



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

New Mexico State Office
301 Dinosaur Trail
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
www.blm.gov/nm

In Reply Refer To:

BLM/NM/PL-16-07-1610

Dear Reader:

Enclosed is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (Proposed RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rio Puerco Field Office. The BLM prepared the Proposed RMP/Final EIS in consultation with cooperating agencies and tribes, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of BLM-administered lands and resources located in Valencia, Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, McKinley and Cibola counties, New Mexico. The document contains land use planning decisions to guide the BLM's management of the Rio Puerco Field Office. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS is open for a 30-day review and protest period beginning on the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS in the *Federal Register*.

This Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended. [The BLM identified Alternative C The Proposed RMP \(Alternative CE\) is a reasonable combination of objectives and actions from the alternatives \(A-D\) analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS, released on July 13, 2012, as the Proposed RMP.](#) The Proposed RMP/Final EIS contains the Agency Proposed RMP (Alternative CE), a summary of changes made between the Draft RMP/EIS and Proposed RMP/Final EIS, impacts of the Agency Proposed RMP, and a summary of written and verbal comments received during the public review period for the Draft RMP/EIS and [BLM's-BLM's](#) responses to the comments.

Pursuant to BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed RMP/Final EIS and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decision within 30 days from the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. For further information on filing a protest, see the accompanying protest regulations in Attachment 1. The regulations specify the required elements of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g., meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). If your protest does not include all of the elements outlined in 43 CFR 1610.5-2, the BLM will not respond to your protest.

Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the Proposed RMP and Final EIS may be found online at <https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/public-participation/filing-a-plan-protest> and at 43 CFR 1610.5-2. All protests must be in writing and mailed to the appropriate address, as set forth below, or submitted electronically through the BLM e-Planning project website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/64954/570>. Protests

submitted electronically by any means other than the e-Planning project website protest section will be invalid unless a protest is also submitted in hard copy. Protests submitted by fax will also be invalid unless also submitted either through the e-Planning project website protest section or in hard copy. All protests submitted in writing must be mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail:
Director (210)
Attention: Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 261117
Lakewood, CO 80226

Overnight Delivery (non-US Postal Service):
Director (210)
Attention: Protest Coordinator
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80226

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the Department of the Interior's final decision on each protest. Responses to protest issues will be compiled and formalized in a [Director's Director's](#) Protest Resolution Report made available following issuance of the decisions.

Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be mailed or made available electronically to all who participated in the planning process and will be available to all parties through the BLM Rio Puerco Field Office RMP revision e-Planning website: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/64954/570>.

Sincerely,

Timothy R. Spisak
New Mexico State Director

Attachment 1: Protest Regulations (1 p)

Attachment 2: Critical Item Checklist for Filing a Protest (1 p)

Attachment 1

Regulations for Filing a Valid Protest

TITLE 43--PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR

CHAPTER II--BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PART 1600--PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING--Table of Contents

Subpart 1610--Resource Management Planning

Sec. 1610.5-2--Protest procedures.

(a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.

(1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.

(2) The protest shall contain:

(i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;

(ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;

(iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;

(iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and

(v) A concise statement explaining why the State ~~Director's~~Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

(3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested.

(b) The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Attachment 2

Critical Item Checklist for Filing a Protest

The following items must be included to constitute a valid protest.

- Name of Resource Management Plan (RMP) or Amendment (RMPA) being protested
- Protester's Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Your interest in filing this protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of this plan?)
- Issue or issues being protested
- Statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested (including Chapter, Section, Page, and/or Map)
- Attach copies of all documents addressing the issue(s) that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, OR an indication of the date the issue(s) were discussed for the record (including dates)
- A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest - including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Reader Notes: The Rio Puerco Field Office (RPFO) Proposed RMP and Final EIS is a revision of the Draft RMP/EIS. Changes were made in the document for correction and clarification of information and analysis. See Chapter 1, Section 1.4, *Changes Between the Draft RMP/EIS and Proposed RMP/Final EIS*, as well as the footnotes in Chapter 2, for a description of the major changes since the Draft RMP/EIS.

Most of the maps referenced in this document appeared in the Draft RMP/EIS and have not been modified. Some additional maps and references were added in the applicable sections both in the Proposed RMP and in the Final EIS.

~~The BLM selected Alternative C, which was identified as the Agency Preferred Alternative in the Draft RMP/EIS, as the Proposed RMP. The BLM developed the Proposed RMP as Alternative E. In contrast, in the Draft RMP/EIS, Alternative C was identified as the Agency Preferred Alternative. Alternative E would provide suitable protection to all inventoried resources but focuses on resource use and extraction. Some prescriptions under alternatives other than Alternative E that may balance the protection of resources but do not modify the intent and focus of Alternative E, the Proposed RMP, were adopted into Alternative E.~~

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