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Public Comment Period Extended on BLM's Price Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

PRICE, Utah—The comment period for BLM's Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Price Field Office will be extended by 45 days, until November 29th. BLM made the decision to extend the comment period after they received a number of requests from the public and other government agencies. BLM originally released the Draft RMP to the public on July 16 for their review and comment. It considers an array of management options for future public land management.

“The public's input is critical since this RMP will guide management of more than 2.5 million acres of public lands,” said BLM Field Office Manager Patrick Gubbins. “We understand that this is a very complex document—the culmination of two years of work by BLM, our cooperating agencies, and the public. We want to make sure the public and our partners have the time that is needed to understand the document and provide substantive comments,”

Thus far, more than 38,000 comment letters have been received on the Price RMP. According to Gubbins, “BLM looks forward to continued interest, and we hope to receive input that will assist us in developing a high-quality final plan.”

In order to assist the public with understanding the draft plan, BLM will post additional materials over the next couple weeks on the RMP web site (www.pricermp.com) to answer some of the commonly asked questions they have received during the comment period.

One of the common concerns raised during the comment period related to motorized route designation and off-highway vehicle management. In the final plan, BLM will designate areas as open to motorized travel, closed to motorized travel, or limited to designated routes. For the “limited” category, BLM will also designate which specific routes will be open to motorized use (the route designations that were already made in the 2003 San Rafael Route Designation Plan will be incorporated into the Final RMP).

“There are more than 3,500 miles of existing routes in the management area. We do not plan on designating all of these routes as open; rather, our goal is to create a designated route network that protects other resources and provides both motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities,” said Gubbins.

The draft plan addresses many other 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 Wild and Scenic River Suitability.

Places of particular interest within the planning area include the San Rafael Swell, Nine Mile Canyon, and Desolation Canyon. The draft plan considers a range of alternatives for management of important resources and uses in these and other places.

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.

The Draft RMP/EIS may be viewed electronically at www.pricemp.com or by calling the Price Field Office at 435.636.3600. Comments can be submitted via the web site or sent to Price Field Office RMP Comments, Attention: Floyd Johnson, 125 S. 600 W., Price, Utah, 84501.

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