

The BLM Resource Management Planning Process



Federal Land Policy and Management Act

- Congress, through FLPMA, has directed that BLM lands be managed for **multiple use and sustained yield**, and has required the BLM to do that through **land use planning with public involvement**.
- Land use planning = **Resource Management Plan (RMP)**

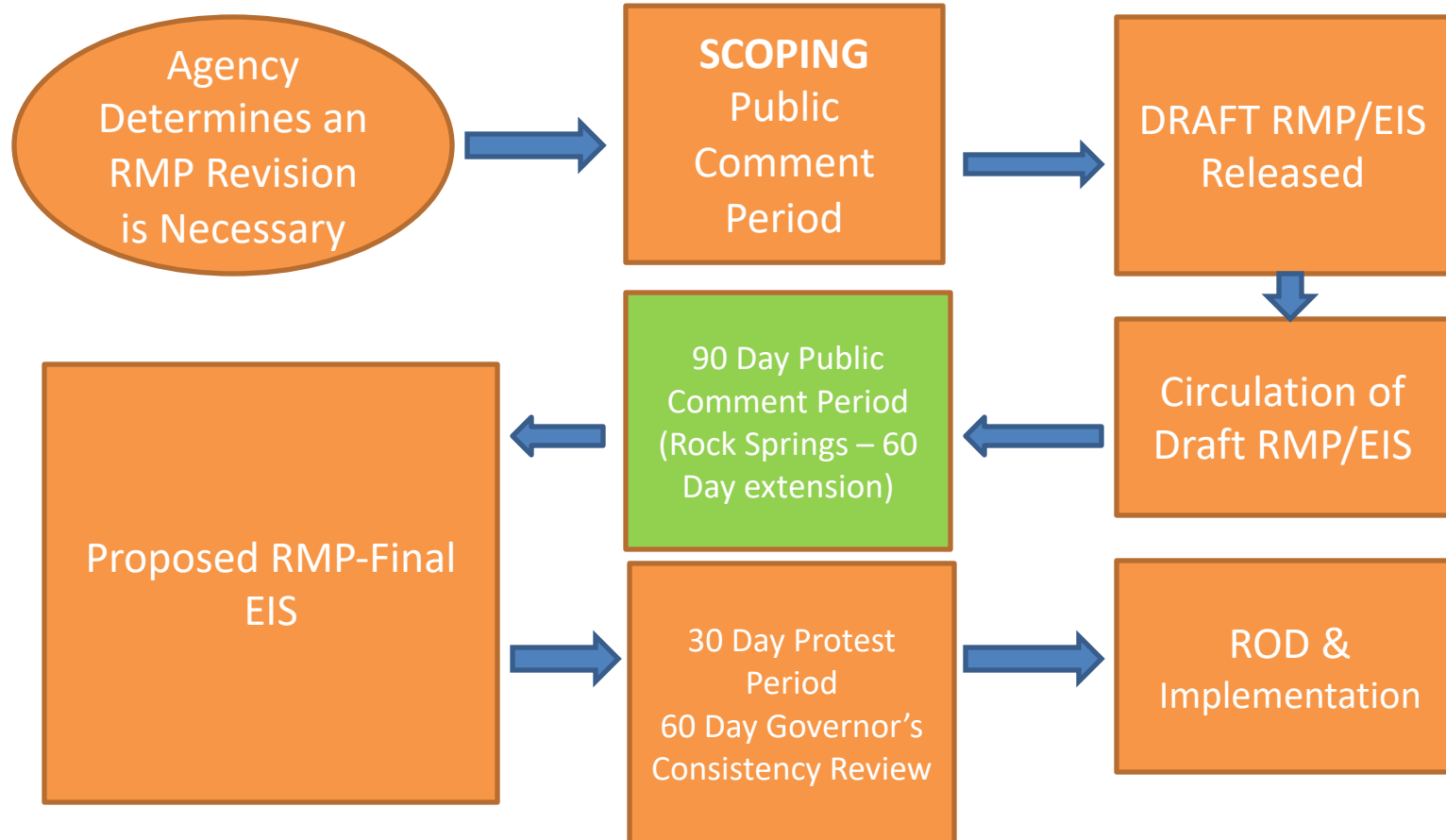
FLPMA – Section 202 (43 U.S.C. § 1712)

- **(a) Development, maintenance, and revision by Secretary.**
 - The Secretary shall, with public involvement and consistent with the terms and conditions of this Act, develop, maintain, and, when appropriate, revise land use plans which provide by tracts or areas for the use of the public lands.

