many comments were assigned more than one planning issue category, depending upon the amount of issues raised in each comment document.

Figure 4. Percentages of Comments Received in each Planning Issue Category



### 1.3 SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, MANAGEMENT CONCERNS, AND PLANNING CRITERIA

A **Planning Issue** is identified as a matter of controversy or dispute over resource management activities or land use that is well defined or topically discrete and entails alternatives between which to choose. **Management Concerns** are topics or points of dispute that involve a resource management activity or land use. While some management concerns overlap planning issues, a management concern is generally more important to an individual or a few individuals, as opposed to a planning issue, which has more widespread point of conflict. However, certain management concerns (e.g., cultural resources) will still play pivotal roles in developing alternatives and reaching decisions regarding the major issues. Planning issues may result from changed circumstances from the previous planning process or new data that was previously unavailable.

#### 1.3.1 Management Concerns and Planning Issue Development

Identification of management concerns and planning issues is the first step in the RMP planning process. To initiate the process, BLM identified preliminary planning issues and management concerns based on RMP evaluations, new Bureau program guidance, and LFO staff input. Each issue includes a planning question followed by information that would be considered in answering the question. The questions and information are being refined throughout the planning process. Appendix F contains the preliminary planning issues and management concerns developed by BLM prior to scoping.

From the initial list of preliminary planning issues and management concerns, the BLM used a multi-step process to categorize and distill the issues further identified during the RMP scoping period:

1. Comment documents were reviewed for content; individual and duplicate comments were then identified.

2. A matrix was created listing all of the comments (Appendix E). One or more resource categories (listed in Table 10 above) were assigned to each comment based upon the resource-specific content of the comment.
3. Categories were then developed and listed on the matrix to determine the disposition of each comment. The categories included:
  - Comment will be addressed in the RMP;
  - Comment presents a new issue and will be addressed in the RMP;
  - Comment further refines an existing issue and will be addressed in the RMP;
  - Comment will not be addressed;
  - Comment is beyond the scope of the RMP and will not be addressed;
  - Comment is better addressed administratively or at a lower level of planning;
  - Reference only.
4. Members of the RMP Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) reviewed all comments listed in the matrix and determined the appropriate planning issue category(s) for each comment.
5. Planning issue statements were written to encapsulate the issues and concerns raised by the scoping comments in each issue category.

The planning statements presented in this section are designed to highlight the key issues described in comments received during the scoping process. Because they are meant to encapsulate the issues and concerns raised by the public as well as the cooperating agencies and the BLM during preliminary and internal scoping, each of the broad planning issue statements incorporates a number of closely related, but more specific, refined RMP-related issues. A more detailed look at individual issues and their relationship to the planning issue statements is provided in Table 11 of this document.

### **1.3.2 Digest of Scoping Comments by Planning Issue Category**

Appendix G provides a digest of the public comments received during the public scoping process for each planning issue category. As discussed previously, the BLM received and reviewed 526 comments (370 unique comments and 159 duplicate comments) from 48 unique documents and 5 form letters comprising 39 duplicate documents during the scoping period. In the issue category digest located in Appendix G, the primary needs, uses, and concerns raised during scoping have been categorized and consolidated by BLM.

### **1.3.3 Management Concerns and Issues Identified and Refined through Scoping**

A planning statement (written in the form of a question) has been developed for each of the 22 topic categories receiving comments during the scoping process. No comments were received for the remaining topic category, Visual Resources (VR). These planning statements attempt to condense the issues and concerns raised by the public during the scoping process. Adjustments to the planning issues and management concerns will continue to be made, as needed, during the planning process as BLM receives additional input from the public and cooperators.

The following section provides examples of the types of more specific issues and management concerns that are distilled within the broad planning issue categories presented in Section 1.5 of this document. These more specific issues arose out of the Preparation Plan for the Lewistown RMP (available at <http://blm.gov/ngld>), internal scoping, and the public scoping comments. In Table 11 below, each of the broad planning issue statements appears in a pink shaded row and the more specific issues it

encapsulates appear in the unshaded rows that follow in Table 11. The topic categories were derived to capture and organize the entire spectrum of scoping comments received. Actual order and organization of the issue statement during the development of the RMP will be in accordance with Appendix F of the Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601).

