

Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument

RECORD OF DECISION and APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

December 2008

BLM

Lewistown Field Office





United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Montana State Office
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, Montana 59101-4669
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In Reply To:
1616

December 2008

Dear Reader:

I am pleased to announce that, after several years of hard work and collaborative efforts, the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Approved Resource Management Plan (Approved Plan) is complete. This document will provide guidance for the management of about 375,000 acres of BLM land in northcentral Montana and about 396,000 acres of federal minerals.

The Approved Plan is nearly identical to the Proposed Plan (Alternative F) presented in the 2008 Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS). The Approved Plan emphasizes protection and restoration of the natural resources while still providing for resource use and enjoyment. Where appropriate, it proposes a combination of management actions including allowing natural processes to continue, applying more treatment methods to achieve a natural range of native plant associations, and protecting the remote settings that currently exist in the Monument. All decisions in the Approved Plan must meet the purpose of the Monument and comply with the Proclamation.

The BLM received 46 protest letters during the 30-day protest period provided for the Proposed RMP/Final EIS in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2. The BLM Director addressed all protests without making significant changes to the Proposed RMP although minor adjustments, corrections, and clarifications were made, as identified in the Modifications and Clarifications section of the Record of Decision (ROD).

The EIS supporting this planning process included the necessary site-specific planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis to move forward with five specific implementation decisions:

- All road designations (roads designated as open and closed)
- All backcountry airstrip designations (airstrips designated as open and closed)
- The group size for boaters (20) launching from Coal Banks or Judith Landing from June 15 to August 1
- The 2-night camping limit at Level 2 sites from June 15 to August 1
- Motorized watercraft restrictions on the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River

This ROD constitutes the final decision of the authorized officer for the five specific implementation decisions discussed above. They are now appealable for 30 days following publication of the Notice of Availability of the ROD in the Federal Register. These decisions are further described in the section Decisions Subject to a Separate Appeals Process in the ROD.

Copies of the BLM ROD and the Approved Plan are available on the BLM website at <http://www.blm.gov/mt>, or can be obtained by requesting a copy in person, by telephone, or by writing to the following address:

Lewistown Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
920 NE Main Street
P.O. Box 1160
Lewistown, MT 59457
(406) 538-1900

The BLM is pleased to provide this copy of the ROD and Approved Plan for your reference. We greatly appreciate all who contributed to the completion of this Approved Plan, including the State of Montana, Blaine County, Chouteau County, Fergus County, and Phillips County who were our cooperating agencies on this plan over the years, as well as the Central Montana Resource Advisory Council. We also appreciate the extensive public involvement during this time by groups, organizations, and individuals. Your interest is appreciated. I hope your involvement will continue as we move forward to implement and monitor the plan and manage the public land in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene R. Terland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Gene R. Terland
State Director