

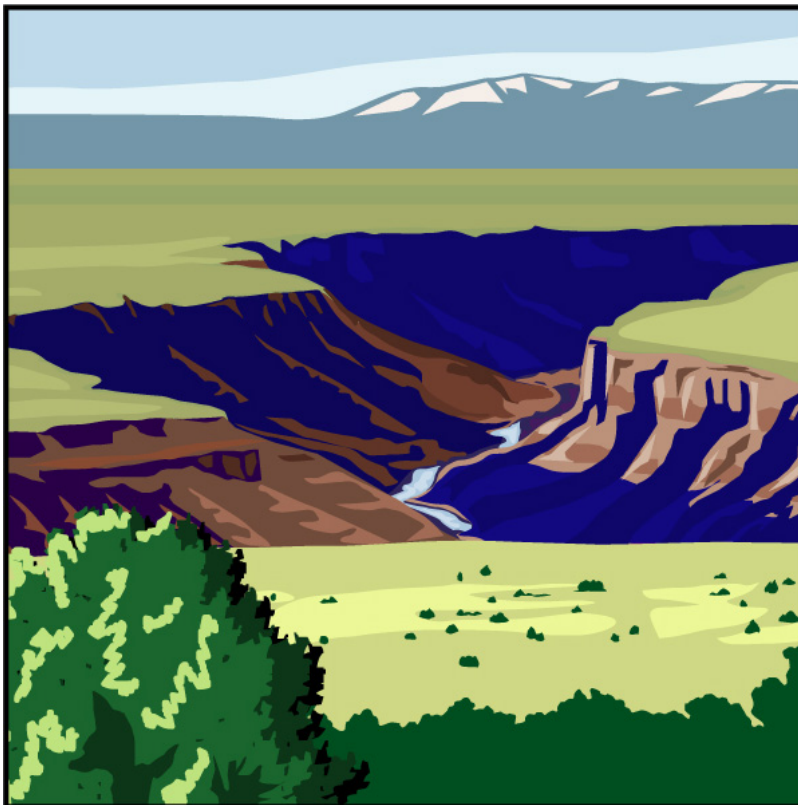
# TAOS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Environmental Impact Statement  
and  
Amendment**

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## Preparation Plan

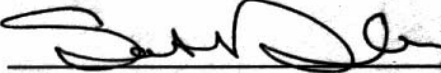
**February 2006**

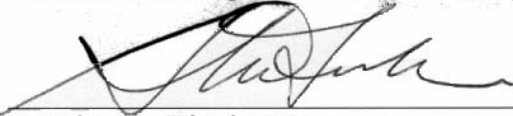



# Taos Resource Management Plan Amendment and EIS

# Preparation Plan



Prepared by :  2/14/2006  
Taos Field Manager Date

Recommended by:  2/14/06  
Farmington District Manager Date

Approved by:  2/16/06  
New Mexico State Director Date

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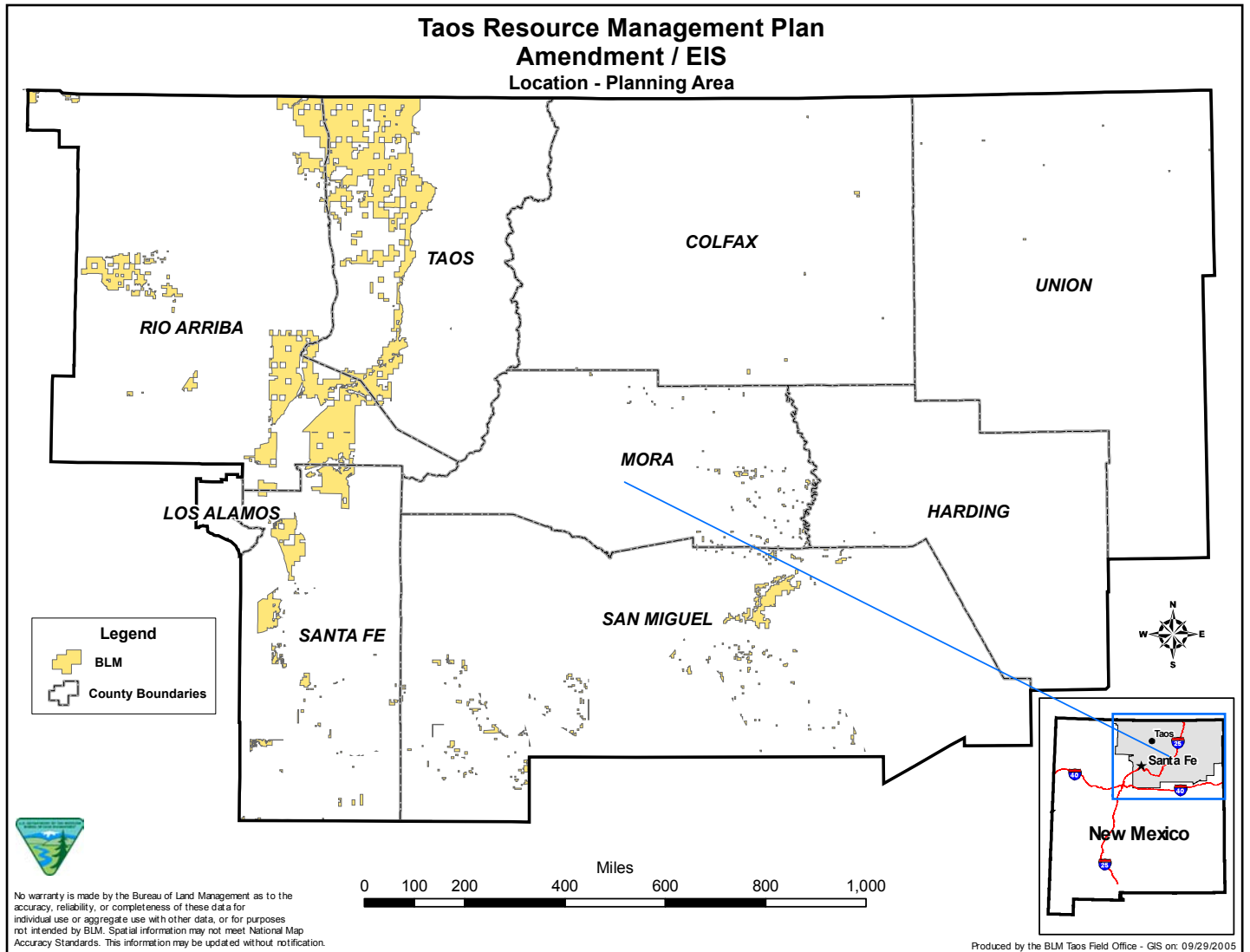
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# MAP 1



