



GJ RMP public comment

RAC update/discussion
August 22, 2013

Multiple Use definition (FLPMA)

- Management of the public lands & their various resource values-utilize in the combination that best meets present & future needs of the American people;
- making most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide for periodic adjustments in use-conform to changing needs and conditions;

Multiple Use definition (FLPMA)

- use of some land for less than all of the resources; combination of balanced & diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g., rec, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific and historical values)
- Harmonious & coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land & quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources & not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output.

Sustained yield definition (FLPMA)

- The term “sustained yield” means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use.

Scope of comments

- 4,000+ comments-emails and letters
- Air quality, recreation, travel management, social/economic analysis, oil and gas, lands with wilderness characteristics main topics of substantial interest
 - State of Colorado, Mesa Co., and EPA-air
 - Detailed comments from public, Mesa and Garfield Counties on travel mgmt.
 - Individual recreationists and COHVCO-soc/econ

Scope of Comments (cont)

- Individual oil and gas operators-detailed, specific comments on oil and gas stips, leasing, protections for soil/water/air/wildilfe
- Detailed comments on lands with wilderness characteristics, including ground-truthed inventory comments by wilderness society
- Lengthy comment letters from Mesa County, COHVCO, others

Process-Comment Analysis

- Submitted every letter/email (4,000 +) to contractor
- Contractor reviews each letter and extracts substantive and non-substantive comments
- Enters into database
- Prepared draft comment report
- Provides BLM with database and scanned copies of all letters

Examples of non-substantive comments

- The best Alternative is B (or A, C, D....)
- I want the EIS to reflect the following: no logging, grazing, drilling, mining...
- Do not add any more restrictions
- More areas should be available for multiple uses

(Without reasons stated for the preference)

Comment Summary- Substantive

- Three broad topics:
 - National Environmental Policy Act (covers general, purpose and need, alternatives, baseline info, impacts, mitigation, and resource-specific comments)
 - Federal Land Policy and Management Act (consistency, multiple use, issues and planning criteria, planning process)
 - Edits

Comment review

- Non-substantive comments will be summarized and reviewed
- Substantive comments will be compiled, summarized, and included in the report BLM will use to develop the proposed
- Planning team lead and Field Manager to do preliminary review each comment against range of alternatives then interdisciplinary work/discussion

Comment Review

- Depending on degree of change and how different the impacts would be from the current Preferred, planning to develop a new Preferred alternative
- Changes may also include improving information in EIS (e.g., updating impacts or affected environment)
- Some comments simply require response/clarification/explanation

Status

- Draft summary report provided to BLM
- BLM reviewed report and requested changes
 - More full incorporation of comments from coop agencies
- Travel management comments will be part of comment database (don't have these yet)-significant effort by local individuals and groups (forums etc)

Process/NEPA/Document

- Parts of the RMP are too specific, consider the least specific management possible
- Clarify the role of humans in the environment
- Recognize and adopt newly developed community master and comprehensive plans-Fruita, Palisade, Delta, GH, updated Mesa County plan, local sage-grouse plans

Air Quality

- Questions about how WEST CARMMs modeling will be incorporated
- Detailed comments on baseline, mitigation, impacts from EPA, Mesa County, and Colorado Dept. of Public Health and the Environment-focus on ozone, PM10
- Questions on BLM's authority re: air strips

Fish and wildlife

- Questions about NSOs for hookless cactus, restrictions for Debeque phacelia
- Increase NSOs based on site-specific NEPA
- Master Leasing Plans (BLM is currently working to integrate master leasing plan info into the document vs. appendix) (Shale Ridges of particular interest)
- Use National Technical Team recommendations for sage-grouse

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

- Questions on BLM's authority to identify areas with wilderness characteristics
- Wilderness Society completed in-field review of our inventory and submitted detailed comments
- Use different management prescriptions for different areas
- More focus on the northern Dolores

