

following public land issues: Wild and Scenic rivers, protection of riparian areas, soils, vegetation, water quality, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, historical and archaeological resources, scenic quality, recreation, commercial uses, access, and resource interpretation/education. The alternatives can be summarized as: (A) No Action or Existing Management; (B) Biodiversity Protection; (C) Resource Use; (D) Preferred, which is a balance between the other three.

Under the Preferred Alternative, the BLM would implement the CRMP in both the Taos and San Luis Resource Areas, along with the following Taos Resource Management Plan amendments: designation of the identified areas of the Lower Gorge and Copper Hill Units as Areas of Critical Concern for wildlife habitat and scenic quality values; exclusion of 58,765 acres from grazing; withdrawal of 73,820 acres from mineral entry; closure of 50,173 acres to mineral leasing; application of No Surface Occupancy standards for oil and gas development on 25,615 acres; closure of 65,432 acres to mineral material disposal; prohibition of land disposals, except for Color-of-Title sales (in the Dixon area) and three parcels identified for community needs; exclusion of rights of way from within the expanded Wild Rivers Recreation Area, the Lower Gorge Unit (with exceptions), and portions of the Copper Hill Unit. The BLM would also recommend the Rio Grande Bosque segment (as identified in Pub. L. 103-242) for Wild and Scenic River designation, with a Recreational classification, and the Rio Embudo for designation with a Wild classification. Finally under the Preferred Alternative, the agency would increase protection of riparian areas, vegetation, soils, water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic quality, while placing limits on recreational uses in the corridor and restricting vehicle access to some areas.

Public participation has occurred throughout the CRMP process. A Notice of Intent was published on November 14, 1994, in the **Federal Register** (Vol. 59, No. 218, 56528-29), and an amended notice was published on February 20, 1996 (Vol. 61, No. 34, 6383-84).

**Mike Ford,**

*District Manager.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[CO-076-1220-00]

#### Notice of Intent To Amend the Grand Junction Resource Area Management Plan

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to amend the Grand Junction Resource Area Resource Management Plan, 1987.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Grand Junction Resource Area, is proposing to amend the Grand Junction Resource Management Plan, approved in January of 1987. The amendment will consider changes that would enhance and build upon existing management direction in the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Planning area. The effects of these changes have been analyzed in an environmental assessment (EA). The amendments have been developed as part of the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Integrated Resource Management Plan, and will consider a number of new management actions affecting recreation, wilderness, vegetation, wildlife, and fire management.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The affected area includes 118,700 acres of public land in western Mesa County between the Colorado National Monument and the Utah state line. The Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Integrated Resource Management Plan and EA has been developed by an ad-hoc committee of affected and interested publics along with Bureau of Land Management specialists with expertise in outdoor recreation, wilderness, archaeology, paleontology, range conservation, wildlife and fire management. There will be a thirty day public comment period on the plan, the EA, and a guidebook for Prescribed Natural Fire Planning and Implementation for the area beginning on July 18, 1997. During the public comment period, an open house will be held at the Bureau of Land Management office in Grand Junction, Colorado on August 7, 1997 from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. The open house is being held to give an opportunity for the public to discuss the plan and proposed amendments one on one with various BLM specialists.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Harley Metz, Ecologist, Grand Junction Resource Area, 2815 H Road, Grand

Junction, Colorado 81506; (970) 244-3076.

**Mark Morse,**

*Grand Junction District Manager.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[WY-030-07-1060-00]

#### Intent To Gather Excess Wild Horses

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to gather excess wild horses.

**SUMMARY:** During the summer and fall of 1997, the Great Divide Resource Area plans to continue implementing the decisions made in Wyoming BLM Environmental Analysis WY-037-EA4-122, "Management Changes in the Wild Horse HMAs of the Great Divide Resource Area," Environmental Analysis WY-037-EA4-121, "Great Divide Wild Horse Capture Plan," and Environmental Analysis WY-037-EA1-039, "Management of Wild, Free Roaming Horses That Stray From HMAs". This will be accomplished by the removal of approximately 200 excess horses from the Cyclone Rim HMA, 150 excess horses outside HMAs north of Interstate 80 and 400 excess horses outside HMAs South of Interstate 80. The documents referenced above, as well as their supporting documents may be reviewed at the BLM Great Divide Resource Area office located at 1300 North, Third Street, Rawlins, Wyoming 82301. The referenced decisions determined the Appropriate Management levels for the HMAs in the Great Divide Resource Area. The planned actions have been reviewed for conformance with these decisions and the appropriate land use plan. Inventories conducted in February of 1997 identified the presence of excess horses in these areas. Actual dates and numbers of horses to be gathered will be dependent on weather, ability to place and move trap locations, wild horse health, and supplemental inventories to be conducted in conjunction with the gathering operations. If you wish to respond to this notice and also wish that your name or street address be withheld from public review or disclosure under the Freedom Of Information Act, you must state this clearly at the beginning of any written comment you submit. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.