## *A. Introduction and Background*

The Taos Field Office manages the public lands of the north-central and north-east portions of New Mexico, with the largest portions located in Rio Arriba, Santa Fe and Taos Counties. Small parcels are scattered throughout the remaining area, which includes Colfax, Harding, Los Alamos, Mora, San Miguel and Union Counties. These nine counties cover about 15.3 million acres. BLM-Taos manages 593,659 surface acres and 4,331,946 acres of federal mineral estate. See Map 1 for the location of these counties in New Mexico and a general outline of the planning area.

The Taos Resource Management Plan was approved in 1988, after a five-year planning process. The five key issues identified were:

*Special Management Areas*  
*Transportation*  
*Vegetative Uses*

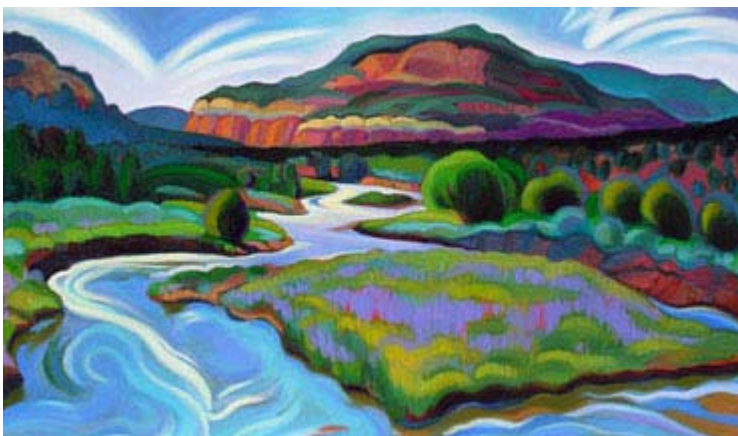
*Land Ownership Adjustments*  
*Right-of-Way Exclusion Areas.*

Since 1988, the Taos RMP has been amended several times, as shown in Table 1:

<b>Table 1 – Amendments to the Taos RMP</b>		
<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Oil and Gas Leasing and Development	1991	Established areas as opened or closed to O&G leasing, and determined levels of control on opened areas
La Cienega ACEC	1992	ACEC boundary expanded
Orilla Verde Recreation Area	1994	Established a Recreation Area and management prescriptions on land acquired from New Mexico State Parks
Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan	2000	Changed ACECs, Recreation Area boundaries and prescriptions, amended RoW Exclusion Areas, established VRM classes for areas not covered in RMP
Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management	2001	No RMP decisions were changed; RMP maintenance added a new paragraph to briefly summarize the standards and guidelines; Special Management Area prescriptions were revised as needed.
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail	2004	Established a new Special Management Area, with prescriptions for management. Also amended RMP by designating VRM classes along the trail corridor.
RMPA for Fire and Fuels Management on Public Land in New Mexico and Texas	2004	State-wide amendment provided updated guidance for fire and fuel management practices

These amendments, and periodic Plan maintenance, have kept the RMP fairly current, but the great increase in population and development throughout the Field Office has brought forward new information and an increased sense of urgency to comprehensively review the RMP and amend specific sections that can not be updated through plan maintenance. The most significant growth is in the Santa Fe County area, where the population is projected to increase from 143,000 in 2005 to 193,000 in 2015 (a 35% increase). Other counties are growing more slowly, but in a unique way – while the cities are hardly expanding in size, the unincorporated areas are being developed as ranchettes or built for single-family housing, creating demand for road and utility rights-of-way and forcing us to reassess our management of the adjacent public lands that now have value for uses other than grazing.

This Preparation Plan was developed through much dialogue about current RMP direction among BLM employees, the public and other agencies, and consideration of the findings of recent RMP reviews. As a result, the Preparation Plan provides the foundation for the entire planning process for the Taos RMPA. It identifies the preliminary issues to be addressed, preliminary planning criteria, data needs, the analysis process, the preparers, the roles of the public and other agencies, and a preliminary budget. This Preparation Plan will serve as a “road map” for the Taos Field Office in completing the RMPA, and reflects a necessarily dynamic and adaptive planning process.



## ***B. Anticipated Planning Issues and Management Concerns***

The Taos RMP 15th Year Final Evaluation Report completed in September 2003, (2003 RMP Evaluation Report) identified the need for several amendments or an RMP revision, and began the dialogue between New Mexico and the Washington Office to schedule Taos for an RMP update. The decision was made in early 2005 to proceed with an amendment which would address the following preliminary issues and management concerns.

### **1. Land Tenure Adjustment**

Current land tenure adjustment issues in the Taos Field Office are supported by the findings of the 2003 RMP Evaluation Report which were that the 1988 RMP does not address current or future community and regional needs for such things as landfills, water resources, wildlife corridors, and open space. For example, in the 1988 RMP, BLM designated most small parcels in Santa Fe County as surplus and open to disposal: in 1998, Santa Fe County residents passed a bond measure to provide funds for acquiring and managing lands for open space, and public lands are included in their vision. Farther north, Taos County is working on a Green Infrastructure Plan that identifies several blocks of public lands as hubs best suited for conservation, recreation, or cultural preservation.

