

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Clear Creek Management Area
Resource Management Plan &
Environmental Impact Statement**

PUBLIC SCOPING WORKSHOPS

All meetings will be from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

September 27, 2007
Veterans Memorial Hall
649 San Benito St.
Hollister, CA

October 4, 2007
Harris Ranch Garden Ballroom
24505 W. Dorris Ave.
Coalinga, CA

October 11, 2007
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library
Room 225
150 E. San Fernando St.
San Jose, CA

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Hollister Field Office, is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address BLM management of the public land located in Clear Creek Management Area.

The purpose of this newsletter is to invite you to participate in the planning process, and provide some background information on the process of preparing a RMP/EIS.

The scoping process provides persons affected by the project an opportunity to express their views and concerns. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) defines scoping as an “early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action” (40 CFR 1501.7).

Objectives of the scoping process:

- Identify potentially interested parties;
- Identify public and agency concerns;
- Define the range of issues that will be examined in the plan;
- Ensure that relevant issues are identified early and drive the analyses; and
- Establish a public record.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The BLM is a federal agency within the United States Department of Interior that is responsible for managing the surface and subsurface resources and uses of certain public lands. The BLM’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In managing public lands, BLM must follow certain principles:

- recognize diverse social, economic, and cultural conditions
- balance uses that best serve the needs of the public
- accommodate multiple use and sustained yield

The HFO administers approximately 63,000 acres of public land in Clear Creek Management Area, located in southern San Benito and western Fresno counties.

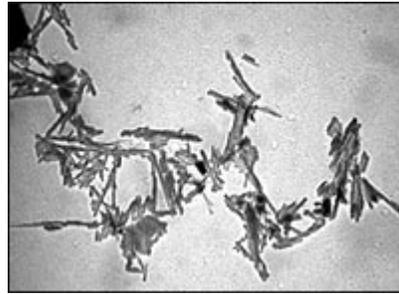


Why is a RMP/EIS needed?

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, a RMP must be prepared before taking specific resource management actions and pursuing additional planning. The land use planning process is a key tool used by the BLM to manage resources and designate uses on lands managed by the BLM. Under BLM guidelines, the RMP planning process is integrated with the requirements of the NEPA.

The RMP is a land use decision-making document that guides future management direction for the planning area and site-specific activity planning. It provides a comprehensive and balanced assessment, while remaining adaptive and flexible in its approach to resource management. The plan is created through an open, public process, utilizing the input from those who have an interest in these public lands, and the surrounding communities. BLM must follow the RMP when initiating implementation actions, and monitoring the consistency of these actions with the RMP. The RMP may implement specific decisions, which are effective immediately. These may include opening or closing areas to off-highway vehicles, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern designations, and visual resource management class designations.



Chrysotile asbestos fibers

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The process of preparing an EIS:

- identifies planning issues and concerns
- identifies the purpose and need for the proposed action
- develops and evaluates reasonable alternatives for the proposed action
- describes the affected environment
- assesses potential environmental consequences of alternatives
- involves the potentially affected public

The EIS will identify potential impacts that implementation of the RMP could have on the environment and identify appropriate measures to mitigate those impacts. The EIS will be prepared in compliance with NEPA, CEQ regulations, FLPMA, and other relevant laws and regulations, including the BLM H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook.

Preparation of the CCMA RMP/EIS will provide the public an opportunity to:

- Understand the requirements for planning and NEPA compliance
- Make recommendations on how resources should be managed
- Review decision-making options for resource management of public lands in Clear Creek Management Area.

What are the steps in the planning process?

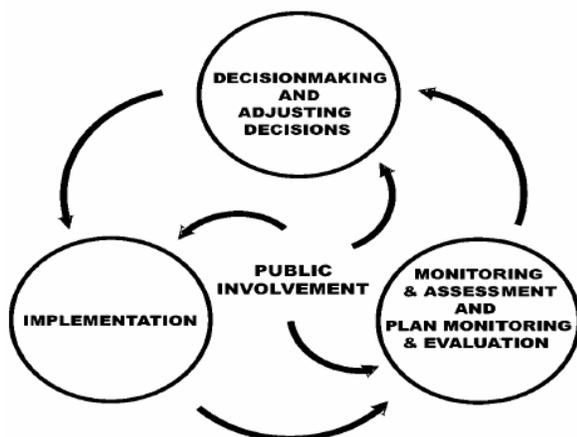
The RMP/EIS process, scheduled for completion in about three years, has nine basic steps:

