



US Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Volume I, November 11, 2008

# The Grand Junction RMP Newsletter

## Introduction

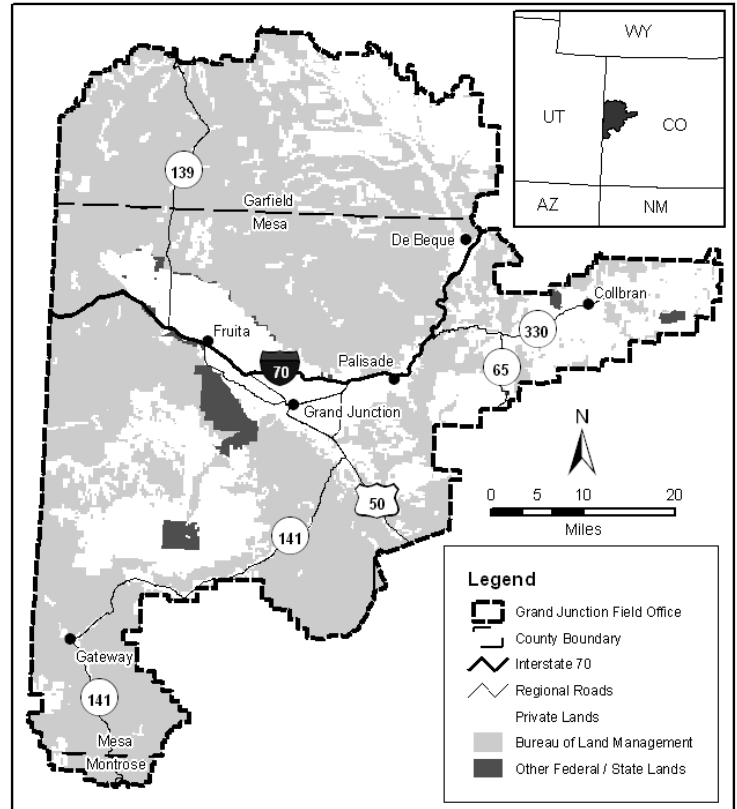
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Grand Junction Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) to guide management of the 1.2 million acres of public land (surface) and 1.45 million acres of federal mineral estate (subsurface) that it administers (see map insert). The RMP will be prepared as a dynamic and flexible plan to allow evolving management to reflect the changing needs of the planning area over the next two decades, and will replace the current plan that was developed in 1987. In order to provide a comprehensive plan, the BLM requests input from you to help us identify issues and concerns within and adjacent to the planning area and to finalize the planning criteria that will be used to evaluate these issues.

## BLM Grand Junction Field Office Planning Area

The BLM is an agency in the US Department of the Interior that administers 258 million surface acres of America's public lands, located primarily in 12 western states. The BLM is separated into state offices and further into field offices. The RMP is being prepared by the Grand Junction Field Office, located in the western portion of Colorado.

The boundary of the **planning area** encompasses lands in Mesa, Garfield, Montrose, and Delta counties. Management direction outlined in the RMP will apply only to the **1.2 million acres of public land** (surface) and **1.45 million acres of federal mineral estate** (subsurface) administered by the BLM within these counties. No management direction will be developed for private or state lands.

The BLM-administered public lands within the Grand Junction Field Office planning area are currently managed in accordance with the decisions in the 1987 Grand Junction RMP. The BLM has completed approximately 50 maintenance actions and 12 plan amendments since the 1987 Record of Decision was signed. Preparation of an updated Grand Junction RMP is necessary to respond to changing resource conditions, to respond to new issues and federal policies, and to prepare a comprehensive framework for managing public lands administered by the field office. The RMP will establish new land use planning decisions to address issues identified through public scoping and, where appropriate, may incorporate decisions from the existing Grand Junction RMP, as amended.



**Mark your calendar!**  
Upcoming open houses

**Tuesday December 2, 2008**

Two Rivers Convention Center  
159 Main Street, Grand Junction, CO

**Wednesday December 3, 2008**

Grand Center  
182 N. 500 West, Moab, UT


**Thursday December 4, 2008**

Collbran Auditorium  
102 Main Street, Collbran, CO

**All meetings will be from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.**  
**Informal presentations at 6 pm.**

## What is an RMP?


An RMP is a land use plan that describes broad multiple-use guidance for managing public lands administered by the BLM. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act directs the BLM to develop such land use plans and to provide for appropriate uses of public lands. Decisions in land use plans guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. The RMP will accomplish the following:

- ◆ Establish goals and objectives for resource management and the measures needed to achieve those goals and objectives;
- ◆ Identify lands that are open and available for certain uses, including any restrictions, and lands that are closed to certain uses; and
- ◆ Provide comprehensive management direction for and/or allocate use of all resources. 