Rio Arriba county has received strong public support for a series of ordinances whose intent is to retain agricultural lands as productive farms – there is interest in land exchanges to privatize portions of the BLM-acquired lands in the Sebastian Martin land grant, and in exchange, create blocks of public land on Black Mesa and other areas with value for open space, recreation, and cultural resources. The County’s intent is to promote development on lands best suited for development and reduce the pressure to subdivide agricultural lands.

Community requests to Taos Field Office for acquisition of public lands through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) process are increasing both in number and complexity at a rapid rate. In some instances, multiple jurisdictions within an area are requesting the same parcel with different intents, for example the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County are both interested in acquiring the same parcel in west Santa Fe for different uses. Current RMP direction regarding R&PP actions is lacking or conflicting regarding whether R&PP disposal actions may be considered on a case-by-case basis or may be permitted only on lands identified for disposal in the RMP.

Another pertinent finding of the 2003 RMP Evaluation Report which is still current is the need to evaluate acquisition of private lands or easements to improve access to certain parcels of public lands.

### **2. Land Uses**

The Taos Field Office is also experiencing an increase in the number of requests for rights-of-way (RoW). The communities of Espanola and Santa Fe especially, are looking to outlying areas of public lands for the location of new and upgraded utility infrastructure facilities and routes. An amendment to the Taos RMPS identifying RoW corridors adjacent

to communities is necessary to facilitate planning for the future by communities, utilities and BLM-Taos, and to reduce costs related to coordination, permitting and implementation. This is supported by the 2003 RMP Evaluation Report which identified a need for the Taos Field Office to develop goals, objectives and criteria for designating RoW corridors and to make the appropriate designations in the RMP revision (amendment).

### **3. Special Area Designations**

Currently, a number of communities, including northwest Santa Fe, Cerrillos, La Cienega, Ojo Caliente, San Pedro, and Velarde-San Juan Pueblo, are actively seeking some type of special designation, or modification of an existing designation, for nearby public lands in order to protect a mix of resource values. This issue was highlighted in the 2003 RMP Evaluation Report, which noted the need to adjust some boundaries of existing ACECs or Recreation Areas, and to consider new designations in areas where new information or emerging issues warrant another look. Inclusion in this overarching RMP amendment is the most efficient and effective means to evaluate and make the necessary changes. To date, the following areas have been identified for potential action:

- La Cienega ACEC and La Cieneguilla area – this area identified in the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act and communities strongly support expansion to include adjacent public lands containing large Pueblos and rock art
- Buckman/Santa Fe Ranch area – long-time community support for special designation status and recent interest by potential local partners, including the US Forest Service, to develop a proposal for a park or recreation area
- Cerrillos Hills – active community and Santa Fe County support to integrate public land adjacent to Cerrillos Hills Historic Park into overall recreation theme and management
- Galisteo Basin - BLM lands referred to in the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act will be considered for ACEC or other appropriate designation to protect cultural resources
- Ojo Caliente - area residents are actively pursuing some form of protective designation for archaeological and scenic resources
- Black Mesa - communities of Ojo Caliente, Velarde, and San Juan Pueblo are interested in expansion and/or new designation of Black Mesa to include Mesa Prieta with links to the Ojo Caliente ACEC; necessary to protect and manage cultural resources such as habitation sites, petroglyphs, trails and agricultural features
- Sabinoso - a non-suitable WSA with outstanding wilderness characteristics; will be considered for ACEC designation



- Ute Mountain - recently acquired area and some adjacent lands will be considered for BLM or Congressional designation (ACEC, National Conservation Area)
- San Pedro Mountains - residents have asked for a review of the present allocations on public lands near San Pedro
- Sombrillo ACEC - modify existing ACEC to provide special protection and designation of traditional clay and ash sources for Tewa Pueblos
- El Palacio (Fun Valley) – currently is providing for off-highway vehicle use and is anticipated to be designated as a special recreation management area with an updated management plan

#### **4. Visual Resource Management**

Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes have been designated only for the Rio Grande Corridor and for a number of Taos' special management areas. The lack of designations on most of the land managed by the Taos Field Office results in staff conducting inventory and developing VRM objectives for each project, which is costly, inefficient, and can lead to inconsistencies in VRM classifications within the same or similar areas. The RMP needs to be amended by determining and designating VRM classes on all public lands managed by the Taos Field Office in a public, comprehensive planning setting.

#### **5. Off-Highway Vehicles**

Designations are confusing in the existing RMP, the narrative does not match the maps, and the original designations do not conform to current Land Use Plan Handbook guidance. Some current RMP guidance can be clarified through RMP maintenance, but an amendment is necessary to resolve some of the area designation issues. In Santa Fe, Mora, and San Miguel Counties, for example, some lands designated "open" to vehicle use need to be changed to a "limited" designation.

#### **6. Mineral Materials**

Taos County is one of several areas where there is a rapidly growing demand for aggregate materials, yet the current RMP is lacking sufficient guidance to facilitate timely and efficient identification and permitting for removal of these resources. The community of San Pedro is emerging as another area with similar demands which may be similarly constrained. This issue continues to grow since it's identification in the 2003 RMP Evaluation Report, which recommended that Taos Field Office provide additional guidance on locatable and salable minerals in a field office- wide review, and address split mineral estate in an RMP amendment. The overarching RMP amendment is a timely and effective vehicle to address this issue.

### ***C. Preliminary Planning Criteria***

Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that guide and direct the development of the plan. They ensure that plans are tailored to the identified issues and ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. The planning criteria identified will help the Taos Field Office focus on the decisions to be made in the RMP Amendment and achieve the following:

- Provide an early, tentative basis for inventory and data collection needs.
- Enable the manager and staff to develop a preliminary planning base map delineating geographic analysis units.
- Stimulate the refinement of planning criteria during public participation.

