

The public is encouraged to help identify these questions and concerns during the scoping phase.

An interdisciplinary approach will be used to develop the plan in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Disciplines involved in the planning process will include specialists with expertise in minerals and geology, forestry, range, fire and fuels, outdoor recreation, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, sociology and economics.

The following planning criteria have been proposed to guide development of the plan, avoid unnecessary data collection and analyses, and to ensure the plan is tailored to the issues. Other criteria may be identified during the public scoping process. After gathering comments on planning criteria, the BLM will finalize the criteria and provide feedback to the public on the criteria to be used throughout the planning process.

- The plan will be completed in compliance with FLPMA and all other applicable laws.
- The planning process will include an EIS that will comply with NEPA standards.
- The plan will establish new guidance and identify existing guidance upon which the BLM will rely in managing public lands within the Butte Field Office.
- The RMP/EIS will incorporate by reference the *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management*, the *Off-Highway Vehicle EIS and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and Portions of South Dakota*; and, when signed, the *Montana/Dakotas Statewide Fire Management Plan*.
- The RMP/EIS will incorporate by reference all prior Wilderness designations and Wilderness Study Area findings that affect public lands in the planning area.
- The plan will result in determinations as required by special program and resource specific guidance detailed in Appendix C of the BLM's Planning Handbook.
- The plan will recognize the State's responsibility to manage wildlife populations, including uses such as hunting and fishing, within the planning area.
- Decisions in the plan will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, State, tribal, and Federal agencies as long as the decisions are in conformance with legal mandates on management of public lands.

- The scope of analysis will be consistent with the level of analysis in approved plans and in accordance with Bureau-wide standards and program guidance.

- Resource allocations must be reasonable and achievable within available technological and budgetary constraints.

- The lifestyles and concerns of area residents will be recognized in the plan.

The BLM is also requesting public input for nominations considered worthy of ACEC designation. To be considered as a potential ACEC, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Nominations must include descriptive materials, detailed maps, and evidence supporting the "relevance" and "importance" of the resource or area. There is currently one ACEC within the Butte FO boundary; the Sleeping Giant ACEC in Lewis and Clark County was designated by the Headwaters RMP in 1984. All ACEC nominations within the planning area will be evaluated during development of the RMP.

Dated: September 12, 2003.

Richard M. Hotaling,
Field Office Manager.

[FR Doc. 03-28963 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310--55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[UT080-1310-00]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Greater Deadman Bench Oil and Gas Producing Region Field Development Project, Uintah County, UT

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Vernal Field Office, Vernal, Utah, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will focus on Questar Exploration and Production Company's (QEP) proposed gas and oil development on about 99,000 acres in the Greater Deadman Bench oil and gas production region.

DATES: Public scoping comments will be accepted on or before February 4, 2004. A public scoping open house and information meeting will be held on

January 14, 2004 from 7-9 p.m., at the Uintah County Commission Chambers, 147 E Main Street, Vernal, Utah. If you have any information, data, concerns, or suggestions related to the potential impacts of the proposed action, including the issues identified above, please submit them to the address listed below.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The project area, located about 20 miles south of Vernal, Utah, involves about 85% BLM-administered lands (83,864 acres); 12% (11,448 acres) State of Utah-administered lands; and, 3% (3,473 acres) patented land. Currently 278 oil and water-injection wells and about 300 gas wells with their attendant service roads exist within the project area. The proponent anticipates the drilling of up to 1239 new wells over a period of 10 years, or until the resource base is fully developed. Of these new wells, 826 would be new locations and 470 would be twins drilled from existing locations (representing 38% of the total new wells that would be drilled). Required infrastructure includes electric power lines, roads, oil and gas flow lines and pipelines, well pads (with pumping units for oil wells), central facilities, water injection facilities, gas treatment and compression facilities. Gas would be transported via pipeline to centralized compression and treatment facilities. Produced water would be trucked or piped to one of several existing QEP water injection plants where it would be re-injected into the oil reservoir or disposal zone via an injection well system.

