

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to the Bureau of Land Management, San Juan Public Lands Center, Columbine Field Office, 15 Burnett Court, Durango, Colorado 81301. Responses to written comments will be published as part of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. 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.

You may obtain copies of the Draft EIS will from the San Juan Public Lands Center, 15 Burnett Ct. Durango, Colorado. Copies will also be available at the following locations:

Silverton Public Library, 1111 Reese Street, Silverton, Colorado.
Durango Public Library, 1188 2nd Ave., Durango, Colorado.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Richard Speegle, Team Leader, Columbine Field Office, at 970-375-3310, or e-mail at richard_speegle@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Draft EIS/Draft Amendment analyzes four alternatives to address the issues of public safety, Canada lynx impacts, impacts on the local winter economy, impacts to neighboring private lands, public access and other related issues. The four alternatives can be summarized as: Proposed action (unguided skiing only), (A) no action, or continuation of current practices, (B) guided skiing only, and (C) the preferred alternative, an integrated guided and unguided operation. The proposed action alternative is the proposal by Core Mountain Enterprises, LLC (Silverton Outdoor Learning and Recreation Center) for a ski area and recreation/learning facility, titled the "Silverton Outdoor Learning and Recreation Center (SOLRC)" on public lands north of Silverton, Colorado. The proposal includes lift-accessed skiing, snow boarding, and summer and winter related educational courses; and hiking, mountain biking and lift-accessed scenic chairlift rides during the summer months. Seasonal foot bridges would be installed across Cement Creek for skier access. In addition, two summer use trails (one would be a mountaineering trail, the other a hiking trail) are

proposed on public lands. The alternative (B) guided operation only, includes the same proposed area and all of the elements of the proposed action, but would allow for a limited "guided only" operation.

It would also allow the optional use of a guided helicopter access, allowing a wider skier distribution and more extensive skier compaction of the area, creating potential skier safety benefits as well as increasing recreational opportunities. The preferred alternative (C) integrated guided and unguided operation, would blend the unguided skiing under the proposed action with the guided only operation of alternative (B), incorporating the skier safety approaches appropriate to both. The preferred alternative (C) would include all elements of both the proposed action and the guided only operation of alternative (B), with the following exceptions:

1. Skier access to the permit area terrain would be staged according to skier safety hazards. Areas where risks were adequately reduced, due to avalanche control efforts and/or naturally evolving snow conditions, would be open to unguided skiing. Areas where hazards existed but could be avoided would be open to guide skiing only, and areas where the hazard was too high to reliably avoid, would be closed.

2. Limited tree thinning, limbing, and cleanup on forested, north-facing slopes within the permit area. The objective would be to increase safe tree-skiing opportunities, primarily for unguided skiers, during periods of high avalanche hazard above timberline. This alternative would incorporate both approaches to skier safety, from resort-style risk reduction as described above under the proposed action to the risk-avoidance approach typical of guided operations (alternative B). Determination of which areas were open for unguided skiing and for guided skiing—and which areas were closed to skiing of any type—would be made on the basis of snow-stability criteria detailed in the skier-safety operation plan.

Public participation has occurred throughout the EIS process. A notice of intent was filed in the **Federal Register** in September of 2002. Since that time, an open house was conducted in Silverton, Colorado to solicit comments and ideas. Any comments presented throughout the process have been considered.

Dated: April 11, 2003.

Mike Znerold,
Acting Center Manager, San Juan Public Lands Center.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ES-020-1310-EI]

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Planning Analysis/Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare a Planning Analysis/Environmental Assessment (PA/EA).

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management, Eastern States, Jackson Field Office, announces its intent to prepare a PA/EA in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), Louisville, Kentucky, to consider leasing Federal mineral estate for oil and gas exploration and development. The PA/EA is being prepared in response to an expression of interest (EOI) from the public. The EOI requests leasing without the right of surface occupancy. The lands, managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, are within the Nolin Lake Project in Edmonson, Grayson, and Hart Counties, Kentucky. This notice is issued pursuant to title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.7 and Title 43 CFR 1610.2 (c). The planning effort will follow the procedures set forth in Title 43 CFR part 1600. The public is invited to participate in this planning process, beginning with the identification of planning issues and criteria.