The planning criteria identified below are preliminary, and it is expected that they will be refined through the public participation process. The Taos Field Manager will approve the final set of planning criteria. The preliminary planning criteria for the Taos RMP Amendment are:

1. Actions must comply with laws, regulations, executive orders, and BLM Manuals (i.e. supplemental program guidance).
2. Actions must be reasonable, achievable, allow for flexibility where appropriate, and support adaptive management principles.
3. The Taos RMP Amendment will change Field Office management guidance in a number of program areas by either modifying existing direction or adding new direction. As appropriate, RMPA guidance will be developed within an adaptive management framework, providing context and identifying processes and tools for implementing adaptive management.
4. The planning process will include an Environmental Impact Statement that complies with National Environmental Policy Act standards.
5. The planning process will follow guidance provided in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1.
6. The planning process will be conducted using an interdisciplinary approach.
7. While ensuring conformance with BLM policies and federal laws, the planning team and Taos Field Manager will strive to make RMP Amendment decisions consistent with existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, and federal agencies, to the extent possible.
8. A collaborative approach to public and agency participation will be used throughout the planning process. The Taos RMP Amendment planning team will work collaboratively with

county, municipal, and Tribal governments; other federal, state and local agencies; interested individuals and groups; and other BLM staff groups.

9. The Economic Profile System (EPS) will be used as one source of demographic and economic data for the planning process. EPS data will provide important baseline data and contribute to estimates of existing and future (projected) social and economic conditions. Socio-cultural and economic analysis will subsequently be performed to identify impacts of the potential management alternatives on the diverse populations within the planning area.

As required in the Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1, EPS workshops will be conducted with community participants from Taos, Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties. These workshops will be held to foster strong working relationships with county residents and to share information and perspectives about local economic conditions.

10. The RMP Amendment process will foster participation of Native American tribal governments, and will provide strategies for protection of cultural resources and traditional cultural practices on public lands.

11. The RMP amendment process will emphasize focused, collaborative work with communities to identify public lands and resources upon which they currently rely and /or will rely in the future. This work will center on *a.* identifying current and future land use and land ownership patterns that support communities while meeting BLM's overarching mission and goals, and *b.* identifying areas with potential for a modified or new special designation status and associated benefits to local communities, the general public and BLM.

12. The RMP amendment will recognize valid existing rights related to the use of public lands.

## ***D. Data and GIS Needs***

The Taos Field Office has identified a significant amount of data and GIS needs that are required to address resource and use issues and develop and analyze impacts of plan alternatives. Data collection has been ongoing and will continue for the various programs and resources needed.

Some of the necessary data must be updated, compiled, and put into digital format for use in the planning process and for development of alternatives and resource maps for the plan. GIS themes are the building blocks to quantify resources, create maps, and manipulate resources during alternative formulation, especially the preferred alternative.

The National Data Standards will be reviewed and followed for the collection of new data. All metadata will meet the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Standards.

Aerial photos and Geographic Information System (GIS) data will be used in the development of document maps, graphics, and for resource analysis. BLM capabilities for the Planning Area include various layers of planimetric data, surface ownership, roads and utilities and special management area boundaries. After a review of the preliminary issues described in Section B, the following data needs have been identified:

### 1. Land Tenure Adjustment

- projected population/community growth by county
- culture, lifestyle, and values of current residents and predictions for future residents based on projected demographic changes (applies to all six issues for the RMP amendment)
- current uses and demands, and future projections, for public lands and resources, for example, wood gathering, plant and lichen rock collection, recreation, sand and gravel removal, hunting, outfitter-guiding, etc. (applies to all six issues for the RMP amendment)
- county and city zoning maps
- develop potential land use maps which incorporate non-BLM lands that influence BLM's management of lands to identify conflicts and opportunities (open space, access, water source zones, etc.)

### 2. Land Uses

- GIS coverage of existing/planned rights-of-way
- map showing current exclusion areas, right-of-way corridors

### 3. Special Area Designations

- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)
- research/collection of existing recreation market data

### 4. Visual Resource Management

- inventory all lands for existing scenic quality (possible contract)

- identify Key Observation Points and interview residents to establish sensitivity levels
5. Off-Highway Vehicles
- update data for existing routes – El Palacio OHV area, and lands in Santa Fe County
  - acquire data from counties to map all county-maintained routes
6. Mineral Materials
- acquire and transfer/map data from USGS/State on locations of salable materials

## *E. Participants in the Process*

### **RMPA/EIS Team Organization and Additional Staffing Needs**

The RMP Amendment Team will be comprised of current employees of the Taos Field Office, two from the New Mexico State Office, and one from the Rio Puerco Field Office. Team members were selected based on the expertise and local knowledge they bring to this planning effort, and are identified and their roles described in Table 2. The RMPA/EIS will be prepared primarily by this team. Core Team members will do the following:

- Provide program-specific guidance for land use planning and information about lands, resources, and communities;
- Conduct the public participation and collaboration phase of the process, engaging in conversations with communities, the general public, and other agencies;
- Conduct inventory and data collection, identify issues, and analyze and document impacts from alternatives for most resource issues (see discussion below regarding socio-economic data collection and impacts analysis); and
- Review and comment on the DEIS/FEIS/RMPA documents as they are being prepared and assist in their completion.

In order to free key staff so they may contribute to the RMPA planning effort, additional staff are needed to accomplish the ongoing workload in the Taos Field Office. Positions identified as necessary to achieve this balance of “normal work” plus the RMPA planning effort are as follows:

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Recreation                 | 2 SCAs, interns or other hosted workers at 6 months each |
| • Archaeology                | 1 GS-9/11 position (or equivalent) for 30 months         |
| • Writer/editor/file manager | 1 GS-9/11 position (or equivalent) for 36 months         |

Labor costs for staff and contracted assistance are shown in Table 5 (page 18).