**Table 11. Planning Statements by Topic Category**

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
<b>1. AIR QUALITY AND ATMOSPHERIC RESOURCES (AA)</b> <b>How can BLM prevent degradation to air resources and minimize contributions to climate change?</b>	
	How will BLM manage fine particulate matter from prescribed fire projects?
	How and where will BLM manage noise emission?
	How will BLM limit or reduce emissions from activities on federal lands?
	How will BLM mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change?
<b>2. ACCESS (AC)</b> <b>What management actions are needed to maintain and improve access to public lands?</b>	
	How will BLM identify opportunities to improve and maintain access?
	Where and how will BLM utilize acquisition, disposal, and land exchanges to consolidate larger, more accessible blocks of public lands?
<b>3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES (AP)</b> <b>What administrative processes will be used to develop the RMP?</b>	
	How will BLM document cumulative effects, and what scale will be used?
	How will BLM craft the purpose and need to define the scope of the RMP?
	How will BLM incorporate new data and inventories into the RMP?
	What process will be used to develop the alternatives?
	How will BLM conduct outreach and education to user groups?
	How will BLM analyze and implement adaptive management?
	How will BLM assign values to public land resources?
<b>4. CAVE AND KARST (CK)</b> <b>What management is needed to manage for cave and karst resources?</b>	
	How will cave and karst resources be managed to encourage visitor use while providing for safety and protection of cave resources?
	What process will be implemented to develop site-specific cave management plans?
	What cave and karst resources currently exist within the planning area?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
<b>5. CULTURAL RESOURCES (CR)</b> <b>How will BLM provide for the preservation and interpretation of cultural and heritage resources?</b>	
	How will cultural and heritage resources be inventoried?
	How will BLM manage the mineral estate in regards to cultural, historical, and paleontological resources?
	What types of land-use designations should be considered to best manage cultural and historical resources?
<b>6. FIRE MANAGEMENT (FM)</b> <b>How can the BLM manage fire and fuels to protect public safety as well as natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	How can BLM mitigate fine particulate matter when implementing prescribed fire projects?
	What areas will be prioritized for fuels treatment projects?
	How will post-implementation fuels projects be monitored and treated for invasive and noxious weed species?
	What type of livestock grazing restrictions will be required after fire treatments?
	What road infrastructure is needed for fire management?
<b>7. FOREST PRODUCTS (FP)</b> <b>How can the BLM provide forest products while protecting natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	What forest resources are identified for timber or special forest product sale locations?
	Where will forest product activities be emphasized or restricted?
	How will the road network be managed prior, during, and after forest product activities?
<b>8. FISH AND WILDLIFE (FW)</b> <b>How can the BLM manage public land uses while maintaining and improving terrestrial and aquatic habitats?</b>	
	What are the priority species and where are their habitats in the planning area?
	What areas are not fulfilling ecological function due to historical or existing land use practices?
	What types of stipulations, mitigations, and restrictions to land uses are required to protect fish and wildlife resources?
	What designations should be considered to manage for priority species and vegetation?
	How will the federal estate be managed to protect fish and wildlife resources?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	What are the primary sources of alteration to key fish and wildlife species and key habitats within the planning area?
	What types of land tenure adjustments could best manage fish and wildlife resources?
	How will Greater Sage-grouse conservation objectives be incorporated into the RMP?
	How will roads and travel be managed to protect fish and wildlife resources?
	Where could land-use practices be sited to be least impactful to fish and wildlife resources?
	How can BLM help reduce hunter/landowner conflicts?
	What would be the most effective methods of habitat restoration?
	How can livestock/wildlife conflicts be reduced?
	How will BLM allow for expansion of bison?
<b>9. LIVESTOCK GRAZING (LG)</b> <b>How can the BLM manage livestock use on public lands while also protecting natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	How will livestock grazing be managed to best maintain and improve priority vegetative communities?
	What forage use levels will be allocated to livestock?
	How will direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts from livestock be documented?
	What types of mitigation measures and restrictions will be required to protect resources?
	Is BLM's drought policy effective to manage livestock grazing during periods of drought?
	What types of vegetative restoration techniques should be implemented to increase forage production?
	Where and how will range management infrastructure be constructed, modified, and maintained?
	How will unallocated, cancelled, or relinquished animal unit months (AUMs) be managed?
	How can BLM help reduce recreation/livestock grazing conflicts?
	What types of livestock will be authorized?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