DATES: Comments relating to the identification of planning issues and criteria will be accepted for thirty days from the date of this publication. 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 comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from the individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Bureau of Land Management (ATTN: Sid Vogelpohl), Jackson Field Office;

411 Briarwood Dr., Suite 404; Jackson, MS 39206. Submit electronic comments to Sid_Vogelpohl@blm.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sid Vogelpohl at (601) 977-5402.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM has responsibility to consider EOIs to lease Federal mineral estate for oil and gas exploration and development.

Directional wells may be drilled into the Nolin Lake property at depth (4,000 feet) from privately owned property adjoining tracts managed by the COE. No surface equipment or drilling locations would be on COE-managed property. Subject to completion of the PA/EA, the COE has consented to leasing without the right for surface occupancy.

The area being addressed, along with acreage, is identified below.

Legal Description: Acquired Lands within Segments 7 through 17 and Segments 22 through 28 within the Nolin Lake Project. Total acreage is 6,731 acres.

An interdisciplinary team will prepare the PA/EA. Preliminary issues, subject to change as a result of public input, are as follows: (1) Potential impacts of oil and gas exploration and development on the surface resources and uses by the COE; and (2) consideration of restrictions on lease rights to protect surface resources and uses by the COE.

Preliminary planning criteria developed to guide the preparation of this PA are listed below. These criteria may be refined by public input.

1. Land use planning and environmental analysis will be conducted in accordance with laws, regulations, executive orders and manuals. Planning will be conducted for the oil and gas mineral estate (leaseable mineral estates, such as, oil and gas; are under the administration of the BLM).

2. A reasonable foreseeable development scenario will be prepared for the exploration and development of oil and gas resources (if any) under the identified land. The surface estate is managed by the COE.

3. Resource data needed to evaluate the impacts of foreseeable oil and gas exploration and development will be collected.

4. The planning team will work cooperatively with (a) federal, state, county and local governments and agencies, (b) tribal governments, (c) groups and organizations and (d) individuals.

Comments relating to the preliminary issues and planning criteria (listed above) should be submitted in writing to the address provided above. Due to the

limited scope of this PA/EA process, public meetings are not scheduled.

Dated: May 8, 2003.

Bruce E. Dawson,

Field Manager, Jackson Field Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-060-03-1610-DO]

Notice of Intent To Revise the Platte River Resource Management Plan and Prepare an Associated Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to revise the Platte River Resource Management Plan (RMP), to be titled and referred to in the future as the Casper RMP, and prepare an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); solicitation of public comments on resource issues and preliminary planning criteria; and call for coal and other resource information for the Casper RMP planning area, Wyoming.

SUMMARY: This document (1) provides notice that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to prepare a revised RMP with an associated EIS, (2) solicits public comments regarding resource issues and preliminary planning criteria, and, (3) solicits resource information for coal and other resources for the Casper planning area. The planning area, encompassing approximately 1.4 million acres of BLM-administered public land surface and 4.7 million acres of BLM-administered Federal mineral estate, is located in Converse, Goshen, Natrona, and Platte counties, Wyoming. The Platte River RMP (1985) will continue to guide management actions and decisions for the planning area until the Casper RMP is completed and approved.

Preparation of the Casper RMP and associated EIS will fulfill the obligations set forth by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Federal regulations.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process. The BLM can best utilize public comments and resource information submissions submitted within 60 days of publication of this notice.

ADDRESSES: Please send written comments and resource information submissions via mail to the BLM,

Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604; or electronically to rmp_wymail@blm.gov. Members of the public may examine documents pertinent to this proposal in the Casper Field Office. To be considered, all comments must include legible full name and address on the envelope, letter, postcard, facsimile, or e-mail. Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Casper Field Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EIS process. 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, please state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. The BLM will honor such requests 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: For further information or to have your name added to the Casper RMP mailing list, contact Linda Sloane at the above address or by telephone at (307) 261-7600, or electronically to rmp_wymail@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national interests. The public scoping process will help identify planning issues, provide for public comment on the proposed planning criteria, and provide an opportunity to comment on documents published throughout the RMP revision process.

The Cedar Ridge-Badwater Creek area, located along the southern border of the Big Horn Mountains in Natrona County, has been evaluated as a traditional cultural property (TCP). The TCP is a sensitive cultural resource of high significance eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. During the Casper RMP planning process, the Cedar Ridge-Badwater Creek area will be evaluated as a Special Management Area (SMA.)

1. Preliminary Issues

Emerging resource issues and changing laws necessitate preparation of the Casper RMP. Preliminary issues and management concerns have been identified by BLM personnel, other