Energy and Minerals

- Range of alternatives too narrow-increased restrictions in each alternative, BLM should make an effort to decrease impediments
- Technical suggestions regarding coal-EIS will be updated with these
- Consider “demonstration project” around Roan Creek/Carr Creek-opportunities to coordinate private/public development

Recreation

- Consider more alternatives-more different kinds of recreation in Bangs Canyon, Castle Rock, Palisade area, North Fruita Desert
- Clarify implementation procedures for Special Recreation Permits
- More clarification on future shooting ranges-develop proactive approach
 - Unreasonable to require cleanup of clay targets
 - Agree with broad “open unless closed” approach but also recommend developed ranges

Recreation (cont)

- Palisade proposal-option of “epic descent” mountain bike riding opportunity in conjunction with Grand Mesa
- Keep backcountry airstrips open
- Effects of overcrowding on trails-is supply adequate for current and future use?

Recreation (cont)

- Comments reveal complexity of recreational interests in this area
 - Motorized-includes singletrack motorcycle, trials motorcycle, hill climb/dirtbiking, ATV, jeeping.....
 - Hang-gliding and backcountry airplanes
 - “Quiet use”-mtn bikes, horseback, on and off-trail hiking opportunities
- Diversity of desires-in some cases, all looking for specific experience

Travel Management

- Set aside Zone L (North Desert) until a collaborative travel plan can be developed by stakeholders working with BLM
- Detailed comments from Mesa and Garfield Counties regarding historic routes
- Other comments all route-by-route, will be considered after allocations are updated/considered

Discussion topic-Zone L

- Zone L and travel-John Potter headed up a group called “Friends of Zone L”-may be appropriate for sub-group work
 - Is there interest/value in ongoing working group approach?
- Level of interaction needed by BLM may indicate sub-group would be appropriate if desired

Travel Management

- Garfield County-has undertaken research of historic routes
 - Asks BLM to show historic routes across private land, leave BLM routes open behind private land pending ability to prove public access
 - BLM-doesn't want to encourage trespass-
grayed out these routes and propose closed or administrative designations

Travel Management (cont)

- Mesa County-considering recreation as a value that the county is interested in, more fully today-significantly expanded routes noted as important to Mesa County
 - County undertook hearings and conveyed comments from the public about travel management (and rec, oil and gas, ag)
- County heard strongly from motorized use advocates and comments reflect that focus

Travel Management (cont)

- Additional work with Mesa County through coop agency relationship with BLM
 - Coordination/clarification needed to understand Mesa County's position, share information on specific travel management areas
 - Understand new/restated position on areas of recreational importance

Wild and Scenic

- Finding only 11.53 miles of the Dolores eligible out of all rivers running through BLM is not a balanced approach
 - Delay a suitability finding pending additional stakeholder involvement
- Additional input on stakeholder comments

Impacts

- Social and Economic-lots of focus on recreation
 - Many users feel the EIS undervalues recreation expenditures
 - Economists-assumptions on portion of all rec spending that can be attributed to BLM? Role of local spending?
 - Differences in how we displayed data-can be fixed
 - Interest in economic role of recreation more specific/important in GJ given amt. of public lands

Social/Econ discussion topic

- Clarify assumptions, esp. regarding local expenditures and link between BLM and rec spending
- Include qualitative (at least) mention of the importance of recreation, public lands
- Clarify analysis so that expenditures are grouped in a more comparable way
- Pursue a more detailed, specific socio-economic analysis of the importance of public lands in Mesa County-work with partners (Mesa Co? COHVCO?)

Soc/Econ discussion (cont)

- Understand its important to recreationists to know that we understood the full scope of economic impact from recreation
- Recreation critical link in a diverse economy
- FLPMA-multiple use and sustained yield-give consideration to the relative values of resources and not necessarily to combo of uses that will give greatest economic return or greatest unit output

Impacts (cont)

- Requests for additional evaluation of effects of stips on development
- Questions on how RMP guidelines affect existing leases



Questions?