In addition to Field Office Team members and adjunct staff, a core team member will be added to collect and interpret socio-economic data relative to local citizen’s culture, lifestyle, values and traditional and desired uses of lands and resources, as they relate to public lands. The team member will assist in developing alternatives and will prepare a socio-economic

analysis of the impacts of the alternatives for inclusion in the EIS. Several BLM Team members will assist in this effort as well as to gain knowledge and build skills capacity for working with socio-economic data within the Taos Field Office. If done under contract, the cost is estimated to be \$80,000 over a three-year period. We will also seek out a BLM employee in another office who could provide this expertise, at a lower cost.

<b>Table 2 – RMPA Team Members</b>		
	<b>RMPA Role/Responsibility</b>	<b>Specialist</b>
<b>Core Team</b>	Team leader, planning coordinator	Sher Churchill
	Asst team leader, writer-editor, file manager	GS 9/11 term appointment, contract, or consultant
	Archaeology	Paul Williams
	Recreation, Visual	Tami Torres
	Asst Field Manager – Recreation	John Bailey
	Realty/lands specialist (Taos area)	Lora Yonemoto
	GIS/remote sensing, mapping	Patricio Martinez
	Fisheries, watershed & soils	Greg Gustina
	Wildland-urban interface fire, old growth	Justin Dean
	Socio-economics	TBD
<b>Advisors</b>	Realty/lands specialist (Santa Fe area)	Hal Knox
	Field Manager, oversight	Sam DesGeorges
	Forestry	Dave Borland (NMSO)
	Wildlife biologist, landscape	Valerie Williams
	Public affairs, public education	Mark Lujan
	Geology/minerals	Joe Mirabal (Albuquerque)
	Asst Field Manager - Resources	vacant

## ***F. Process for the Plan***

### **1. RMP Amendment/EIS Process and Outline**

Development of the RMPA/EIS will occur in the following steps:

- Pre-scoping preparations and staffing organization
- Identification of issues, scoping and data collection
- Formulation of alternatives, effects analysis, and identification of mitigation, monitoring and evaluation needs
- Prepare and release draft RMPA/EIS
- Public review and comment on draft RMPA/EIS
- Prepare and release final RMPA/EIS
- Protest period and Governor’s consistency review
- Complete and release approved RMPA/FEIS/ROD
- Integration of all current RMP and new RMPA direction into one body

It is anticipated that the Taos Resource Management Plan Amendment will be submitted in the following format. The organization of the final document may differ slightly, but will generally follow this outline.

---

Dear Reader Letter	Alternative C
Cover Sheet	Additional Alternatives described as above
Table of Contents	
Summary	Cumulative Effects
<u>Chapter 1. Introduction</u>	<u>Chapter 5. Consultation and Coordination</u>
History and Background	Introduction
<u>Chapter 2. Plan Amendment Alternatives</u>	Formal consultation
Introduction	Tribal
Elements Common to All Alternatives	Other agencies
Alternative Descriptions	Public and agency involvement, coordination and results
<u>Chapter 3. Affected Environment</u>	Public and agency review of RMPA/EIS
Introduction	Public and agency comments
Descriptions of affected elements of the environment	Disposition of comments
	List of Preparers and Reviewers
<u>Chapter 4. Environmental Effects</u>	Glossary
Introduction	Appendices
Direct and Indirect Effects of Alternatives	References cited
Alternative A (No Action)	Index
Alternative B	

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## 2. Alternative Formulation

Alternatives are developed to address significant issues. Taos Field Office staff has worked vigorously to identify the significant issues driving the need to amend the Taos RMP; those issues are described in section B. Anticipated Planning Issues and Management Concerns.

The EIS will describe and analyze a range of alternatives, comprised of the No Action alternative (continued management) and a number of action alternatives, each of which will describe options for addressing the six significant issues. The Field Office will work closely with the public and other agencies to identify an array of reasonable options that address each issue. A hypothetical example of an action alternative and a combination of possible options to address the significant issues is displayed below in Table 3.

<b>Table 3 Example of an Alternative with Options to Address Issues</b>						
	<b>Issue: Land tenure</b>	<b>Issue: Land use</b>	<b>Issue: Special area designation</b>	<b>Issue: Visual resources</b>	<b>Issue: Off- highway vehicles</b>	<b>Issue: Mineral materials</b>
<b>Alt A</b>	Parcels in northwest Santa Fe previously identified as available for disposal are now identified for retention; new parcels north and east of Espanola are identified for disposal...	Designate a utility RoW corridor along Buckman Road in northwest Santa Fe...	Designate Galisteo Basin and Cerrillos Hills as new special recreation management areas and modify Ojo Caliente and Black Mesa ACECs to incorporate additional portions of Black Mesa	Cerrillos Hills, Galisteo Basin, and northwest Santa Fe area assigned VRM class I; Velarde-Alcalde areas assigned VRM class II...	Change “open” designation in Cerrillos Hills to “limited”...	Aggregate mineral materials locations are identified and materials may be removed in any area except where the area is designated as closed...

## 3. Internal Review of the Plan and Input

Internal review will be conducted through briefings and review of documents. Review periods by the NMSO and WO are built into the schedule and the Taos Field Office plans to stay in close communications with key NMSO staff and the Director as the plan progresses. Input is expected in the form of comments and assistance in preparation and communications about the plan. Support from key NMSO and management personnel has been identified in the plan of work and labor spreadsheet.

The interdisciplinary team is responsible for preparing the RMPA/EIS and will be integral to writing, reviewing, commenting on and assisting in editing the entire document.