## What is Public Scoping and How Can You Participate?

Public involvement is an integral part of preparing the Grand Junction Field Office RMP. This public scoping period gives the public and other interested agencies and organizations the opportunity to provide comments on issues to be addressed and methods to be used in this plan before BLM begins drafting it. The official scoping period began on October 15, 2008 with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* and will continue until January 9, 2009. During the scoping period, the BLM will host three public open houses in Grand Junction and Collbran, CO and Moab, UT. Notices providing information on these meetings will be published in the local newspapers and distributed within the planning area.

The public is formally invited and encouraged to participate in the planning process for the RMP during the public scoping period. Some ways you can participate are as follows:

- ◆ Attending one or more of the open house meetings to learn about the project and planning process and to meet BLM representatives;
- ◆ Reviewing the progress of the RMP on-line at the official Grand Junction RMP Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo.html>. The Web site will be updated with information, documents, and announcements during the initial scoping process and throughout the duration of the RMP preparation;
- ◆ Joining the Grand Junction Field Office RMP mailing list in order to receive future mailings and information, by:
  - Returning the comment form on the insert of this newsletter by mail;
  - E-mailing us at [gjfo\\_rmp@blm.gov](mailto:gjfo_rmp@blm.gov); or
  - Contacting Matt Anderson at 970-244-3027 or [Matt\\_Anderson@blm.gov](mailto:Matt_Anderson@blm.gov). 

## Anticipated Planning Issues

A planning issue is a matter of controversy over a resource management topic that is well defined and entails alternative actions or decisions. Based on the lands and resources that we manage, the BLM has identified categories of issues (see box above). We expect most public issues and concerns fall within one of these themes. However, we do not presume that this is an all-inclusive list and may revise it based on the comments we receive. The BLM requests your comments on these or other issues on or adjacent to BLM-administered lands within the Grand Junction Field Office planning area. See the article on *What is Public Scoping and How Can You Participate?* to see how you can submit your comments. 

### Issues Categories

- *Energy Development*
- *Vegetation Management*
- *Invasive/Noxious Weeds*
- *Forestry & Woodlands*
- *Drought Management/Climate Change*
- *Recreation*
- *Wilderness*
- *Special Designation Areas*
- *Travel Management*
- *Lands and Realty/Community Growth and Expansion*
- *Special Status Species Management*
- *Wildland Fire Management*
- *Wildlife and Fish*
- *Cultural Resources, Heritage Resources, Native American Religious Concerns, and Paleontological Resources Management*
- *Air Quality*
- *Soil and Water*
- *Wild Horses*
- *Wildland-Urban Interface*
- *Public Safety*
- *Social and Economic Considerations*

***“This resource management planning effort will shape the future of the tremendous resources that the Grand Junction Field Office manages, as well as the quality of life for those living around and visiting these lands,”*** said Grand Junction BLM Field Manager Catherine Robertson. ***“It is essential to the success of this plan that the public is involved throughout the process. The BLM will provide ample opportunities for the public to roll up their sleeves up and be engaged.”***

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## Preliminary Planning Criteria

During its initial planning sessions, the Grand Junction BLM staff developed the preliminary planning criteria listed on this page. Planning criteria establish constraints, guidelines, and standards for the planning process. They help planners to define the scope of the process and estimate the extent of data collection and analysis. The BLM requests your input and may modify these criteria based on your comment. In order to submit comments, see the article on *What is Public Scoping and How Can You Participate?*

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The plan will be completed in compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and all other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

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*Impacts from the management alternatives considered in the revised RMP will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) developed in accordance with regulations at 43 CFR 1610 and 40 CFR 1500.*

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Only public lands and split-estate lands managed by BLM are covered in the RMP. No decisions will be made relative to non-BLM administered lands.

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*The planning process will follow ten stages of an EIS-level planning process: conducting scoping, development of a Management Situation Analysis report, formulation of alternatives, analysis of the alternatives' effects, selection of a preferred alternative, publication of a Draft RMP/EIS, providing a 90-day public comment period for the Draft, preparation and publication of a Proposed Plan/Final EIS, providing a 30-day public protest period, and preparation of a Record of Decision. For specific information, please see the Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1.*

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For program specific guidance of land use planning level decisions, the process will follow the Land Use Planning Manual 1601 and Handbook H-1601-1, Appendix C.

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*Broad-based public participation will be an integral part of the planning and EIS process.*

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Decisions in the plan will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, federal, and tribal agencies as long as the decisions are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal law, and regulations applicable to public lands.

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*The RMP will recognize the State's responsibility and authority to manage wildlife.*

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The RMP will recognize the Office of Surface Mining's responsibility and authority to regulate coal activities.