<b>10. LANDS AND REALTY (LR) *Includes comments pertaining to withdrawals.</b> <b>What land tenure and management adjustments are needed to meet access and development needs, while also protecting natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	Where and how will BLM utilize acquisition, disposal, and land exchanges to consolidate larger, more accessible blocks of public lands?
	Where will land authorizations that are required for commercial activities be allowed to reduce resource impacts?
	What types of mitigation measures or restrictions are required to protect resource values?
	What opportunities exist to improve access and consolidate public lands?
	What areas are currently withdrawn from mineral and energy development and should additional areas be recommended?
	How will the RMP decisions affect existing land-use authorizations?
	What areas require survey or boundary identification?
	What parcels of BLM land should be identified for retention, acquisition, and disposal?
	What areas should be permitted for renewable energy development?
<b>11. MINERALS AND ENERGY (ME)</b> <b>Which areas should be open to mineral and energy development and how should BLM manage such development while protecting human health as well as natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	Where will mineral and energy development be allowed to occur and what constraints should apply?
	What areas would be least impacted by mineral and energy development?
	Are any additional withdrawals required to protect resources?
	How will the RMP incorporate new technologies in oil and gas development?
	What actions can BLM implement to protect aquatic resources, water quality/quantity, and reduce emissions?
	What is the potential for “frack-sands” development in the planning area?
	How will impacts from oil and gas be documented in the RMP?
	What types of protections, monitoring, and mitigation measures are required to protect water resources?
	How will produced water be managed?
	What abandonment procedures and reclamation will be required on inactive wells?
	What mitigation strategies for remediating future unanticipated impacts to water resources will be required?
	How will BLM provide long-term monitoring strategies for water resources?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	Where will nonenergy leasable development be allowed to occur?
	What areas are suitable for coal development?
	How will BLM deal with anticipated requests for exceptions and waivers?
	How will the RMP provide context and balance between the planning area and adjacent areas of development?
	Where would minerals and energy development be the least impactful?
	How will BLM incorporate the Master Lease Plan concept to resolve conflict in areas of competing uses and interests?
	How will RMP decisions affect valid existing rights?
<b>12. PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES (PR)</b>	
<b>How can the BLM manage paleontological resources to provide both resource protection and opportunities for public education and study?</b>	
	Are additional withdrawals required to protect paleontological resources?
<b>13. PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)</b>	
<b>How can the BLM ensure activities conducted on BLM-administered lands do not contribute risks to public health and safety?</b>	
	How can BLM provide for watershed protection for community drinking water and groundwater resources?
	How can BLM help reduce user conflicts between landowners, hunting, and recreational shooting on public lands?
	How can BLM promote recreational use of public lands while ensuring public safety and protection of natural, biological, and cultural resources?
<b>14. RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES (RV)</b>	
<b>How can the BLM provide recreational opportunities on public lands while protecting public safety, and natural and cultural resources?</b>	
	Which areas are most important for recreational activities?
	What are the needs for recreational and visitor services within the planning area? What opportunities exist to meet growing recreational demands?
	Are current recreational needs being met? What are the baseline conditions for recreational and visitor services?
	What constraints on resource uses are needed to improve recreational experiences and expand opportunities?
	Where does conflict between recreational users exist and how will BLM balance competing uses?
	What recreational uses are compatible and what opportunities exist for dual-use recreational activities?
	How will BLM provide interpretation and educate user groups about recreational opportunities in the planning area?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	Where will resource use activities be least impactful to recreation and visitor services?
	How can BLM better coordinate with adjacent landowners and user groups to manage recreational sites?
	How will BLM manage cave resources to allow recreational opportunities while balancing the needs of public safety and protection of resources?
	How can BLM help reduce recreation and landowner conflicts?
	How will direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to and from recreational activities be documented in the RMP?
	What road system is required to support recreation in the planning area and how will travel management be incorporated into the RMP?
	What management adjustments to land tenure are needed to improve recreational and visitor opportunities?
	Will BLM implement user fees for visitor services?
	What areas will continue to be available for dispersed camping?
<b>15. SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS (SD)</b> <b>How can the BLM manage areas that contain unique or sensitive resources?</b>	
	Are existing Special Designations still required to manage sensitive resources?
	Are current Special Designation boundaries still appropriate?
	What areas contain unique or sensitive resources that are in need of special management?
