

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CO-034-99-1230-00]

Designation Order; Lifting of the Moratorium on Commercial Outfitting Permits and the Establishment of Special Stipulations, Conditions, and an Environmental Analysis Process for New and Existing Commercial Outfitting Permits for the San Miguel River Special Recreation Management Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Uncompahgre Field Office, Montrose, Colorado.

ACTION: Lifting of the 1995 moratorium on commercial outfitting permits, establishment of special stipulations and conditions, and initiating an environmental analysis process to evaluate new and existing commercial upland and river permits within 32,641 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management as the San Miguel River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in San Miguel and Montrose Counties, Colorado.

SUMMARY: In June, 1995, the BLM issued a Federal Register Notice establishing a moratorium on commercial outfitting permits within the SRMA and ACEC to hold commercial use at 1994 levels while a multi-objective watershed plan was being prepared. The Notice of the moratorium (Vol. 60, No. 125, Thursday, June 29, 1995) stated that when the watershed plan was completed, the moratorium would be lifted and constraints on the number of outfitting permits and/or the total number of user days associated with those permits, if any, would be implemented.

The San Miguel Watershed Plan was completed in June, 1998 and actions in the Plan pertaining to Public Lands will be implemented by the BLM where determined feasible and in compliance with existing BLM management objectives or approved plan amendments. Additional environmental analyses will be completed, where determined necessary, to evaluate the impacts of implementation of general and/or site specific management actions and projects.

As part of the Watershed Plan implementation process, the BLM is lifting the commercial permit moratorium until April 15, 1999 and entering into a two-year analysis period during which time it will: (1) Issue new annual probationary permits to both

river and upland outfitters that meet Special Recreation Permit application requirements and BLM management objectives for the SRMA/ACEC; (2) Allow existing permitted outfitters within the SRMA/ACEC area to propose modifications to their operating plans and proposed use figures; (3) Conduct on-the-ground monitoring of all uses within the SRMA/ACEC to provide environmental and social data for analyzing the impacts of those uses; (4) Establish interim Special Stipulations and Conditions for commercial permits and site-specific management regulations for all uses within the management area where needed to protect resources and reduce user conflicts; and, (5) Work with the public and the San Miguel Coordinating Council and a San Miguel Watershed Task Force to prioritize and implement additional resource management actions and develop resource protection standards, Limits of Acceptable Change, and other similar protection guidelines for recreation uses within the SRMA and ACEC.

At the end of the two-year period, the BLM will determine, through an environmental analysis process, how commercial permits will be issued and managed in the future to ensure maximum protection of the area's sensitive riparian resources, reduce user conflicts, and provide the highest quality recreational opportunities for the outfitted public. The process will include, but not be limited to, analyzing the impacts of reissuing permits to existing outfitters, the impacts of the new probationary permits on the existing uses, and the potential impacts of restricting commercial use in the future under a closure or allocation system.

EFFECTIVE DATES: The moratorium is lifted as of March 10, 1999 and will be reinstated on April 16, 1999. All new river permit applications for the San Miguel River must be postmarked by April 15, 1999 and received no later than five days afterward by the Uncompahgre Field Office. The environmental analysis period will begin April 15, 1999 and extend through December 31, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Tucker, Recreation Planner, Uncompahgre Field Office, 2505 South Townsend Ave., Montrose, Colorado 80401, (970) 240-5309.

Dated: March 2, 1999.

Allan J. Belt,

Uncompahgre Field Office Manager.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-930-4210-06; WYW 147234, WYW 142433]

Notice of Proposed Withdrawal and Opportunity for Public Meeting; Cancellation of Proposed Withdrawal; Wyoming

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to withdraw 3951.36 acres of public land in Big Horn County, to protect important paleontological resources within the Red Gulch dinosaur track site pending completion of land use planning. This notice closes the land for up to two years from surface entry and mining. The land will remain open to mineral leasing.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 5, 1999.

Comments and requests for a public meeting must be received by June 3, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests should be sent to the BLM Wyoming State Director, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet Booth, BLM Wyoming State Office, 307-775-6124, or Chuck Wilkie, BLM Worland Field Office Manager, P.O. Box 119, 101 South 23rd Street, Worland, Wyoming 82401-0119, 307-347-5100.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 1. On January 29, 1999, a petition was approved allowing the BLM to file an application to withdraw the following described public land in aid of planning from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, subject to valid existing rights:

Sixth Principal Meridian, Wyoming

T. 52 N., R. 91W.,

Sec. 17, all;

Sec. 18, lots 5-8, E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$;

Sec. 19, lots 5-7, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$,

NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$,

N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$,

SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 20, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 21, all;

Sec. 28, all;

Sec. 29, N $\frac{1}{2}$ M $\frac{1}{2}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$,

N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$,

N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 30, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.

The area described contains approximately 3951.36 acres in Big Horn County, Wyoming.

2. This notice also cancels a withdrawal application approved May