

its resources until BLM prepares a management plan for the area. Excepted from this emergency closure is the Rio Grande Gorge below the rim, which will remain open to foot travel and boating between June 1 and March 31 each year. Also excepted from the closure are certain official activities.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 31, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Send inquiries or suggestions to the Taos Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 226 Cruz Alta Road, Taos, NM 87571.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Huntsinger, Taos Field Office Manager, (505) 758-8851.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The land subject to this closure is part of a tract of land being acquired by BLM primarily because of its value as wildlife habitat and open space for recreation. The Ute Mountain property is situated within and adjacent to the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor north of Taos, New Mexico, on the New Mexico-Colorado border. This property offers spectacular views of the Rio Grande Gorge and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and encompasses the entire extinct volcano called Ute Mountain. The land includes the mountainous and forested former volcano, high mesa desert with sagebrush-grasslands, cliffs of the gorge, and riparian areas along the Rio Grande.

Ute Mountain rises to 10,093 feet from an elevation of about 7,600 feet at its base and has been a private sanctuary for elk, deer, antelope, and other game. The land is host to large herds of deer and elk. The property also provides critical riparian and breeding habitat for peregrine falcon, golden eagle, brown trout, and the federally-listed endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and threatened bald eagle. The property is bordered by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands and private lands. The western edge of the property, the Rio Grande Gorge, is an active recreation area, providing river sports and associated camping, hunting, picnicking, and wilderness recreation.

The property being closed is a little more than half of the entire 14,344-acre Ute Mountain Property. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and BLM have completed the first phase of a multi-year effort to preserve Ute Mountain. TPL, a national non-profit land conservation organization, conveyed to BLM 7,924 acres of the Ute Mountain property, bringing part of one of New Mexico's most notable landscapes into permanent protection. When completed, the Ute Mountain property will be protected

from development, leaving open a critical migratory wildlife corridor and adding approximately 7 miles of the Rio Grande to the active recreation area. BLM will manage the land, located within the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor, to protect its open space, recreational, and habitat values.

II. Lands Affected

This order affects public land in Taos County, New Mexico, described as: A certain tract of land near Costilla, Taos County, New Mexico; within the Sangre de Cristo Grant; described as part of projected Sections 24, 25, and 36, Township 32 North, Range 11 East; part of projected Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, and 13, Township 31 North, Range 11 East; part of projected Sections 19, 20, 21, 28, and 33, and all of projected Sections 29, 30, 31, and 32, Township 32 North, Range 12 East; part of projected Sections 4, 5, 8, 17, and 18, and all of projected Sections 6 and 7, Township 31 North, Range 12 East of the New Mexico principal meridian (New Mexico system); and further described as part of Tract "A" shown on a plat entitled "A Survey of the Westerly Portion of the Sangre de Cristo Grant," by Leo Archuleta, NMLS no. 4249, dated February 1980.

This tract contains 7923.85 acres, more or less; all as shown on a survey plat entitled "Robert Starks to the Trust for Public Land" RGSS survey no. L203-A1, by Scott B. Crowl, NMLS no. 12441, dated June 16, 2003, as revised August 27, 2003.

III. Closure

In compliance with 43 CFR 8364.1(c), notice is hereby given that BLM is closing the public lands in the Ute Mountain Property. These restrictions will be in effect year-round from December 31, 2003, until rescinded by BLM. The order to close these lands is needed to protect the public land resources there until the land use plan for the tract is complete. BLM is establishing and will administer this emergency closure under the authority of 43 CFR 8364.1.

BLM finds good cause to publish this closure notice effective on the date of publication and without providing for public comment due to the immediate need to protect the habitat for the endangered and threatened species in the tract. Also, the regulations on Closures and Restrictions at 43 CFR 8364.1 do not require publication of a request for comments.

BLM hereby closes the described public lands to all entry and use, except for the Rio Grande Gorge below the rim, which will remain open to foot travel

and boating between June 1 and March 31. Any person who fails to comply with this order may be subject to the penalties provided in 43 CFR 8360.0-7.

This closure will remain in effect until BLM completes the acquisition of the property, expected to occur no later than the end of FY 2005. At that time BLM will prepare a management plan with input from local residents and other interested parties. During this closure period, BLM will consult with the public and develop a process for completing a management plan for the area.

BLM will post closure signs at main entry points and trails in the area indicating the area closed and explaining the reason for the closure. Maps of the closure area and more detailed information are on file at the Taos Field Office.

IV. Exceptions

The following persons are exempt from this order: all Federal, State, and local officers or employees in the scope of their duties, members of any organized rescue or fire-fighting force in performance of an official duty, and persons authorized in writing by the Bureau of Land Management.

Dated: November 21, 2003.

Paul Williams,

Acting Field Office Manager.

[FR Doc. 03-32239 Filed 12-30-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-40-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[UT-020-03-2821-HU-Q157]

Emergency Restriction on Public Lands: Tooele County, UT

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Emergency restriction on public land in Tooele County, Utah.