	Should areas be nominated for Congressional designation (such as Outstanding Natural Areas along the Rocky Mountain Front)?
	What types of management actions are needed within current special designations or in new areas where new designations have been proposed?
	How will BLM manage lands adjacent to existing wildlife refuges, protected areas or lands under consideration in the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act?
	Are BLM's current designations appropriate to manage for backcountry resource values?
	How will the federal estate be managed to protect unique or sensitive surface values?
	What resource uses are appropriate within Special Designations?
	Should cave/karst areas receive special designation and management?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
<b>16. SOCIO-ECONOMICS (SE)</b> <b>How can the BLM manage public land use with the preservation of local tradition and local economies that rely upon BLM-administered land?</b>	
	How can the BLM balance its mandate for multiple use management with the preservation of local tradition and local economies that rely upon BLM-administered land?
	How can BLM maintain traditional land use practices?
	What opportunities exist to develop resources that would contribute to local economies?
	What minority, low income, and/or tribal communities will be impacted by RMP decisions?
	What direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts will RMP decisions have on communities within the planning area?
	Will BLM decisions contribute to additional loading placed on local communities' abilities to provide necessary public services and amenities?
	How can BLM decisions add stability, flexibility, and diversification needed to support communities dependent on agriculture?
	How would land tenure adjustments affect the economic stability of rural communities?
	How can public land management contribute to the economic stability of small rural communities in the planning area?
	What are the existing socio-economic conditions, customs and traditional practices within the planning area?
	How would protection of unique and sensitive resources, wilderness characteristics, and recreational services impact local economies?
	How will conservation and commercial uses be balanced?
	How will management prescriptions be compatible with surrounding, intermingled and adjacent lands?
	What impacts do resource uses have on local communities?
<b>17. SOIL RESOURCES AND GEOLOGY (SR)</b> <b>How can BLM maintain and restore soil resources?</b>	
	What areas have soils that are specifically steep, sensitive to disturbance, and have low reclamation potential?
	What areas are in need of reclamation or are currently being impacted by resource uses?
	What sensitive soil types are near surface waters, ephemeral, or intermittent stream channels?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	What sensitive soil types are near sensitive aquatic resources such as westslope cutthroat trout?
	What resource uses are currently contributing to, or could potentially contribute to, sedimentation, erosion, and soil degradation?
<b>18. TRIBAL INTERESTS (TI)</b> <b>What management actions are required to support tribal interests within the planning area?</b>	
	What minority, low-income, and tribal communities will be impacted by RMP decisions?
	What mitigation measures are needed to reduce disproportionate, adverse impacts on minority, low-income, and tribal communities?
	How will BLM acknowledge and incorporate treaty rights into the RMP?
	What are the current and potential impacts from resource uses to tribal interests?
	How will BLM manage effects of climate change on tribal interests?
	What resource uses are compatible with tribal interests, treaty rights, and trust responsibilities?
	How will tribes be represented in formulation of the RMP?
<b>19. TRAVEL MANAGEMENT (TM)</b> <b>How should travel be managed on BLM-administered lands to allow access and recreation while protecting natural, biological, and cultural resources?</b>	
	What are the recreation and transportation needs within the planning area?
	What areas are/should be delineated for travel management?
	What criteria will be used for designating roads as closed, open, or limited?
	Where are the current roads/routes and what is their condition? What is the baseline travel network within the planning area?
	Where are sensitive soils and, specifically, steep slopes that need to be considered for travel management?
	What management measures will BLM implement to reduce road proliferation until travel management can be implemented?
	How will travel management be evaluated within special designations?
	What are the cumulative effects, both within and outside of the planning area, due to restrictions from private landowners and other agencies' travel management decisions?
	What types of vehicles will BLM allow on existing roads and routes? Does this include landing aircraft?
	What are the purposes of existing roads/routes in the planning area? Do they meet the current and projected need of users?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	What types of recreational and access uses are compatible or competing on the road/route and trail systems?
	How can BLM provide motorized access to historic and cultural sites while protecting the integrity of those sites?
	Where are seasonal restrictions appropriate?
	Where are the valid existing rights that require access?
	How can BLM better coordinate with neighboring landowners and adjacent federal and state agencies to ensure consistency of travel management decisions?
	How will site-specific travel planning be initiated within the planning area?
	How can BLM implement travel management to help reduce landowner and recreational conflicts?
	Under what circumstances is administrative, off-road use acceptable? And, what limitations on administrative use are required?
