

Portland, Oregon 97232-4181 (telephone (503) 231-2071). Requests for copies of the draft recovery plan and written comments and materials regarding this plan should be addressed to Wayne S. White, Field Supervisor, Ecological Services, at the above Sacramento address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Diane Elam, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above Sacramento address.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystems is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide recovery efforts, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for downlisting or delisting listed species, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed. The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act as amended in 1988 requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service will consider all information presented during the public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. Substantive technical comments will result in changes to the plan. Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plan, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individualized responses to comments will not be provided.

The giant garter snake is an endemic species of wetlands in the Central Valley of California. Historically, giant garter snakes were found in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys from the vicinity of Butte County southward to Buena Vista Lake, near Bakersfield in Kern County. Today, populations of the giant garter snake are found in the Sacramento Valley and isolated portions of the San Joaquin Valley. They historically inhabited

natural wetlands and now occupy a variety of agricultural, managed, and natural wetlands including their waterways and adjacent uplands. This species is threatened by historic wetland habitat loss and resulting habitat fragmentation, and by continuing urban expansion. The objective of this draft recovery plan is to delist the giant garter snake through implementation of a variety of recovery measures including (1) habitat protection; (2) public participation, outreach and education; (3) habitat management and restoration; (4) surveying and monitoring; and (5) research.

**Public Comments Solicited**

The Service solicits written comments on the draft recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

**Authority:** The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: September 3, 1999.

**Elizabeth H. Stevens,**

*Acting Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office, Sacramento, California.*  
[FR Doc. 99-23510 Filed 9-10-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

**[UT080-09-1310-00]**

**Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for Amending the Book Cliffs Resource Management Plan, Utah**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental assessment for amending the Book Cliffs Resource Management Plan (RMP) by changing oil and gas leasing categories on crucial mule deer winter range.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Utah Bureau of Land Management, Vernal Field Office will be writing an Environmental Assessment (EA) on a proposed amendment to the Book Cliffs RMP that covers portions of Uintah County, Utah. The amendment would change the oil and gas leasing category on 162,500 acres of crucial mule deer winter range from Category 1 (Standard Stipulations) to Category 2 (Special stipulations) for protection of mule deer. Protective measures would include seasonal restrictions,

rehabilitation requirements, siting of oil and gas wells, clustering of wells to reduce habitat disturbance and fragmentation, and other mitigative measures.

Alternatives identified at this time include the proposed action and the no action alternatives. Issues to be analyzed include impacts on wildlife, minerals, cultural resources and special status plants and animals. Potential impacts on Northern Ute tribal interests also will be considered.

**DATES:** Public scoping comments relating to issues and potential additional alternatives will be accepted for 30 days following the publication date of this notice. Comments must be submitted on or before October 13, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Scoping comments should be sent to Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Vernal Field Office, 170 South 500 East, Vernal, Utah 84078, ATTN: Book Cliffs RMP Amendment for Oil and Gas Leasing Categories on Crucial Deer Winter Range.

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 Environmental Assessment 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, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In 1992, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, in consultation with BLM wildlife biologists updated big game habitat delineations in the Book Cliffs. The updated delineations were the result of new and more detailed habitat information provided by field biologists. Analysis of this new information permitted more accurate identification and expansion of the boundaries of crucial mule deer winter range. Because mule deer crucial winter range has now been identified in areas presently offered for oil and gas leasing without protective measures for mule deer, a plan amendment is being considered.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Duane De Paepe (435) 781-4403 or e-mail: ddepaepe@ut.blm.gov.

Dated: September 1, 1999.

**Linda S. Colville,**

*Acting State Director.*

[FR Doc. 99-23679 Filed 9-10-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[MT-020-1010-00]

#### Notice of Meeting

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Montana, Billings and Miles City Field Offices, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Eastern Montana Resource Advisory Council will have a meeting October 13, 1999 at the Mon-Dak Heritage Center, 120 Third Ave. SE, Sidney, Montana starting at 8:00 a.m. Agenda topics include Bureau of Reclamation transfer of parcels along the Yellowstone River, and continued discussion on access, and the draft off-highway vehicle environmental impact statement.