**G. Plan Preparation Schedule**

<b>Table 4 – Plan Preparation Schedule</b>																
<b>Key Planning Steps</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>				<b>FY 2007</b>				<b>FY 2008</b>				<b>FY 2009</b>			
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
Preparation Plan																
Notice of Intent																
Analyze the Management Situation / Report																
Data Collection																
Scoping/Develop Planning Criteria/Issue Report																
Formulate Alternatives																
Prepare / Issue Draft RMPS / EIS																
Public Review / Comment Analysis																
Prepare Proposed RMPA / Final EIS																
Protest Period/Governor’s Consistency Review																
Prepare ROD / Approved RMPA																

## ***H. Public Participation and Collaboration Plan***

### **1. Goals and Objectives**

This public participation and collaboration plan provides a strategic framework for considering *who, why, when and how* to engage the public and agencies in planning for this major amendment to the Taos RMP. As a working tool, it is intended to be adaptable and adjusted as the planning process progresses, to ensure that the right parties are engaged in a timely manner. The goals and objectives of the public participation and collaboration plan are:

- To inform and engage citizens and agencies in a meaningful dialogue about management of public lands and resources in the area managed by Taos Field Office, a dialogue which will hopefully lead to shared visions for desired future conditions;
- To facilitate discussions and information-sharing about community needs – current and future- that may depend on lands and resources managed by Taos Field Office;
- To ensure that there is equitable representation of all interests in developing the RMPA/EIS;
- To nurture and build long-term, positive working relationships with communities and groups affected by Taos Field Office management of public lands and resources;
- To effect timely identification of new parties to be engaged or parties that are no longer interested in the process as well as any necessary adjustment of techniques or schedules to further public and agency dialogue with Taos Field Office.

### **2. Public and Agency Participation and Consultation**

Taos Field Office staff discussed public and agency participation and collaboration at length and developed a detailed, preliminary list of potentially interested parties to contact. This discussion is divided into three parts, A. potential “Cooperating Agencies,” B. Formal consultations, and C. general public and agency participation, as follows.

#### **a. Cooperating Agencies**

Taos Field Office has developed a preliminary list of potential Cooperating Agencies that will be invited to join the planning process in that capacity. Recent experience has shown that some entities that seem to be well-suited for Cooperating Agency status choose to participate as “participating agencies” instead. The office plans to work with any entity regardless of its status. It is expected that the office will refine the list of potential “cooperators” as the planning process begins.

#### Potential Cooperating Agencies

Counties: Santa Fe, Taos and Rio Arriba

Towns: Questa, Taos, Espanola, Santa Fe, Las Vegas

Agencies: Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, NM Game & Fish, NM State Lands Office, NM Department of Agriculture

## **b. Formal Consultations**

### Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7 consultation will be performed with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. BLM staff will begin work on Section 7 consultation at the beginning of this project due to the additional elements that need to be considered under a Memorandum of Agreement and other reasons. BLM will also conference with the Service regarding special status species.

### Tribal

Consultations will be requested and/or initiated with tribes and pueblos that have previously been identified as having interests or Traditional Cultural Properties for this Planning Area. Those are anticipated to be: Taos, Picuris, San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Pojoaque, Nambe, Tesuque, Cochiti, Santa Domingo, Hopi, Zia, Acoma, Laguna, Santa Ana, Jemez, Isleta, Sandia, Zuni, Jicarilla Apache, Ute Mountain Utes, Southern Utes, Kiowa, Comanche, and Navajo.

## **c. General Public and Agency Participation and Activities**

Taos Field Office has developed numerous positive working relationships in many of the affected communities within the planning area. While BLM will host some formal public and agency meetings, the Field Office anticipates using a variety of local community forums and informal opportunities to share information and ideas throughout the RMPA process. Therefore, the public and agency participation strategy will be dynamic and adjusted as needed.

The preliminary list of publics and agencies to developed by Taos Field Office begins to address in detail *who, why, when and how* parties should be contacted. The list and additional information about timing and contact techniques are provided in Appendix A. However, following is a synopsis of some major RMPA/EIS process steps and when key publics and agencies will be engaged. The key process steps with target dates are also identified in the RMPA/EIS schedule, section G of this document.

### *I. Pre-Scoping*

BLM will, based on the preliminary list of citizen issues and management concerns, continue to refine the preliminary of issues and management that will serve as the basis for discussions in upcoming community outreach and scoping sessions. It is anticipated that the initial list of issues and management concerns will be refined at that time. Taos Field Office will also begin discussions with the public and other agencies about *desired future conditions* of the landscape within the planning area, in order to eventually develop a shared vision (BLM-public-other agencies-tribes) for future management of that landscape

During this period, the Field Office will compile a mailing list of interested or affected parties. This list will be maintained and updated as necessary through the process. It will include individuals, special interest groups, and government agencies at the local, state, tribal and federal levels. The list will be used to inform those parties of public involvement activities and opportunities, and to provide on-going information about the planning process and timelines.

The Field Office will encourage the participation of Taos, Rio Arriba, and Santa Fe Counties as formal cooperating agencies and initiate formal contacts with tribal governments. Numerous formal and informal discussions between BLM and each of its formal partners are anticipated. In addition, the Field Office will work with communities, partners and tribes to gather preliminary data related to the biological, physical, social, and economic conditions from available sources. This data will provide essential facts for conducting analysis, evaluation and decision making

Economic Profile System (EPS) workshops will be hosted by the Field Office and conducted by the Sonoran Institute, primarily for community stakeholders and key in the planning area and especially in Taos, Rio Arriba, and Santa Fe counties. The objective of the workshops will be to identify and reach preliminary acceptance of social, economic, and demographic characteristics in the planning area. This data will serve as input for future analyses related to planning alternatives.

## 2. Scoping

Taos Field Office will conduct a series of collaborative public workshops in the planning area for the purpose of scoping the amendment. The scoping meetings will build on and refine the issues and management concerns, and be used to develop shared visions for desired future conditions of the landscape. A notice of intent will be published in the Federal Register, inviting participation in the planning process.