	How will roads/routes not designated in travel planning be closed or reclaimed?
	How will routes within areas containing wilderness characteristics be managed prior, during, and after travel planning?
	How will upgrading of existing roads/routes be considered within Greater Sage-grouse habitat?
	Where are problem routes and where is damage occurring from the travel network?
	How will adaptive management be used to close or modify problem routes?
	How will illegally-created roads and routes be managed?
	How will BLM provide education and public interpretation of future travel management decisions?
	How will public safety be evaluated and considered during travel planning?
	How will BLM address expanding interest and need for single-track trails?
	How will BLM address illegal, off-road use?
	What are the travel system requirements for fighting wildfire?
<b>20. VEGETATIVE COMMUNITIES (VC)</b> <b>How can BLM maintain and restore vegetative communities?</b>	
	What invasive and noxious weed species are present in the planning area, where are they located, and to what extent do they impact native communities?
	What sources of alteration are impacting vegetative communities in the planning area?
	What are the priority vegetative species and community types in the planning area?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	What restoration methods are needed to restore altered communities?
	Which vegetative communities are most important to priority fish and wildlife species?
	What types of grazing practices and management systems will be used to maintain and improve vegetative health?
	What management activities will be used to conserve, restore, maintain, and enhance vegetative communities and to control/manage noxious weeds?
	What types of unimpacted vegetative communities exist within the planning area and where do they exist?
	What drought strategies are required to protect vegetative communities during prolonged periods of drought?
	How will monitoring be implemented; what types of monitoring will be used and at what frequency?
	How will conifer encroachment be managed?
	What recovery period will be required after fire?
	What goals and objectives will be established for vegetative communities?
	How will forage be allocated?
<b>21. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS (WC)</b> <b>How will BLM maintain wilderness values?</b>	
	How will BLM incorporate citizen inventories?
	Where do lands with wilderness characteristics exist within the planning area?
	How will BLM ensure compatible management on lands adjacent to wildlife refuges and protected areas?
	What sources of alteration are impacting lands with wilderness characteristics and what types of impacts are projected in the future?
	Are lands with wilderness characteristics compatible with other special designations and outside designations such as backcountry conservation areas?
	Are special designations along the Rocky Mountain Front adequate to protect wilderness characteristics?
	How would management associated with wilderness characteristics be compatible with other resources and resource uses?
	How would lands with wilderness characteristics be impacted by land tenure adjustments?
	What supplemental values are present within lands found to contain wilderness characteristics?
	What impacts do lands with wilderness characteristics have on local communities?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	How can BLM minimize conflicts between wilderness characteristics and other resources and resource uses?
<b>22. WATER RESOURCES (WR)</b> <b>How can land use practices be managed to maintain and improve water resources?</b>	
	Where are the important waterways, ground and surface water resources, and what is their current condition?
	Where are the existing wetlands and waters of the United States that are regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and wetlands and waters protected under Executive Order 11990?
	Where are the Class I and Class II trout streams within the planning area and what management actions are required to preserve and enhance these resources?
	Where are municipal watersheds and designated source water protection areas?
	Where are sensitive soils located in relation to surface waters, and ephemeral and intermittent stream channels?
	What are the primary sources of impairment within the planning area?
	How will the federal estate be managed to protect ground and surface waters?
	What water protection measures will be implemented to protect water resources?
	How will BLM consider water quantity and availability when analyzing commercial activities?
	What are the current and projected water demands from resource uses, and from what water sources?
	How can water demand be reduced?
	How will BLM quantify, document, and analyze impacts to water resources resulting from leaks and spills, production and disposal of produced water, infiltration basins, evaporation ponds, use of reserve pits, underground injection control wells, tailing ponds, production well bore integrity, closure requirements, pipeline use, and re-stimulation and abandonment of existing wells? What mitigation measures will be required to minimize the potential for these impacts? How will these operations be monitored?
	How will BLM analyze impacts that occur downstream of the planning area?
	How will water quality and quantity monitoring be implemented prior, during, and after anticipated developments to detect impacts to both ground and surface waters, including private well monitoring?
	How will BLM minimize impacts, loss, and degradation of wetlands and preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands?
	How will adaptive management be implemented to protect water resources?