RMPs

- Establish goals and objectives to guide future land and resource management actions implemented by the BLM.
- Are the basis for every on-the-ground action the BLM takes.
- Trigger NEPA – which is done concurrently with the development of the RMP.

RMP Process



Scoping

- The BLM's land-use planning process begins with a formal public scoping process to identify planning issues that should be considered in the land management plan.

Draft RMP/EIS

- The BLM develops a range of alternatives in a draft RMP and draft EIS. The release of the draft RMP and draft EIS is followed by a 90-day public comment period.
- Preferred alternative: BLM regulations require the identification of a preferred alternative. 43 CFR 1610.4-7.



Comment Review & Proposed RMP

The Field Manager shall evaluate the comments received and select and recommend to the State Director... a proposed resource management plan and final environmental impact statement. 43 CFR 1610.4-8.

Proposed RMP/Final EIS

- Once comments have been reviewed and evaluated, the BLM revises the draft plan, as appropriate, and then releases a proposed RMP and final EIS.

Protest Period and Consistency Review

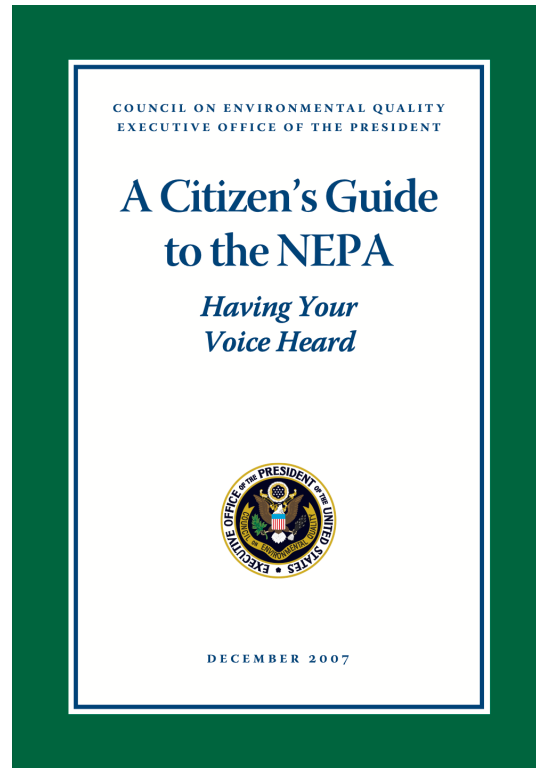
- The release of the proposed RMP and final EIS begins a 30-day protest period for any person who previously participated in the planning process and has an interest that is, or may be, adversely affected by the proposed plan. At the same time, the BLM provides the proposed RMP and final EIS to the governors of those states included in the RMP for a 60-day review period to identify any inconsistencies that may exist with state and local plans.

Approval

- After inconsistencies and protests have been considered, the BLM State Director may approve the final RMP.
- This is a final agency action – and at this point legal challenges can be pursued.



Public Commenting to the BLM



Requirement to Respond to Substantive Comments

- In the final EIS, the BLM must respond to substantive comments received on the Draft RMP/EIS. The response can be in form of changes to the final RMP/EIS, factual corrections, modifications to the analysis or the alternatives, new alternatives considered, or an explanation of why a comment does not require the agency's response. 40 CFR 1503.4

Substantive Comments

- Comments should be clear, concise, and relevant to the analysis of the proposed action.
- Comments that are solution oriented and provide specific examples are more effective than those that simply oppose the agency proposed action.
- Focus on the purpose and need of the plan, the proposed alternatives, and the assessment of environmental impacts,

More on Comments

- Commenting is not a form of voting on an alternative.
- The number of negative comments an agency receives does not prevent an action from moving forward.
- Numerous comments that repeat the same basic message of support or opposition will typically be responded to collectively.

