

provides the only access to deep water on the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. The boat ramp is unsafe in its current condition and therefore was closed in June 2002 to everyone except 21 commercial watermen who were paying a commercial rate to the Wise Point Corporation, the former owners. Recreational anglers who have used the boat ramp in the past are anxious for the boat ramp to reopen. In all alternatives, the Service proposes to open the boat ramp to recreational and commercial users. In Alternative A, the Service would manage the boat ramp much as it was managed by the Wise Point Corporation. The Service would not make improvements to the boat ramp area and would allow 24-hour access for commercial watermen who apply for a special use permit. In all other alternatives, the Service would improve the parking lot and boat ramp and reserve parking spaces for commercial watermen. Over time, the Service would phase out docking, 24-hour access and reserved parking privileges for commercial watermen. Alternatives C and D propose scaling down the size of the parking lot from 75 spaces (Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative) to 35 and 25 spaces, respectively.

**Firearms range:** An inholding adjacent to the refuge and owned by Northampton County is home to a firearms range used for law enforcement personnel from Federal, State and County agencies. There are elevated levels of contaminants in the range area. Noise generated from firearms has the potential to conflict with the visitor experience. In all Alternatives, the Service would continue to work with partners to find an alternate, off-refuge site for the firearms range. Refuge staff would also continue to maintain the firearms range and schedule use so as not to conflict with environmental education programs. In alternatives B, C and D, the Service would also work with Northampton County to implement modern practices for firearms range management such as controlling surface runoff and leachate from the berm and periodically removing contaminated soils.

**Communications tower:** Verizon Virginia, Inc., owns a 299-foot communications tower on the refuge. The tower supports in-house radio communications for Verizon and refuge staff. The communications tower could cause bird strikes and the tower does not conform to current Service guidance on communications tower siting. Adjacent to the tower is a switching station that houses underground communications lines which cross the

Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel and head north to Cape Charles. The lease on both the tower and the switching station expires in 2007. In all alternatives, the Service proposes not to renew the lease for the tower. Verizon would be responsible for removing the tower once the lease expires. In Alternative B, the Service would work with Verizon to assess the need for continued use of the switching station.

**Land acquisition:** In alternative A, the Service would continue to acquire from willing sellers the remaining 310 acres of land within Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR's current approved acquisition boundary. In Alternatives B, C, and D the Service proposes to expand the acquisition boundary to include 6,030 acres.

Dated: March 20, 2003.

**Richard O. Bennett,**

*Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, Massachusetts.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[WY-930-03-1610-DQ]

#### Notice of Availability of Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Proposed Snake River Resource Management Plan

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the Proposed Snake River Resource Management Plan (RMP), Wyoming.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the FEIS and the Proposed Snake River RMP.

The FEIS describes and analyzes options for managing approximately 981 acres of public land and 15,123 acres of Federal mineral estate in Teton County, northwestern Wyoming. The FEIS documents the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of six management alternatives for BLM-administered public lands near, or adjacent to, the Snake River. The completed RMP will fulfill the obligations set forth by the NEPA, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and Federal regulations.

**DATES:** The Proposed Snake River RMP and FEIS will be available for review for

30 calendar days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes its NOA in the **Federal Register**. Under the provisions of 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1610.5 protest of a proposed BLM RMP must be filed with the Director in accordance with the instructions described in the FEIS and included in the supplemental information section of this notice. Protest of the proposed Snake River RMP will be accepted no later than 30 calendar days from the date the EPA publishes its NOA in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the FEIS has been sent to affected Federal, State, local government agencies, and to interested parties. The document will be available electronically on the following Web site: <http://www.wy.blm.gov/srrmp/index.htm>. Copies of the FEIS will be available for public inspection at the following locations:

- Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009

- Bureau of Land Management, Pinedale Field Office, 432 S. Mill St., Pinedale, Wyoming 82941

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Contact Ms. Kellie Roadifer, Project Manager, BLM Pinedale Field Office, 432 S. Mill Street, P.O. Box 768, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941, or electronically to [pinedale.wymail@blm.gov](mailto:pinedale.wymail@blm.gov) with "Attention: Snake River RMP" in the subject line. Ms. Roadifer may also be reached at (307) 367-5309.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM-administered public lands and mineral estate in the planning area currently do not have an approved land use plan. Upon approval, the Snake River RMP would establish management direction for the surface and mineral estates and associated resources administered by the BLM near Jackson, Wyoming. The public lands and Federal mineral resources analyzed are those administered by the BLM Pinedale Field Office.

The FEIS describes the physical, biological, cultural, historic, and socioeconomic resources in and around the surrounding planning area. The focus for impact analysis was based on resource issues and concerns identified during scoping and public involvement activities and opportunities. Potential impacts of concern regarding possible management direction and planning decisions (not in priority order) are: multi-agency and interagency cooperative management; recreation opportunities along the Snake River;

availability and development of construction mineral materials; and land ownership (land tenure) pattern. The primary issues driving alternative development are: mineral development; visitor health and safety; recreation management; wildlife habitat; open space; land use authorizations; and land tenure adjustment.

