United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Colorado State Office
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, Colorado 80215-7210
www.co.blm.gov

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (CON030)

APR 0 3 2015

Dear Reader:

Enclosed are the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO). The BLM prepared this Proposed RMP and Final EIS in consultation with cooperating agencies and the BLM Colorado Northwest Resource Advisory Council, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. The Proposed RMP provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of the lands and resources administered by the GJFO. The document contains land use planning decisions to guide the BLM's management of the GJFO.

This Proposed RMP and Final EIS have been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. The Proposed RMP is largely based on the preferred alternative, Alternative B, in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, which was released in January 2013. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS document contains a summary of changes made since the Draft RMP/EIS, impacts of the proposed alternative and other alternatives, a summary of the substantive written comments received during the public review period of the Draft RMP/EIS, and responses to those comments.

The planning area consists of about 2.2 million acres of land, which includes about 1.2 million acres of public lands and resources managed by the GJFO. The majority of the planning area is within Mesa and Garfield counties, with small portions falling within Montrose and Rio Blanco counties. When approved, this RMP will replace the 1987 Grand Junction Resource Management Plan and will guide management of public lands administered by the GJFO. The GJFO Proposed RMP/Final EIS and supporting information is available on the project website: http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/rmp.html.

Pursuant to the BLM's planning regulations at 43 C.F.R. 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed RMP and has an interest that is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decisions within 30 days from the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. For further information on filing a protest, see the accompanying protest regulations in the pages that follow (labeled as Enclosure). The regulations specify the required elements of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g., meeting minutes, summaries, or correspondence).

Under these conditions, the BLM will consider an emailed protest as an advance copy and will afford it full consideration.

If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, direct protests to protest@blm.gov.

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail:
Director (210)
Attn: Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 71383
Washington, DC 20024-1383

Overnight Mail:
Director (210)
Attn: Protest Coordinator
20M Street SE, Room 2134LM
Washington, DC 20003

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest–including your personal identifying information–may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior on each protest. Responses to protest issues will be compiled and formalized in a Director's Protest Resolution Report made available following issuance of the decisions.

Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be made available electronically on the BLM website at http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/rmp.html.

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions included in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals, pursuant to 43 C.F.R. Part 4 Subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations once the BLM resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and issues an Approved RMP and ROD. The Approved RMP and ROD will, therefore, identify the implementation decisions made in the plan that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals.

Sincerely,

Ruth Welch
State Director, BLM Colorado

Enclosure:
Protest Regulations (43 C.F.R. 1610.5-2)

Protest Regulations

[CITE: 43 C.F.R. 1610.5-2]

TITLE 43—PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR
CHAPTER II—BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PART 1600—PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING—Table of Contents
Subpart 161 0—Resource Management Planning
Sec. 1610.5-2 Protest procedures.

(a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.

(1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.

(2) The protest shall contain:

(i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;
(ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
(iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;
(iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
(v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

(3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest.

Enclosure