HOW TO READ A DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN



I'm Learning By Osmosis



PURPOSE & NEED

RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

PURPOSE & NEED

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Rock Springs RMP revision is to provide an updated, comprehensive, and environmentally adequate framework for managing and allocating uses of public lands and resources administered by the BLM in the RSFO. The Rock Springs RMP will address changing needs of the planning area by updating information and revising management goals, objectives, and decisions while ensuring that public lands are managed according to the principles of multiple use identified in FLPMA while maintaining the valid existing rights and other obligations already established.

NEED

Since the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Green River RMP was signed in 1997, new data has become available, new policies established, and old policies revised. Additionally, completion of multiple maintenance actions for the Green River RMP, along with multiple RMP amendments, and RODs for programmatic EIS documents are needed to be incorporated into the updated RMP (Table 1-2).

ALTERNATIVES



ALTERNATIVE A

Continues management under existing plans, which balances protection of resource values with the use and development of resources.

No Action Alternative



ALTERNATIVE B

Emphasizes conservation of resource values with constraints on resource uses.

Agency Preferred Alternative



ALTERNATIVE C

Emphasizes resource uses with the least restrictive management actions for energy and commodity development

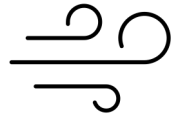


ALTERNATIVE D

A management approach that is less restrictive for resource uses than Alternative B, while also having a greater conservation focus than Alternative C.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

AIR RESOURCES



GEOLOGY



SOIL RESOURCES

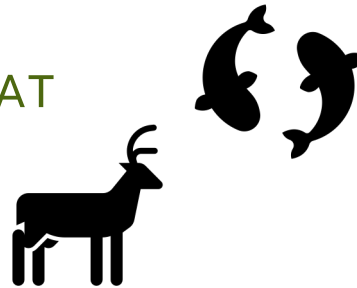
WATERSHED AND WATER QUALITY

VEGETATIVE COMMUNITIES



INVASIVE SPECIES & PEST MANAGEMENT

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT



Special Status Species



Visual Resources

Energy and Minerals



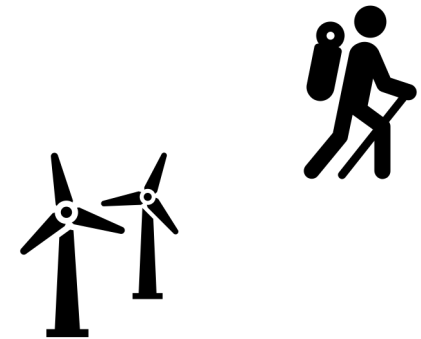
Livestock Grazing Management



Recreation and Visitor Services

Lands and Realty

Renewable Energy





SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

- AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern or ACEC designations highlight areas where special management attention is needed to protect important historical, cultural, and scenic values, or fish and wildlife or other natural resources.

The types of activities allowed within an ACEC depend on the resource and natural value the area is designated to protect.

- WILDERNESS & WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS (WSA)
- WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS
- NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS
- BACKCOUNTRY BYWAYS
- NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED



TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

The BLM has indicated it will conduct a travel plan amendment in a different NEPA process.



GREATER SAGE- GROUSE

The BLM is currently amending its GrSG Plan across the range in a separate effort.



WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT

The BLM already amended its wild horse management plan for the Rock Springs Field Office Area. It is currently in litigation.



WILDERNESS AREAS

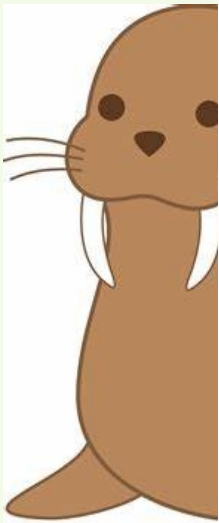
Only Congress can designate, change boundaries, or remove wilderness area designations.

MIX & MATCH

Alternative A



ALTERNATIVE B



ALTERNATIVE C



ALTERNATIVE D