SUMMARY: The Salt Lake Field Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is giving notice it is temporarily restricting a portion of public lands from all forms of public use from November 15, 2003, to November 15, 2005. The restricted area is near Stockton, Tooele County, Utah. The affected public lands include:

T. 4 S., R. 4 W., SLM,

Sec. 18, all public lands in the SW1/4,

Sec. 19, all public lands in the NW1/4NW1/4;

T. 4 S., R. 5 W.,

Sec. 13, all public lands east of Highway

#36 in the E1/2SE1/4,

Sec. 24, all public lands in the NE1/4NE1/4.

The area closed contains 240 acres, more or less.

All public use within the above designated area will not be allowed during this temporary restriction in order to protect the public health and safety, allow for successful rehabilitation activities, reestablishment of native vegetation and prevent the spread of noxious and invasive weed species. BLM will post signs at all entry points to the area. You may obtain maps of the restricted area and information from the BLM Salt Lake Field Office.

DATES: This restriction will be in effect from December 31, 2003, until November 15, 2005. At the end of this 2 year period, BLM will evaluate the level of public health and safety and the success of the rehabilitation and determine if the restriction should be continued for an additional period of time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Nelson, Realty Specialist at 2370 S. 2300 W. Salt Lake City, Utah 84119, (801) 977-4355.

Discussion of the Rules: This restriction to public access and use will serve to protect the health and safety of the public from exposure to high levels of lead and arsenic present in historic mine tailings within the area of the Bauer Fire #Q157, a lightning-caused wildfire that began on July 25, 2003, and was controlled on July 27, 2003. The area where the wildfire occurred is within an urban interface heavily used for Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) play, target shooting activities, and other forms of dispersed recreation. In order to protect the public from exposure to hazardous mine tailings recently found to occur in the area, prevent the spread of noxious weeds, and allow for the successful reestablishment of vegetation on the recently burned steep slopes, the area must be temporarily restricted from all forms of public use.

A map depicting the restricted area is available for public inspection at the Bureau of Land Management, Salt Lake Field Office. Therefore, we find good cause to make this restriction effective immediately, notwithstanding the notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553. Under the authority of 43 CFR 9268.3(d)(1)(I) and 43 CFR 8364.1(a), BLM will enforce the following rule on public lands within the restricted area: You must not enter the restricted area.

Exemptions: Persons who are exempt from these rules include: (1) Any Federal, State, or local officer or employee in the scope of their duties; (2) Members of any organized rescue or fire-fighting force in performance of an

official duty; and (3) Any person authorized in writing by the Bureau of Land Management.

Penalties: The authorities for this closure are section 303(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1733(a)) and 43 CFR 8360.0-7. Any person who violates this restriction may be tried before a United States Magistrate and fined no more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for no more than 12 months, or both. Such violations may also be subject to the enhanced fines provided for by 18 U.S.C. 3571.

Dated: November 12, 2003.

Glenn A. Carpenter,
Field Office Manager, Salt Lake Field Office.
[FR Doc. 03-32238 Filed 12-30-03; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4310--\$\$-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[MT-060-01-1020-PG]

Notice of Public Meeting; Central Montana Resource Advisory Council

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Central Montana Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting will be held January 28, 2004, at the BLM's Lewistown Field Office on Airport Road, in Lewistown, Montana, beginning at 8 a.m. A 60-minute public comment period will begin at 8 a.m. The meeting is scheduled to adjourn at approximately 4:30 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member council advises the Secretary on a variety of management issues associated with public land management in Montana. At this meeting the council plans to discuss:

The access and transportation issue in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Resource Management Plan

All meetings are open to the public. The public may present written comments to the RAC. Each formal RAC meeting will also have time allocated for hearing public comments. Depending on the number of persons wishing to comment and time available, the time

for individual oral comments may be limited.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dave Mari, Lewistown Field Manager, Lewistown Field Office, Airport Road, Lewistown, MT 59457, 406/538-7461.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Michael P. Stewart,
Associate Lewistown Field Manager.
[FR Doc. 03-32132 Filed 12-30-03; 8:45 am]
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-010-1430-FM; N-74293]

Termination of Segregation, Exchange N-74293; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of termination of segregation.

SUMMARY: This action terminates the segregation of the Exchange Proposal N-74293 initiated by Nevada Land and Resource Company, LLC. The land will be opened to the operation of the public land laws, including location and entry under the mining laws.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Helen Hankins, Elko Field Office, 3900 E. Idaho St., Elko, Nevada 89801, 775-753-0200.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 4, 2001, the land described below was segregated as to a proposed exchange with Nevada Land and Resource Company, LLC. The exchange is no longer being pursued on the lands identified below. The segregative effect is hereby terminated for the following described land:

Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada

T. 36 N., R. 64 E.,
Section 2, (All) Lots 1-4, S¹/₂ N¹/₂, S¹/₂;
Section 4, Lots 1-4, S¹/₂ NE¹/₄, S¹/₂ NW¹/₄,
N¹/₂ SW¹/₄, SE¹/₄;
Section 10, All;
Section 12, All;
Section 14, All;
Section 16, All;
Section 22, All;
Section 24, All.
T. 37 N., R. 64 E.,
Section 2, (All) Lots 1-4, S¹/₂ N¹/₂, S¹/₂;
Section 4, (All) Lots 1-4, S¹/₂ N¹/₂, S¹/₂;
Section 8, All;
Section 10, All;
Section 12, All;
Section 16, All;
Section 22, All;
Section 24, All;
Section 26, All;
Section 28, All;