



United States Department of Interior
501 South 2nd Street East

Bureau of Land Management

Malta Field Office
Malta, Montana 59538

Date: September 13, 2006

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Malta Field Office Planning Process Underway Scoping Meetings Scheduled

MALTA--The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Malta Field Office intends to prepare a Resource Management Plan (RMP) with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The planning area encompasses Blaine, Glacier, Hill, Liberty, Phillips, Toole, Valley, and northern Choteau Counties, Montana. This new plan will replace the existing Judith-Valley-Phillips RMP and the West HiLine RMP, which currently guide management of these public lands.

As part of the planning process, 18 public scoping meetings are planned to obtain tribal, public and agency input to assist in identifying planning issues and to exchange ideas on how public land should be managed. Scoping is an invaluable first step in the planning process and public participation is encouraged. The RMP will address many issues related to: access and transportation corridors, energy development – (fluid minerals – oil and gas; alternative - wind), management of vegetation, management of wildlife, conservation and recovery of special status species, water quality, quantity, and aquatic species, management of areas with special values, availability and management of public lands for commercial uses, and land tenure adjustments.

Public scoping meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. Shortly thereafter will follow a 15 to 20-minute presentation explaining the RMP developmental process. BLM staff members will be available to answer questions and collect public commentary. Handouts describing the planning process will be available, as will public scoping commentary forms and cards. The meetings will adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Public scoping comments will be accepted through November 8, 2006.

The following table shows the dates and locations of the scoping meetings:

2006 Malta RMP-EIS Scoping Meetings (6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.)		
Meeting Date	Community	Meeting Location
October 2	Malta	Great Northern (GN Conf. Room)
October 3	Whitewater	Whitewater High School
October 4	Glasgow	Cottonwood Inn
October 5	Opheim	Opheim High School
October 6	Zortman	Little Rockies Fire Station
October 10	Harlem	Harlem Elementary School
October 11	Hays/Lodge Pole	Hays High School
October 12	Turner	Turner High School
October 16	Shelby	Marias River Electric
October 17	Browning	Blackfeet Community College
October 18	Great Falls	BLM/U.S. Forest Service Office
October 19	Helena	Red Lion Colonial Hotel
October 23	Chester	Chester High School
October 24	Big Sandy	Big Sandy High School
October 25	Havre	Havre High School
October 26	Rocky Boy	Stone Child College
October 30	Chinook	Chinook Motor Inn
October 31	Billings	Hampton Inn

For more information, or to have your name added to the Malta RMP mailing list, contact Claire Trent, RMP Project Manager, at (406) 654-5124 or Donald Klinko, at (406) 654-5134. Electronic mail inquiries may be sent to MT_Malta_RMP@blm.gov.

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