Issue Category	Refined Planning Issue
	What grazing monitoring strategies will BLM implement on an allotment, watershed, or subwatershed level to ensure compliance with standards and guidelines for rangeland health?
	How much forage will be allocated to watershed and stream protection?
	How will grazing privileges that are lost, relinquished, cancelled, or have base property sold without transfer be distributed for wildlife and watershed protection?
	How will watershed boundaries be considered and incorporated for special designations and other management boundary delineations?
	How will resource use during periods of drought be managed to preserve aquatic resources?

**1.3.4 Planning Criteria Identified through Scoping**

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require the development of planning criteria to establish constraints or ground rules that guide and direct preparation of the resource management plan. 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, and the result of consultation and coordination with the public; other federal, state and local agencies; and Native American tribes. The BLM’s list of preliminary planning criteria is located in Appendix H. The following planning criteria were identified during scoping by individuals, organizations, agencies, and tribes. In addition to the planning criteria listed below, many commenters provided literature citations, newspaper articles, and other reference materials that were recommended for consideration in the RMP. A complete list of reference suggestions provided during scoping are included in Appendix I, Scoping Reference Materials. The LFO manager will approve the final issues and management concerns to be addressed in the RMP along with the planning criteria to be considered with modifications during the planning process, as needed.

Planning Criteria Identified During Scoping:

- 40 CFR Section 144.3
- 40 CFR § 1502.14 (2010)
- 43 CFR § 1610.4-4 (g)
- 43 CFR Sec 4100.0-8
- 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b)
- 43 CFR § 1610.3-2
- 43 CFR 4180
- 16 USC §§ 431-433 – Antiquities Act of 1906

- 16 USC § 1244(a)(6) – National Trails System Act of 1968, amended in 1978
- Title 18 USC Section 1001
- 42 USC § 4332(2)(C)(iii)
- 42 USC §§ 7401 et seq.
- MDEQ 42 USC§ 7407(a) (2010)
- 42 USC § 7475(d)(2)(B) (2010)
- Administrative Procedures Act (APA)
- Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972, Section 303(d)
- Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 363
- False Claims Act
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) – 43 USC § 1712
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
- Taylor Grazing Act of 1934
- BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1)
- 6100 – National Landscape Conservation System Management Manual, p. 1-6; The National Landscape Conservation System: 15-Year Strategy 2010-2025; Bureau of Land Management Montana/Dakotas: National Landscape Conservation System, Three-Year Strategy 2013-2015
- BLM Manual 6310 – Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands (Public)
- BLM Manual 6320 – Considering Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process
- Executive Order 11644 – Use of Off-road Vehicles on the Public Lands (February 8, 1972)
- Executive Order 11989 – Use of Off-road Vehicles on the Public Lands (May 24, 1977)
- Executive Order 11990 – Protection of Wetlands (May 24, 1977)
- Executive Order 12898 – Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994)
- Executive Order 13514 – Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance (October 5, 2009)
- Interior Releases Updated Draft Rule for Hydraulic Fracturing on Public and Indian Lands for Public Comment, BLM, May 16, 2013 EPA, US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and US Department of the Interior (USDI) MOU dated June 23, 2011, regarding Air Quality Analyses and Mitigation for Federal Oil and Gas Decisions through the National Environmental Policy Act Process
- ([http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2013/may/nr\\_05\\_16\\_2013.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2013/may/nr_05_16_2013.html))
- Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide (July 2008)
- BLM Washington Office (WO) Instruction Memorandum No. 2001-191

- BLM WO Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-167
- BLM WO Instruction Memorandum No. 1992-67 (expired)
- Federal Lands Hunting, Fishing and Shooting Sports Roundtable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (2006)
- USDI, BLM and USDA, FS MOU No. W0300-2006-07 dated April 2006, concerning Oil and Gas Leasing and Operations
- Onshore Order 2
- Montana State Water Plan, Montana Water Supply Initiative – 2015 ([http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water\\_mgmt/state\\_water\\_plan/default.asp](http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_mgmt/state_water_plan/default.asp).)
- Off-Highway Vehicle EIS and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and Portions of South Dakota
- Final National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-highway Vehicle Use, January 19, 2001
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Climate Change Policy Statement
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Position Regarding the Transfer of Federal Lands
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Position Statement Regarding Developed Campgrounds on Federal Lands
- Public Law 88-657
- Public Law 105-359 (Improving Access to Outdoor Recreational Activities on Federal Land, prepared by Wilderness Inquiry, June 27, 2000)
- Public Law 109-432, Section 403(a)
- Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota (1977)
- Water Quality Best Management Practices for Montana Forests (Montana State University [MSU] Publication EB158)