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*BLM will recognize the State's responsibility for permitting related to oil and gas activities and in regulating air quality impacts.*

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BLM will recognize the State's responsibility for permitting related to uranium, coal and sand and gravel activities, and in regulating water quality impacts.

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*The National Sage-grouse Strategy requires that impacts to sagebrush habitat and sagebrush-dependent wildlife species be analyzed and considered in BLM land use planning efforts for public lands with sagebrush habitat in the planning area.*

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The RMP will recognize existing rights.

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*The RMP/EIS will incorporate existing adequate management decisions brought forward from existing planning documents.*

The planning team will work cooperatively and collaboratively with cooperating agencies and all other interested groups, agencies, and individuals.

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*The BLM and cooperating agencies will jointly develop alternatives for resolution of resource management issues and management concerns.*

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The planning process will incorporate the Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Colorado as goal statements.

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*Areas with special environmental quality will be protected and if necessary designated as ACECs, Wild and Scenic Rivers, or other appropriate designations.*

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Any public land surface found to meet the suitability factors to be given further consideration for inclusion in the W&SR System will be addressed in the RMP revision effort in terms of developing interim management options in the alternatives for the EIS.

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*Wilderness Study Areas will continue to be managed under the Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review until Congress either designates all or portions of the WSA as wilderness or releases the lands from further wilderness consideration. It is no longer the policy of the BLM to make formal determinations regarding wilderness character, to designate additional WSAs through the RMP process, or to manage any lands other than existing WSAs in accordance with the Wilderness IMP.*

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Forest management strategies will be consistent with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

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*Fire Management strategies will be consistent with the Colorado Fire Management Plan (2005).*

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The planning process will involve American Indian tribal governments and will provide strategies for the protection of recognized traditional uses.

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*Any location specific information pertaining to cultural resources (either map, description, or photo) is proprietary to the BLM and will not become the property of any contractors working on the EIS or attached to any document (paper or electronic), nor is this information subject to any public release or FOIA requests (36CFR 7.18).*

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All proposed management actions will be based upon current scientific information, research and technology, as well as existing inventory and monitoring information.

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*The RMP will include adaptive management criteria and protocol to deal with future issues.*

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The planning process will use the BLM Colorado Mitigation Guidelines to develop management options and alternatives, and analyze their impacts. The guidelines will also be part of the planning criteria for developing the options and alternatives, as well as for determining mitigation requirements.

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*A reasonable foreseeable development scenario for fluid minerals will be developed from analysis of past activity and production, which will aid in the environmental consequences analysis.*

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Planning and management direction will be focused on the relative values of resources and not the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or economic output.

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*Where practicable and timely for the planning effort, current scientific information, research, and new technologies will be considered.*

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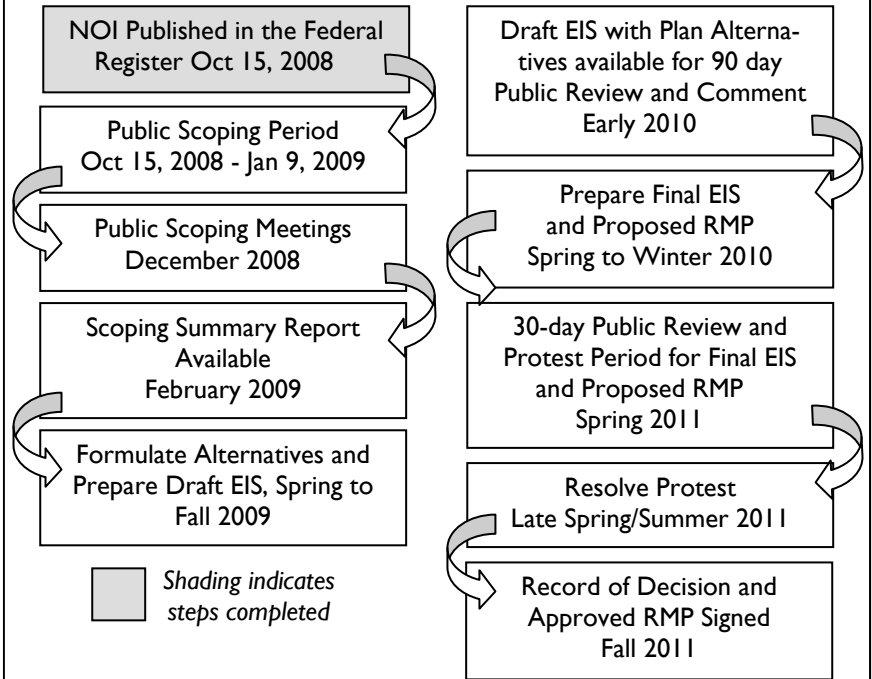
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## Commonly Used Acronyms

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
NOI	Notice of Intent
RMP	Resource Management Plan

## Planning Process Timeline



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**How to contact us**

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