



# Preliminary Planning Criteria

## Little Snake Resource Management Plan

Little Snake Field Office

Planning regulations covering public land managed by the BLM (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require preparation of **planning criteria** to guide development of all resource management plans or revisions.

Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that guide and direct the development of the plan and determine how the planning team approaches the development of alternatives and ultimately, selection of a Preferred Alternative. They ensure that plans are tailored to the identified issues and ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Planning criteria are based on standards prescribed by applicable laws and regulations, agency guidance, the result of consultation and coordination with the public, other Federal, state and local agencies and governmental entities, and North American Indian tribes, analysis of information pertinent to the planning area, and professional judgment.

The following preliminary criteria have been developed. After public input analysis, they become proposed criteria, and can be added to or changed as the issues are addressed or new information is presented.

- The plans will be completed in compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).
- The planning process will include an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards.
- Complete the planning work on time and on budget.
- Focus the collaborative effort so that the collaborators can see that they make a difference, within a timeframe that is reasonable and achievable.
- Provide a strategy for reaching desired conditions and outcomes, and meeting objectives.
- The plan will recognize valid existing rights.
- Recognize the specific niche that federal lands provide both to the nation and to the surrounding community. A successful plan will be one that is responsive to both national needs and community needs.
- Public participation will be encouraged throughout the process as per the attached Public Participation Plan. Collaborate and build relationships with tribes, state and local governments, federal agencies, local stakeholders and others in the community of interest of the plan as normal business. Collaborators are regularly informed and offered timely and meaningful opportunities to participate in the planning process. The Northwest Colorado Stewardship will manage the collaborative process to find a common vision and strategy for the plan.
- Decisions in the plan will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, State and Federal agencies as long as the decisions are in conformance with Federal laws and regulations that direct resource management on the public lands
- Road and trail access (and OHV management) guidance will be incorporated into the plan to ensure public and resource needs are met. At a minimum, the Plan will divide planning areas into OHV area designations that are open, limited or closed. The plan will include a



map of area designations. Specific criteria for open, limited and closed designations are provided in definitions outlined in 43 CFR 8340.0-5 (f), (g) and (h). Additional criteria are provided by existing law, proclamation, executive order, regulation or policy.

- The Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) inventory results will be integrated into land use planning and energy use authorizations.
- Environmental protection and energy production are both desirable and necessary objectives of sound land management practices and are not to be considered mutually exclusive priorities;
- For all stipulations developed in new land use plans and to further improve consistency and understanding of lease stipulations, State and Field offices will use the Uniform Format for Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations prepared by the Rocky Mountain Regional Coordinating Committee in March 1989. Lease stipulations will be reviewed for consistency with neighboring field offices and States, and where there are discrepancies, efforts will be undertaken to try and get consistency.
- The lifestyles and concerns of area residents will be recognized in the plan.
- A capable organization or individual will prepare a socio-economic assessment of the planning area that will identify, analyze and review the social and economic considerations of the plans. They will also facilitate community discussions on resolving community issues generated by agency land use plans.
- The plan will incorporate the Colorado Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. It will lay out a strategy for ensuring that proper grazing practices are followed. Grazing will be managed to maintain or improve the health of the public lands by incorporating conditions to enhance resource conditions into permitted operations.
- Contain an adaptive framework that incorporates regular monitoring and evaluation to adjust management within the direction of the existing plan; or when that is not possible, with a focused plan amendment process.
- Have realistic desired conditions and achievable objectives consistent with likely budgets and the design criteria.
- Lands with wilderness characteristics may be managed to protect and/or preserve some or all of those characteristics. This may include protecting certain lands in their natural condition and/or providing opportunities for solitude, or primitive and unconfined types of recreation.
- Identify existing and potential corridors (potential corridors include existing ROW routes that can be considered for additional facilities and thus be considered a corridor if not already so designated);
- Identify existing and potential ROW development sites such as energy development areas (e.g., wind energy sites) and communication sites;
- Describe likely development of potential corridors and other ROW sites as a basis for impact assessment

We welcome public comments on the preliminary planning criteria...