- identify issues
- develop planning criteria
- inventory data and information collections
- prepare a management situation analysis
- formulate alternatives
- assess the potential effects of the alternatives
- select the preferred alternative
- prepare the RMP
- monitor and evaluate implementation of the RMP

The range, or scope, of public and agency issues and concerns are being identified through comments received in response to this notice and during public scoping meetings listed in this newsletter. The BLM welcomes your thoughts and ideas on the planning criteria, resources, and development of plan alternatives to be addressed in the RMP/EIS process. The study team will develop an inventory of resource information by gathering data that characterizes human, natural, and cultural resources within the planning area. Integrating the issues identified, the inventory of resource data, and existing management direction, the team will identify 1) allowable resource uses, 2) levels of resource production, 3) resource condition objectives, 4) areas of limited or restricted uses, 5) program constraints, and 6) general management direction. A range of reasonable alternatives, including an alternative considering no action, as required by NEPA, will be developed and analyzed in the RMP/EIS. Through scoping and subsequent discussions, the public will assist in developing the alternatives to be addressed in the planning and EIS process.

The potential impacts of the alternatives will be assessed and the results of the analyses will be documented in the Draft RMP/EIS, which the public will have an opportunity to review. Comments on the Draft RMP/EIS received from agencies and the public will be considered and incorporated into the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. After a Governor's Review and public protest period the BLM will issue a Record of Decision and an Approved RMP.

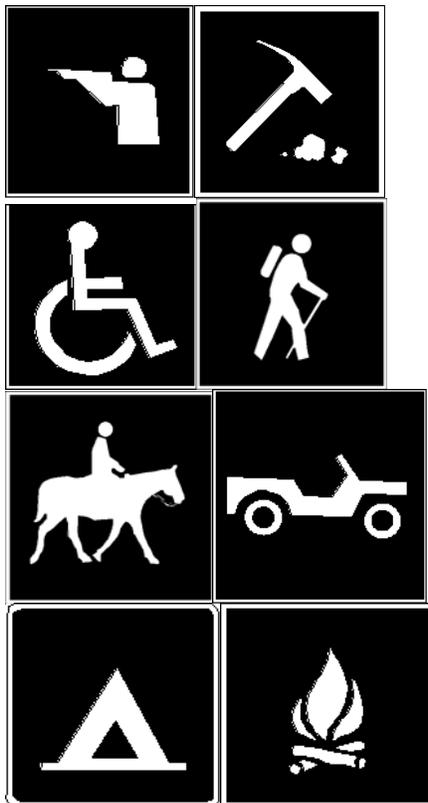
FIGURE 1 - OVERVIEW OF PLANNING RELATIONSHIPS



What preliminary resource concerns will be considered in the RMP?

BLM has identified the following preliminary issues and management concerns:

- Public health & safety
- Land tenure adjustments
- Energy and non-energy leasable minerals (oil and gas)
- Locatable minerals (hard rock and placer deposits)
- Natural resources mgt.
- Cultural resources mgt.
- Recreation
- Wildland fire and fuels management
- Special area designations
- Livestock grazing, and
- Other issues that may emerge through the scoping process



How can you participate in the project?

There are several opportunities to participate in the CCMA RMP/EIS planning process. Three scoping workshops will be held to present information to the public and obtain input. The scoping meetings will combine an informational open house with a brief presentation that provides an overview of the plan purpose, objectives, and schedule.

The Environmental Protection Agency will also host a public meeting in November 2007 to present the results of the Final Health Risk Study for CCMA.

Members of the public are encouraged to share ideas during the scoping meetings. However, *BLM will only accept written comments for inclusion in the CCMA Scoping Report.*

Submit Scoping Issues & Comments during public meetings; or by

USPS mail to: CCMA RMP
20 Hamilton Court
Hollister, CA 95023

Fax to: (831) 630-5055

Email to: cahormp@ca.blm.gov

Public comments will be accepted up to 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency Public Meeting in November 2007 (TBA). **Visit the EPA Region 9 website for more information:**

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/noa/clearcreek/index.html>

To receive notification of upcoming meetings and planning announcements, join the CCMA Mail List!