The Field Office will also work with local community and agency contacts to advertise scoping meetings and to use local community forums wherever possible to gather share information that will assist the scoping process.

## 3. Development of Alternatives

The Field Office will conduct a series of workshops in the planning area, and other areas as necessary, for the purpose of developing realistic planning alternatives. Alternatives will respond to issues and management concerns identified before and during the scoping phase, and will be designed to move the landscape towards the desired future conditions. Alternatives will consider different combinations of resource allocations, uses and management, including a no action alternative. The Field Office will collaborate with citizens, other agencies, interest groups and partners during these workshops to develop the planning alternatives and collect information about potential impacts of the alternatives.

Following the development of alternatives, the Field Office anticipates using formal and informal networks and forums to provide information about the alternatives and gather additional information about potential impacts and to apprise the public and other agencies of the status of the process.

## 4. Public Comment and Review of Draft EIS/Amendment

Taos Field Office will notify the public, other agencies, and partners of the availability of the draft EIS/Amendment for review and comment. Notification will be through the Federal

Register, appropriate media (newspaper and radio), local posters, and informal and forum networks. The Field Office anticipates using local forums, and possibly formal BLM-hosted meetings, if necessary, to provide information and to gather feedback about the analysis and draft Amendment.

#### 5. Protest Resolution and Notification of the Final EIS/Amendment

During resolution of protests, the Taos Field Office will determine and solicit the appropriate level of public participation. Formal notification of the availability of the final EIS and Amendment will be made through a Federal Register notice and announcements in the local media. Community contacts and forums will be used when feasible to share information about the analysis and Amendment.

### 3. Interim RMPA Updates

At least two Taos Field Office planning efforts will run concurrently with the RMPA/EIS planning process, the Galisteo Archaeological Protection Plan and integration of Ute Mountain Plan into the San Antonio Mountain-North Unit Habitat Management Plan. Both of these efforts will be integrated into the overarching RMPA (and EIS), pending funding, available staffing and potential partnerships.

It is possible that critical issues may arise which suggest amending the current RMP during the RMPA/EIS process, yet are not clearly related to the larger amendment. If this occurs, Taos Field Office will consult with the NMSO and will carefully evaluate the issue and make a determination of whether or not to proceed with a separate amendment, to broaden the RMPA/EIS process to incorporate the new issues, or to defer a potential amendment process until after completion of the RMPA/EIS.

### 4. Summarization and Consideration of Public Participation and Collaboration

All public participation activities will be documented for the administrative record and summarized for inclusion in the RMPA/EIS. Comments will be reviewed and content analyses will be performed for key process steps in order to provide clear information regarding issues, concerns and opportunities to the field Office Manager and State Director. Briefings are planned for both the WO and especially the NMSO – Director and staff- so that key staff, the Field Office Manager, and State Director can stay abreast of public sentiment and ideas concerning the RMPA/EIS. Briefings and process steps that will include formal content analysis are identified in the *RMPA/EIS Schedule*, section *G.* of this document.

### 5. Internet Technology

The Taos Field Office will begin work early with NMSO IT specialists to develop and use the most current internet technology available, including a local website and appropriate links. These tools will be used to provide information about the planning process, such as the schedule, key activities, and documents available for review. The office plans to use appropriate internet comment mechanisms as available, although they will be just one tool for collection of comments.

## ***I. Budget***

### **1. Additional Costs**

Total costs for labor and operations, including contracts, are provided in Table 5 below.

A major additional cost shown below is for a contract for social-economic data collection and analysis, and for the writer-editor function. These contracts would be awarded and begun in FY 2006 and completed in FY 2007. An alternative approach for the socio-economist would be to use a BLM employee from another office to serve as the lead for this function. An alternative for the writer-editor would be to use a local consultant, who could advise the team on layout/design, and editing work on the draft plan/EIS only. The table below assumes a contract for these services at full value.

<b>Table 5 – Estimated RMPA/DEIS Preparation Costs by Fiscal Year</b>					
<b>Item</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Travel	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000		\$ 15,000
Rent – meeting space	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 4,000
Printing	\$ 5,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 27,500
Contracts – Consultants					
Meeting facilitators	\$ 4,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 36,000
Writer/editor/file manager	\$ 22,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 22,000	\$214,000
Economic Profile Workshops	\$ 20,000	-	-	-	\$ 20,000
Socio-economic data collection/analysis	\$ 80,000	-	-	-	\$ 80,000
Other Services - Advertising	\$ 6,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	-----	\$ 26,000
Supplies and Materials	\$ 1,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 13,500
<b>Operation expense totals:</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>	<b>\$137,000</b>	<b>\$126,000</b>	<b>\$ 28,000</b>	<b>\$ 436,000</b>
<b>On-board labor (wms/dollars)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(91)</b>	<b>(57)</b>	<b>(13)</b>	
	<b>\$385,000</b>	<b>\$637,000</b>	<b>\$399,000</b>	<b>\$ 91,000</b>	<b>\$1,512,000</b>

## ***J. Taos Field Office Contacts***

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## Appendix 1 - Preliminary Community and Public Coordination

The following is a partial list of the anticipated participants as well as why, when, and how they will be contacted.