Major issues at this time include potential impacts on desert and semi-desert ecosystems and their dependent wildlife species (including antelope, sage grouse, white-tailed prairie dog colonies and their associated species), vegetation (including noxious weeds and reclamation), riparian habitat associated with the Green River corridor. Alternatives identified at this time include the proposed action and the no action alternatives.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jean Nitschke-Sinclear, (435) 781-4437 or e-mail: jean_nitschke-sinclear@blm.

ADDRESSES: Written scoping comments should be sent to: Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Vernal Field Office, 170 South 500 East, Vernal, Utah 84078, Attn: QEP Field Development Project.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Vernal Field Office and will be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). They may be

published as part of the EIS and other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review and disclosure under the FOIA, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: October 9, 2003.

Gene Terland,

Associate State Director.

[FR Doc. 03-31123 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NM-910-04-1020-PH]

New Mexico Resource Advisory Council, Notice of Call for Nominations

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting dates are February 26-27, 2004, at Marbob Energy, 2208 West Main, Artesia, New Mexico, beginning at 8 a.m. both days. The meeting will adjourn at approximately 5 p.m. on Thursday and 11:30 a.m. on Friday. The three established RAC working groups may have a late afternoon or an evening meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2004.

An optional field trip is planned for Wednesday, February 25, 2004. The public comment period is scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, from 6-8 p.m. at Marbob Energy, 2208 West Main, Artesia, New Mexico. The public may present written comments to the RAC.

Depending on the number of individuals wishing to comment and time available, oral comments may be limited.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member RAC advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in New Mexico. All meetings are open to the

public. At this meeting, topics for discussion include: Otero Mesa Unitization working Group results, rehabilitation of the oil and gas legacy wells, oil and gas and cultural management in the Carlsbad Area, the Preferred Upstream Management Practices (PUMP) III Project (a cultural resources Geographic Information System database focused on oil and gas fields), update on noxious weeds program, access follow-up, and proposed RAC initiatives.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Herrera, New Mexico State Office, Office of External Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 27115, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-0115, (505) 438-7515.

Dated: December 15, 2003.

Linda S.C. Rundell,

State Director.

[FR Doc. 03-31284 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-130-1020-PH; GP4-0048]

Notice of Public Meeting, Eastern Washington Resource Advisory Council Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Washington Resource Advisory Council (RAC), will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The Eastern Washington Resource Advisory Council (EWRAC) will meet on January 23, 2004, at the Spokane District Office, Bureau of Land Management, 1103 North Fancher Road, Spokane, Washington, 99212-1275.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting will start at 9 a.m. and adjourn about 4 p.m. Topics on the meeting agenda include:

- Proposed Rule to Amend BLMs Livestock Grazing Regulations
- Fiscal Year 2004 Resource Advisory Council Work Plan
- Land Exchange Update

The RAC meeting is open to the public, and there will be an opportunity for public comments at 10:30 a.m.. Information to be distributed to Council members for their review is requested in

written format 10 days prior to the Council meeting date.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sandra Gourdin or Kathy Helm, Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District Office, 1103 N. Fancher Road, Spokane, Washington, 99212, or call (509) 536-1200.

Dated: December 15, 2003.

Joseph K. Buesing,

District Manager.

[FR Doc. 03-31292 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1550-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Lake Berryessa Visitor Services Plan, Napa County, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice for additional open house meeting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Reclamation will hold an additional open house on the DEIS for the Lake Berryessa Visitor Services Plan (VSP). The first open house was held on November 22, 2003. The public hearings will be held as originally planned on January 21, 2004. The notice of availability of the DEIS and notice of public workshop and notice of public hearings was published in the **Federal Register** on October 31, 2003 (68 FR 62097).

DATES: The additional open house will be held on Saturday, January 10, 2004 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Napa, CA.

The public hearings will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2004 from 1 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 10 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The additional open house will be held at the Napa Valley Expo at the Reisling Hall, 575 3rd Street, Napa, CA.

The hearings will be held at the Solano County Fairgrounds, Exposition Hall, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, Vallejo, CA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Stephen Rodgers at 707-966-2111 x106, fax 707-966-0409, or e-mail: srodgers@mp.usbr.gov.

Dated: December 12, 2003.

Frank Michny,

Regional Environmental Officer, Mid-Pacific Region.

[FR Doc. 03-31291 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

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