### 1.3.5 Issues and Comments for No Further Analysis

Most of the comments received were related to planning issues that will be addressed in the RMP revision; however, a number of comments raised issues that will not be addressed in the RMP revision. These included changes to regulations and BLM policies, issues outside the scope of the planning process, comments that were too vague, comments on the planning or public involvement process, and requests for site-specific actions.

- Regulations and BLM policy issues involved requests for changes to, or continuation of, state or national BLM policies or existing laws and regulations. These types of policy and regulatory decisions are set at the national level. Examples of this type of comment included requests to increase grazing fees, comments stating the BLM should redefine the terms used for calculating AUMs, or implementation of broad-scale, recreational user fees on BLM lands.

- Issues outside the scope of the planning process included requests for the BLM to take actions outside of the agency’s jurisdiction or manage resources not within the planning area (such as the UMRBNM or national forest lands). Examples of comments considered to be outside of the scope included a request to stop the take of animals in the planning area or a request to provide for the restoration of bison. Another example of comments considered to be outside of the scope was related to wilderness area designation. The BLM received multiple comments that supported designation for all potential lands as wilderness areas. The designation of wilderness area status is the sole responsibility of the US Congress, and no changes to existing, Congressionally-designated wilderness or creation of new wilderness can occur until the Congress acts on the existing set of recommendations.
- Comments that were too vague included general statements regarding such things as the need for environmental protection, where the issue of concern was unclear.
- Planning and public involvement process comments included requests for the BLM to follow the principles of multiple use or implement required planning statutes (such as NEPA or FLPMA). There were also requests for certain individuals with specific skillsets or interests to serve on the interdisciplinary team. Some commenters offered recommendations based on personal interpretations of court decisions or research studies. Other commenters provided suggestions on BLM management that were administrative in nature that do not require further analysis, such as “increase education.” Some commenters simply requested specific datasets be made available to the public or to be notified regarding the status of the RMP project.

Requests for implementation level (i.e., project or site-specific) management actions included requests that can’t be properly be addressed at the RMP level. Comments of this type primarily include decisions which are typically made through lower level or project level planning efforts. Examples of these comments often requested establishment of allotment-specific forage objectives, site-specific route designation comments, or offered suggestions on the design of timber sales or specific management actions related to cave management. Although the RMP can provide broad direction and guidance for these types of activities, associated decisions of this nature are tiered down to watershed area plans, travel management plans, project-specific environmental assessments, and cave management plans, respectively. As BLM develops the RMP, adjustments may be made to the issue statements, management concerns and planning criteria.

### **1.3.6 Valid Existing Management to be Carried Forward**

The BLM is currently reviewing the condition of the existing environment and the management situation to identify which management decisions should be carried forward or modified and where there are opportunities for change. This information will be summarized in the Summary of the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) and will be posted on the Lewistown RMP website (<http://blm.gov/ngld>).

### **1.3.7 Special Designations, Including Nominations**

Commenters mentioned that a number of areas are deserving of special consideration (such as the Arrow Creek Breaks, Musselshell Breaks, and areas along the Rocky Mountain Front) or otherwise indicated some areas require additional management protection (such as the Pine Butte Swamp); these areas are described in the comment summaries located in Appendix G (Digest of Scoping Comments by Planning Issue Category).

There were no formal nominations received from the public for new special designations, although a number of commenters suggested boundary changes or special designations on existing outstanding natural areas (ONAs) and areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs). Those suggestions are being evaluated by the interdisciplinary team and will be summarized in the ACEC Report which will be available on the Lewistown RMP website. Any nominations developed during ongoing, internal BLM scoping, and all existing special designations will be reviewed as part of the RMP revision process.