Communities	
WHO	The Taos Field Office works with a number of small communities that are usually unincorporated, but with some organization, such as a neighborhood or community association. Communities we are currently engaged with are: Dixon, Embudo, Pilar, Chimayo, Alcalde, Ojo Caliente, San Pedro, Cerrillos, La Cienega, Edgewood, Tres Piedras, Galisteo, Rio, Santa Fe, Taos, Carson, Las Vegas, Ribera, Wagon Mound, Costilla, Garcia, Tierra Amarilla, Hondo Mesa, Stagecoach Springs, Western Hills, Caja del Rio, Santa Fe Northwest Advisory Council (SNAC), Vecinos del Rio (Velarde area)
WHY	Future needs – adjacent to BLM; how they are affected by our land adjustments; some are very interested & pushing special designations (tweaking old or adding new ones)
WHEN	Early and often
HOW	Direct contact with key community members and organization. Attend town hall or neighborhood association meetings, schedule field trips.
Utilities	
WHO	PNM, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, QWEST, Valor, Jemez Mountain., NORA (Rio Arriba Co.), Verizon and other cell phone companies
WHY	Development of alternative power sources, future rights-of-way needs, location of towers
WHEN	Scoping (scoping meeting for utilities with maps to determine what they have planned, etc.)
HOW	check with utilities to find contacts; check web for national organizations or lobbyist groups
Grazing	
WHO	Livestock associations, grazing permittees
WHY	Wildland - urban interface
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Direct contacts & general public meetings
Water	
WHO	Ditch users/acequias, mutual domestic water associations, Sangre de Cristo Water Association (Santa Fe)
WHY	RoWs, water rights, future needs
WHEN	Pre-scoping, scoping
HOW	Direct contacts & general public meetings
OHV Groups	
WHO	NM Off-Highway Vehicle Alliance, local clubs, businesses
WHY	Identify suitable riding areas, get help in inventory of routes
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	-direct contacts – field in high use areas; our Rangers direct contact -present at their meetings -check w/Scott Draney -check w/Green Infra group
NGOs	
WHO	Non-game wildlife, historical, and resource-focused non-profits groups - birders, Native Plant Society, Taos Archaeological Society, Historical Soc, New Mex. Wildlife Fed., Amigos Bravos, Rio Grande Restoration, Wildlife Soc. (NM chapter), Western Environmental Law Center, Forest Guardians
WHY	General information sharing (RoWs, grazing, wildland-urban interface, disposals, veg treatments, OHV, recreation activities, access
WHEN	Scoping (maybe pre-scoping)
HOW	Make presentations at their general meetings, contact key leaders, invite to general public meetings.

Land Trusts	
WHO	Trust for Public Land, Taos Land Trust, Santa Fe Land Trust, Commonweal
WHY	Our key issue/question concerns developing the most desirable pattern of land ownership. These groups can provide information on <i>green infrastructure</i> (open space) and land use planning
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Contact leadership initially; make presentations to boards
Watershed Groups	
WHO	Upper Rio Grande, Chama, Galisteo Watershed Association,
WHY	-land uses changes, watershed health, water resources, vegetation management, land use planning, adjacency
WHEN	-on-going via their group activities/planning; -pre-scoping -scoping
HOW	whenever we participate in their discussions, general scoping meetings, personal contacts; at their own and general public meetings
Minerals	
WHO	Saleable minerals permittees –private & commercial
WHY	Identify future needs, areas with suitable materials
WHEN	Pre-scoping, scoping
HOW	Individual contact, presentations at their meetings, invite to public meetings
Vegetation	
WHO	People (private and commercial) who buy wood products from us
WHY	Identify future needs, desirable locations, species of interest
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Meet with individuals; much of our information can be obtained when they come in for permits; will discuss during community-oriented meetings, as well
Recreation	
WHO	Recreation permittees (about 65), organized groups (hiking, equestrian, biking, OHV, fishing, hunting), unaffiliated users, Destination Taos (and other ...)
WHY	Data acquisition (market, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum information), visual resource management concerns
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Personal contacts, focus groups, neighborhood meetings, organization meetings
Land Developers	
WHO	Realty companies, Boards of Realtors, other companies involved in medium or large scale projects
WHY	See what they're planning for future; identify developers
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Personal contacts first; general meetings
Other Permittees	
WHO	NM Film Commission
WHY	To identify areas of interest
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Meet with commissioners or director
Chambers of Commerce	
WHO	Espanola Valley, Santa Fe, Taos
WHY	To get specific information on population growth, recreation uses, business perspective
WHEN	Scoping
HOW	Go to their meetings with prepared questions



## Appendix 2 - Intergovernmental Coordination

The following is a partial list of the governmental agencies and offices that will be included in the coordination efforts for the Taos RMP Amendment and EIS.

WHO	WHY
<b>Other BLM</b>	
Farmington FO	adjacent public lands
Rio Puerco FO	adjacent public lands
La Jara & Monte Vista offices	adjacent public lands - Colorado
NSTC	for help with data acquisition
<b>Other Federal</b>	
NPS Rivers & Trails	recreation data
US Fish & Wildlife Service	
NPS	
BIA	
Army Corps of Engineers	
Environmental Protection Agency	
Bureau of Reclamation	
Natural Resource Conservation Service	
*Carson & Santa Fe National Forests, Grasslands	*participating agency -upper watersheds; adjacency; cooperative info-sharing
USGS	mineral material data
<b>Tribal</b>	
Eight Northern Pueblos	
Pueblos – Taos, Picuris, Santa Clara, San Juan,	
<b>State</b>	
NM Department of Transportation	land uses
State Historic Preservation Office	special area designations
NM Office of the State Engineer	
*NM Department of Agriculture	
*NM Game & Fish	special area designations
NM Environment Department	
NM Energy & Natural Resources Department (State Parks, State Forestry)	
State Land Office	land tenure adjustment
NM National Guard	land tenure adjustment, special area designations
<b>Local</b>	
Land grant associations	
Town of Taos, *Espanola, *Santa Fe, Questa, Las Vegas	coordination, land tenure adjustment, land uses, special area designations
*Taos County	“
*Santa Fe County	“
-commissioners, planning dept., open space program	
Enchanted Circle Intergovernmental Council	“
Santa Fe Intergovernmental Council	“
*Rio Arriba County	“
San Miguel County	“
NM Association of Counties	“
Soil & Water Conservation. Districts	

*\* potential cooperating agency*