The meeting is open to the public and the public comment period is set for 11:00 a.m. on October 13. The public may make oral statements before the Council or file written statements for the Council to consider. Depending on the number of persons wishing to make an oral statement, a per person time limit may be established. Summary minutes of the meeting will be available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Marilyn Krause, Public Affairs Specialist, Miles City Field Office, 111 Garryowen Road, Miles City, Montana 59301, telephone (406) 233-2831.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The purpose of the Council is to advise the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management. The 15 member Council includes individuals who have expertise, education, training or practical experience in the planning and management of public lands and their resources and who have a knowledge of the geographical jurisdiction of the Council.

Dated: September 1, 1999.

**Timothy M. Murphy,**

*Miles City Field Manager*

[FR Doc. 99-23671 Filed 9-10-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[MT-930-1820-00]

#### Realignment of the BLM Office in Great Falls

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, DOI.

**ACTION:** None.

**SUMMARY:** This notice provides information about the decision to change the Great Falls Field Office to an Oil and Gas Field Station. This change became effective on August 1, 1999.

#### The Great Falls Field Office is Removed From the Organization Structure

The Great Falls Field Office has been converted to an oil and gas field station reporting to the Montana State Office, Division of Resources, Branch of Fluid Minerals, in Billings, Montana. This realignment will provide more efficient utilization of existing staff among the affected offices.

#### Other Programs Realigned

Responsibility for all other programs, other than oil and gas, has been reassigned to the Lewistown Field Office and its Havre Field Station. The Lewistown Field Office will assume responsibility for program activities in Pondera, Teton, Lewis and Clark (north of 46 degrees), Cascade, and Meagher counties. The Havre Field Station will assume responsibility for activities in Liberty, Glacier and Toole counties.

#### Oil and Gas Field Station Management

A supervisory position will be established in the OIL AND GAS FIELD STATION. The supervisor will report to the Montana State Office, Division of Resources, Branch of Fluid Minerals, in Billings, Montana.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Janet Singer, Deputy State Director, Division of Support Services, 5001 Southgate Drive, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107.

Dated: September 1, 1999.

**Larry E. Hamilton.**

*State Director, Montana State Office.*

[FR Doc. 99-23672 Filed 9-10-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[WY-090-5700-77; WYW-6360 and WYW-145402]

**Notices of Realty Action: Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act Classification in Lincoln County, WY (WYW-6360); and Federal Land Management Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) Direct Sale of Public Lands in Lincoln County, WY (WYW-145402)**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice covers two separate but related realty actions. The first action is to amend the existing R&PP classification to include the disposal of land currently leased to Lincoln County for sanitary landfill lease (WYW-6360). The following public lands in Lincoln County, Wyoming are suitable for classification for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, as amended, (43 U.S.C. 869 *et seq.*).

#### Sixth Principal Meridian, Lincoln County, Wyoming

T. 24 N., R. 119 W.,

Sec. 4, Lot 48, Lot 47 of Tract 91.

The above land contains 40 acres.

The second action is the direct FLPMA sale of public land (WYW-145402), which is adjacent to the public lands involved in the R&PP lease. The Bureau of Land Management has determined that the lands described below are suitable for direct sale under section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1713:

#### Sixth Principal Meridian, Lincoln County, Wyoming

T. 24 N., R. 119 W.,

Lots 2, 3, 6, and 46 of Tract 91,

Lot 45 of Tract 94,

Lots 1 and 4 of Section 9.

The above land contains 93.78 acres.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mark Hatchel, Realty Specialist, Kemmerer Field Office, 312 Highway 189 North, Kemmerer, Wyoming, 83101, (307) 828-4507.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (WYW-6360):

The lands are not needed for Federal purposes. The conveyance of these lands to Lincoln County for sanitary landfill purposes is consistent with the Kemmerer Resource Management Plan and would be in the public interest. The planning document and environmental assessment covering