Six alternatives were analyzed in detail:

1. Alternative A, Continuation of Existing Management Direction or the "No Action" Alternative;

2. Alternative B, Reduced Land Use Restrictions with Higher Levels of Mineral Development and Recreation;

3. Alternative C, Continuation of Existing Management Direction with Reduced Motor Vehicle Access, Increased Wildlife Habitat Protection and Solitude Opportunities, and Possible Consolidation of Public Land Parcels;

4. Alternative D, Disposal of Lands Currently Administered by the BLM;

5. Alternative E, Limited Disposal or Exchange of Lands Currently Administered by the BLM, and

6. Proposed Plan, Transfer of Public Land Parcels To Another Federal Land Management Agency or Disposal of Public Land to Other Governmental Entities With Conveyance Contingent on Continuation of RMP Management Direction.

Background information and maps used in developing the final RMP EIS are available for public viewing at the Pinedale Field Office.

If adopted, this proposed RMP does not authorize any land uses or site-disturbing activities. Decisions regarding these site-specific implementation activities are subject to further NEPA analysis and appeal, as provided by applicable regulations.

Protest Instructions: Publication of this EIS prepared for a RMP affords the public the opportunity to protest. Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the State Director's proposed Snake River RMP may be found at 43 CFR 1610.5. Any person who participated in the planning process, has an interest, or may be adversely affected by the approval of the proposed RMP, may protest such approval. The protest must be in writing and must be filed with the Director. The protest must be filed within 30 days from the date the EPA publishes its NOA in the **Federal Register**. The protest must 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.

E-mail and faxed protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, BLM will consider the e-mail or faxed protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide BLM with such advance notification, please direct faxed protests to the attention of the BLM protest coordinator at 202-452-5112, and e-mails to [Brenda\\_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov](mailto:Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov)

The Director will respond to protests. The response will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the Director will be the final decision for the Department of the Interior.

Protest Filing Addresses: Protests submitted electronically will not be accepted. File written protests by Surface Mail: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Director (210), Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator, P.O. Box 66538, Washington DC 20035 or overnight (WO-210), 1620 L Street, NW., Room 1075, Washington, DC 20036.

**Alan Kesterke,**

*Associate State Director.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[MT-010-1220-AD]

#### Notice of Closure of Public Lands

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Billings Field Office, Montana State Office.

**ACTION:** "Notice of Extension of Emergency Closure of Firearms Target Shooting for One Year on Certain Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Yellowstone County, Montana."

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that certain areas are closed to firearms target shooting from October 1st, 2003 to September 30th, 2004, to protect public safety and natural resources. The closed areas are Shepherd Ah-Nei, 21-Mile, and Acton Ah-Nei areas and are legally described as:

That area of public lands commonly referred to the "Shepherd Area," or "Shepherd Ah Nei" located at:

T 4 N, R 27 E,

Sec. 24, NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, S<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>;

Sec. 25, all.

Sec. 36, all.

T 3 N, R 27 E,

Sec. 1, all.

T 4 N, R 28 E,

Sec. 19, all.

Sec. 20, W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

Sec. 30, Lots 1, 2, N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.

Sec. 31, all

T 3 N, R 28 E,

Sec. 6, Lots 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>,

Principal Montana Meridian, and That area of public lands commonly referred to the "21-Mile Area" located north of Billings and west of the Roundup Road, Highway 87 North and the 21 Mile Road at:

T 4 N, R 25 E,

Sec. 24, all. Principal Montana Meridian, and

That area of public lands commonly referred to as the "Acton Area" or "Acton Ah-Nei" located east of Broadview, Montana at:

T 4 N, R 25 E,

Sec. 31, E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

T 3 N, R 25 E,

Sec. 5, all.

Sec. 6, Lots 1, 2, S<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>;

Sec. 7, Lots 1, 2, E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>;

Sec. 8, all.

Sec. 9, all.

Sec. 17, all.

Sec. 20, N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. Principal Montana Meridian, all in Yellowstone County, in the State of Montana.

Closure signs will be posted at the major entry points to this area. Maps of the closure and information may be obtained from the Billings Field Office.

**DATES:** This Closure will be in effect from October 1st, 2003 to September 30, 2004, unless superceded by permanent rulemaking action.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sandra S. Brooks, Field Manager, BLM, Billings Field Office, P.O. Box 36800, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 50107-6800 or call 406-896-5013.

#### Discussion of the Emergency Closure:

This extension of the emergency closure is necessary for the management of actions, activities, and public use on certain public lands which may have, or are having, adverse impacts on persons using public lands, on property, and on resources located on public lands until permanent management action can be taken. The Billings Field Office, in conjunction with the Resource Advisory