



BLM News



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BLM releases Price Field Office Draft Resource Management Plan

Public urged to comment and attend public meetings

The Bureau of Land Management Price Field Office announced today the availability of their Draft Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft RMP/EIS). More than two and a half years in the making, the draft plan when finalized will guide how natural resources, activities, and uses on more than 2.5 million acres of public lands in Carbon and Emery Counties will be managed during the next 15-20 years.

The Price land use plan is the first of seven draft plans that will be released over the next few years as a part of a statewide plan revision initiative. The Draft RMP/EIS is now available for a 90-day public comment until Oct. 15, 2004, and public meetings will be held to gain input. Once comments are reviewed and considered a Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be issued for review prior to signing a Record of Decision.

“Future management of places like the Bookcliffs, the San Rafael Swell, and Nine Mile Canyon will be determined in this plan,” said Price Field Office Manager Patrick Gubbins. “We need the public’s comments to assist us in finalizing the alternatives and confirming accuracy of the document.”

In the draft plan, BLM evaluated a wide range of alternatives, with each alternative providing a mix of resource protection, use, and development. Alternatives range from being more commodities based to conservation based. The BLM preferred alternative draws from each of the alternatives to present a balanced approach to the full spectrum of resources, resource uses, and programs.

The draft plan addresses key public land issues raised during public scoping and the planning process. Some of these include: recreation, minerals and energy, grazing, water, fish and wildlife, wild horses and burros, air quality, cultural and paleontology, soil and vegetation, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and Wilderness Study Areas.

The plan will also address alternatives for motorized route designation. It will incorporate the 2002 San Rafael Motorized Route Designation Plan, and will use similar criteria to analyze potential designation of motorized routes for the remainder of the Price Resource Area.

Gubbins noted that the Draft RMP/EIS was prepared with the assistance of four cooperating agencies, as well as input from the public during the scoping phase of this planning effort.

“We want to extend thanks to those individuals and organizations that have provided information and ideas that have been considered during this part of the planning process,” said Gubbins. “Our cooperating agency partners have provided integral support and expertise in focusing on issues and developing alternatives to address them.”

The overall intent of the RMP is to develop a comprehensive management strategy that will guide the management of public lands administered by the Price Field Office into the future. This RMP combines two older land use plans (the Price River Resource Area Management Framework Plan and the San Rafael Resource Management Plan) into a single unified Price Field Office RMP.

The Draft RMP/EIS may be viewed electronically at www.pricermp.com or the Price Field Office, 125 S. 600 W., Price, Utah, 84501. You may also contact the Price Field Office by phone at 435.636.3600. A CD-ROM is also available.

Public meetings to provide an overview of the document, respond to questions, and take public comments, will be held at:

Castle Dale August 24 4:00 – 9:00 pm
Museum of the San Rafael, 96 N. 100 E.

Green River August 25 4:00 – 9:00 pm
J.W. Powell River History Museum, 885 East Main

Price August 26 4:00 – 9:00 pm
Holiday Inn, 838 Westwood Blvd.

Salt Lake City August 31 4:00 – 9:00 pm
Best Western Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, 122 W. South Temple

Comments on the Draft RMP/EIS will be accepted until October 15, 2004. Written comments should be sent to: Price Field Office RMP Comments, Attention: Floyd Johnson, 125 S. 600 W., Price, Utah, 84501. Comments may also be made electronically at: www.pricermp.com.

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the BLM Price Field Office at the location listed above during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except weekends and holidays). All submissions from organizations or businesses will be made available for public evaluation in their entirety. Individuals may request confidentiality with respect to their name, address, and phone number. If you wish to have your name or street address withheld from public review, or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, the first line of the comment should start with the words “CONFIDENTIALITY REQUESTED” in uppercase letters in order for BLM to comply with your request. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. Comment contents will not be kept confidential.

**Cooperating Agencies
include the State of Utah, Carbon
and Emery Counties, and U.S. Fish
and Wildlife Service.**

“Acting as a cooperating agency, we have been heavily involved in the planning process, including the formulation of alternatives. We have not always agreed; however we have been able to include our viewpoint and rationale in the process. We feel that our input from the local user perspective will be fully considered in the proposed revised Draft RMP which is forthcoming for public review.”

*-Emery County Commissioner
Ira W. Hatch*

“Participation as a cooperating agency has been of tremendous benefit to the state, to the planning process, and to collaboration between different levels of government. It is a relationship that is well worth the effort, and that will lead not only to a much better resource management plan, but also to improved opportunities for implementation of the plan.”

*-Planning Coordinator, State of Utah
Wes Curtis*

“Our county has worked side by side with the BLM to attempt to reach agreement on various issues facing our county and the BLM. Although we haven’t been able to reach agreement on all issues, there are some that we can agree on. This has been a good first step in getting a good understanding and working relationship with the BLM.”

*- Carbon County Commissioner
Michael S. Milovich*