### **1.4 DATA SUMMARY/DATA GAPS**

The development of the RMP and EIS will use both updated, existing, and new data. Multiple commenters suggested that the BLM conduct baseline studies of the resources in the planning process including: water quality and availability; municipal water supplies and source-water protection areas; wetland and riparian resources; soil resources; wildlife and special status species; vegetation; air quality; baseline travel networks; and lands with wilderness characteristics. The BLM is currently collecting new baseline data or updating existing data, where such information is needed, to develop alternatives or complete the analysis of resource impacts. This new resource data is being generated and digitized into geographic information system (GIS) themes. Some comments identified new data gaps or suggested refinements of existing datasets, such as identifying the locations of Class I and Class II trout streams and refining current water datasets by further delineating the locations of existing wetlands and waters that are subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Executive Order 11990.

Both new and existing data will meet BLM standards and will become part of the publicly available decision record for the planning process.

### **1.5 SUMMARY OF FUTURE STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

In February 2013, BLM completed a Preparation Plan to guide development of the RMP. In this plan, preliminary issues, management concerns, and planning criteria were developed and presented to the public and external agencies during the scoping process. Through the scoping process, BLM received comments that helped shape and refine the preliminary planning issues, management concerns, and planning criteria. As a result of internal and external scoping processes, the following planning issue categories will be used to develop the RMP/EIS. Some of the planning issues listed below will receive a range of alternatives proposed for analysis while others will be primarily used within the analysis of impacts.

#### **Planning Issue Categories:**

- Air Resources and Climate Change
- Geology
- Soil Resources
- Water Resources
- Vegetative Communities
- Fish and Wildlife
- Wildland Fire Ecology
- Cultural and Heritage Resources
- Paleontological Resources
- Visual Resources

- Wilderness Characteristics
- Cave and Karst Resources
- Minerals and Energy Resources
- Livestock Grazing
- Recreation and Visitor Services
- Travel, Transportation Management, and Access
- Lands and Realty
- Renewable Energy
- Withdrawals
- Forest, Woodland, and Special Products
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Back Country Byways
- National Trails
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Wilderness Study Areas
- Outstanding Natural Areas
- Social and Economic Conditions
- Treaty Rights and Tribal Interests
- Environmental Justice
- Public Safety

Upon completion of this report, the BLM will develop its goals, objectives, and alternatives in partnership with cooperating agencies. Alternatives will be responsive to the planning issues identified in this report (as well as any other issues raised following scoping but before publication of the Draft EIS) and will achieve the planning process goals and objectives. Following the development of the alternatives, the BLM will perform an analysis of all the alternatives and will identify its preferred alternative.

The next designated public comment period starts with publication of the Draft RMP and EIS. The draft document will be distributed to individuals; industry; members of state and US Congress; cooperators, lessees, and permittees; RAC members; educational institutions; city, county, federal, state, and tribal government agencies; news media; organizations; and others on the general mailing list. The Draft RMP and EIS will also be available on the Lewistown RMP website at <http://blm.gov/ngld>. The availability of the Draft RMP and EIS will be announced in a Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register*. A 90-day public comment period will begin following publication of the Notice of Availability. Publication of the Draft RMP and EIS is anticipated in 2015.

Following the Draft RMP and EIS public comment period, all of the public comments received by BLM will be considered and revisions will be made, as warranted. Publication of the Proposed RMP and Final EIS will then be announced in the *Federal Register*. A 30-day public protest period will begin following publication. The Governor of Montana will be allowed 60 days to review the document prior to and during the public protest period to assure the RMP is consistent with state- and local-level plans and policies. If significant, substantive alterations are made as a result of protests, the BLM will publish a *Federal Register* notice requesting additional comments.

The BLM will address any public protests or inconsistencies identified by the Governor and will publish ROD(s) and an approved RMP. A notice will be published in the *Federal Register* announcing the availability of the RODs and approved RMP.

The BLM is committed to keeping the public informed concerning the RMP revision. All of the materials and documents related to this RMP revision will be made available on the Lewistown RMP website. Dates for the official public comment and protest periods, along with other relevant project dates, will also appear on this website. For additional information on the planning process, to be added or removed from the mailing list, or to submit a comment on the RMP revision, please contact the RMP Project Manager, Dan Brunkhorst at 920 NE Main; Lewistown, Montana 59457. Members of the public can also email questions or requests to [blm\\_mt\\_lewistown\\_rmp@blm.gov](mailto:blm_mt_lewistown_rmp@blm.gov).