

adverse effects from management activities and protecting and restoring lynx, snowshoe hare, and alternate prey species habitat.

**Public Participation:** The BLM is seeking comments from individuals, organizations, tribal governments, and Federal, State, and local agencies that are interested or may be affected by the proposed action. The scoping comment period will commence with the publication of this notice. Formal scoping will end 30 days after publication of this notice. Comments should be received on or before the end of the scoping period at the address listed below. While public participation is welcome at any time, comments received within 30 days of the publication of this notice will be especially useful in the preparation of the EA. To assist the BLM in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the proposed EA should be as specific as possible. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Lynx Amendment EA, Missoula Field Office, 3255 Fort Missoula Road, Missoula, MT 59804. Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, may be published as part of this EA. Individual respondents may request confidentiality; if you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 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 and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information, contact George Hirschenberger, Missoula Field Office, (406) 329-3908.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM in the Montana State Office proposes to amend one land use plan, the Garnet Resource Management Plan, in the State of Montana. The proposed amendment would preserve the overall multiple-use direction of the RMP and modify or add management direction to the plan for Canada lynx conservation and recovery. The direction would be based on the management recommendations in the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment

and Strategy (LCAS), the Lynx Biological Assessment, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Final Listing rule, **Federal Register**, Volume 65, Number 127, 40601-40606, March 24, 2000, and the best scientific information available. The BLM has identified preliminary issues and management concerns. The following represents the BLM's knowledge to date on potential planning issues: recreation, transportation, oil and gas leasing, mineral development, wildlife habitat restoration, prescribed fire, and livestock grazing and forest management, including timber harvesting, timber stand improvement and forest development. The BLM is seeking comments on the issues related to the proposed action.

**Background:** The Canada lynx inhabits coniferous forests with cold, snowy winters and a prey base of snowshoe hares. The lynx occupies approximately 44,000 acres of habitat on BLM lands administered by this resource management plan, which are located in Granite, Missoula, and Powell Counties, Montana. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) listed the lynx as threatened, effective March 24, 2000. The Service concluded that the chief threat to the lynx in the contiguous United States is the lack of guidance to conserve the species in current Federal land management plans. The Ecology and Conservation of Lynx in the United States, a compendium of current scientific knowledge about lynx, was completed in 2000 by an international team of experts in lynx ecology, directed by the Rocky Mountain Research Laboratory. Based on this information, the *Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy* (LCAS) was completed and later revised by a team of biologists from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in February 2000 and August 2000, respectively. After the lynx was proposed for listing in July 1998 under the ESA, conferencing was initiated on the effects of agency plans on the lynx. A Biological Assessment (BA) was prepared, which indicated that some adverse effects on lynx were likely on each of the 56 BLM and 57 Forest Service units evaluated. This BA was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in February 2000. After listing, formal consultation on the plans was initiated, and was completed in October 2000. Because of the likelihood of adverse effects under current plans, and possible risk to lynx viability, the Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning for the BLM Washington Office, and two Fish and

Wildlife Service Regional Directors signed the Lynx Conservation Agreement in August 2000. It incorporates a staged approach to modifying management direction to better conserve the Canada lynx.

Dated: May 2, 2003.

**Scott W. Lieurance,**

*Acting Missoula Field Manager.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[UT 060-1610-DO-016J; UT 090-1610-DO-017J]

#### **Notice of Intent To Prepare Two Resource Management Plan Revisions for Public Lands and Resources Managed by the Moab and Monticello Field Offices, Respectively, and Call for Coal Information**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Moab and Monticello Utah Field Offices.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to prepare two Resource Management Plan Revisions (RMPs) for public lands and resources managed by the Moab and Monticello Field Offices, respectively, and Call for Coal Information. These two plan revisions will require preparation of a single Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

**SUMMARY:** This document provides notice that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to prepare two RMP revisions and a single associated EIS for lands managed by the Moab and Monticello Field Offices. These planning activities encompass approximately 2.46 million acres of public land in Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah. The plan revisions will fulfill the needs and obligations set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM management policies. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, tribal, and national needs and concerns. The public scoping process will identify planning issues and develop planning criteria, including an evaluation of the existing RMP in the context of the needs and interests of the public.

The minutes and list of attendees for each meeting will be available to the public and open for 30 days to any participant who wishes to clarify the views they expressed. Comments on

issues and planning criteria will be most useful if received on or before the end of the scoping period at the address listed below.

**Public Participation:** Public meetings will be held throughout the region in order to promote public involvement in this process. In order to ensure local community participation and input, public meetings will be held, at a minimum, in Salt Lake City, Moab, Monticello, Blanding, Montezuma Creek, Bluff and Green River, Utah, and in Grand Junction, Colorado. Other locations will be announced in local and regional news media, planning bulletins and on BLM web sites. Early participation by all interested parties is encouraged and will help shape the future management of the public lands in the Moab and Monticello Field Offices. Written comments will be accepted throughout the planning process at the address shown below. In addition to the ongoing public scoping process, formal opportunities for public participation will be provided during a comment period for the draft alternatives and upon publication of the draft RMP/EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** For the Moab Field Office RMP revision, written comments should be sent to RMP Comments, Bureau of Land Management, Moab Field Office, 82 East Dogwood, Moab, Utah 84532; or Fax 435-259-2106. Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the BLM's Moab Field Office. For the Monticello Field Office RMP revision, written comments should be sent to RMP Comments, Bureau of Land Management, Monticello Field Office, 435 North Main Street, Monticello, Utah 84535; or Fax 435 587-1518. Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the BLM's Monticello Field Office.

All comments must be specific to either the Moab RMP or the Monticello RMP. All comments and or data received, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at each of the Field Offices during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EIS. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 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 and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as

representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information regarding the Moab RMP revision and/or to have your name added to this mailing list, contact Brent Northrup, Resource Advisor/RMP Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Moab Field Office, 82 East Dogwood, Moab, UT 84532, phone: 435-259-2151, or e-mail: [brent\\_northrup@ut.blm.gov](mailto:brent_northrup@ut.blm.gov). For further information regarding the Monticello RMP revision and/or to have your name added to the mailing list, contact Gary Torres, Supervisory Planner, Bureau of Land Management, Monticello Field Office, 435 North Main Street, P.O. Box 7, Monticello, Utah 84535, phone: 435-587-1524 or e-mail: [gary\\_torres@ut.blm.gov](mailto:gary_torres@ut.blm.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Preliminary issues and management concerns have been identified by BLM personnel during planning evaluations and pre-planning analysis for each of the RMPs. They represent the BLM's knowledge to date of the existing issues and concerns with current management. The major issue themes that will be addressed in the plan revisions are: Management and protection of public land resources; management of conflicting and competing uses; access to and transportation on the public lands; and balancing multiple uses. Other specific issues may include cultural resource management, fire management, woodland harvest and management, lands and realty management, rangeland health and management, wild horse and burro management, potential establishment of special designation areas, and special status species management.

43 CFR 3420.1-2(a) requires that the BLM publish a call for coal and other resource information in the **Federal Register** if there are areas with coal occurrence in the planning area. Parties interested in coal leasing and development should provide coal resource data for their area(s) of interest. Identification of interests in future coal leasing, substantiated with adequate coal resource data, allows the BLM to address development potential during the RMP revision process and helps avoid unnecessary work, delays, or RMP amendments.

Proprietary data marked as confidential may be submitted in response to this call for coal resource information and other resource information. Please submit all proprietary information submissions to

the individuals at the addresses listed above. The BLM will treat submissions marked as "Confidential" in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the confidentiality of such information.

In addition to coal resource data, the BLM seeks resource information and data for other public land values (e.g., air quality, archaeology, fire/fuels, fisheries, forestry, geologic hazards, lands and realty, oil and gas (including coalbed methane), paleontology, rangeland management, recreation, trona, water quality, and wildlife).

After gathering public comments on what issues the plan should address, the suggested issues will be placed in one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan;
2. Issues resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan.

Rationale will be provided in the plan for each issue placed in category two or three. In addition to these major issues, a number of management questions and concerns will be addressed in the plan. The public is encouraged to help identify these questions and concerns during the scoping phase for the plan revisions. An interdisciplinary approach will be used to develop the plan in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Disciplines involved in the planning process will include, but not be limited to, rangeland management, minerals and geology, outdoor recreation, archaeology, paleontology, special designations, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, sociology, and economics. Each Field Office is seeking public involvement at the earliest possible stages of this planning endeavor to enhance collaboration. If you have information, or concerns you would like to share, including ideas or opportunities that could enhance data collection, resource inventories, formulation of issues or alternatives, or development of planning criteria that would be applicable to the Moab or Monticello planning efforts, please submit them to the above addresses as appropriate. A reasonable range of alternatives that resolve those issues and management concerns identified during the scoping process will be developed and analyzed for each of the RMPs and a single Draft RMP/ Draft EIS will be published and made available for public review.

Dated: April 11, 2003.

**Gene Terland,**

*Associate State Director.*

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