

For Immediate Release: November 28, 2007
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Energy: Using it more popular than development
By Sally Wisely, Bureau of Land Management Colorado State Director

Energy. A highly charged topic these days, literally and figuratively. Whether speaking of oil and gas leasing and development here in Colorado, projected energy supply and demand scenarios, conservation, the role of renewable resources, or the price at the pump, the issues are complex, challenging and controversial. Perhaps the only thing clear about energy is that using it is a lot more popular than developing it.

As American citizens and Colorado residents, I believe it's imperative that we engage in a civil, civic dialogue on such a critically important national and state issue. Understanding the environmental, economic, social, and national security issues and tradeoffs associated with our nation's energy policies is critical to the dialogue, critical to participating in public processes, and ultimately critical to good decision making.

Since Congress has authorized the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage the federal mineral estate as part of our multiple use mandate, and provided specific direction on how to do so, the BLM is right in the middle of much of the energy dialogue. This is as it should be, since these lands and energy resources belong to the American people.

Unfortunately, news reports too often give the impression that ALL energy development in Colorado is taking place on BLM managed public lands, when in fact, statewide less than 15 percent of new oil and gas wells are on federal lands. Some days it seems that 15 percent of activity receives 100 percent of the coverage! While it is frustrating to us, more importantly it does the public a disservice. It's important to tell the complete story.

Colorado currently has approximately 33,357 producing wells; 4,479 are federal wells. Last year, for example, the state of Colorado approved roughly 5,904 new well permits, 706 were federal well permits approved by BLM. Statewide, less than 15 percent of new wells in 2006 and 2007 have been federal. For Western Slope counties, federal well permits account for 24 percent. Fifty percent of all revenues from federal leasing and development are shared directly with the state where the energy is produced; the other half goes to the federal treasury. Last year BLM shared \$2.1 billion with states. Colorado received \$148 million in federal royalties.

The public, owners of the public lands and minerals the BLM manages, should know that development on federal lands is the most regulated, most analyzed and provides the most opportunity for public input, of any in Colorado. Federal wells and the leases associated with them go through at least two rigorous environmental analysis processes, first during the leasing decision process and second prior to any development. These National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes include an environmental analyses identifying potential impacts of the action to other resources such as water, air, wildlife, etc., and stipulations and conditions of approval to mitigate those impacts. They are open to public involvement and participation.

Currently, there is no comparable process for the 85 percent of activity that is solely regulated by the

state, although recently passed state legislation may begin to address this difference.

Given public questions, concerns and ideas about energy development and potential impacts on communities, air, water, wildlife and economies, I think it is essential that we take as holistic a look as possible. For some time now I have been advocating to the state that we work together to take a strategic, statewide approach to address energy development and related issues. I am hopeful that the state will take us up on our proposal. Certainly the BLM stands ready and willing to participate.

I appreciate media coverage of energy issues. I encourage more in depth articles and request that they be as accurate and as complete as possible, covering all aspects of the complex energy issue. I also encourage more opinion pieces from different points of view, showcasing the wide variety of perspectives on the issue.

BLM welcomes the dialogue. Too often in this debate people seem to want to blame someone—the BLM, the energy industry, Congress, the administration. Personally, I'm reminded of the old Pogo comic strip and Pogo's infamous words: "We have met the enemy and he is us." It is us, all of us, and our insatiable demand for energy, that is fueling the energy boom.

I also believe that it is all of us--through vigorous discussion and debate at the local, state and national levels--who will craft workable solutions that meet our energy needs while ensuring a healthy environment, economy, state and nation. That's BLM's goal, as tough and challenging as it is. I encourage everyone to participate. Let's work together to create the future we all want.

-BLM-

Note to Editor's: A publication-quality jpg photo of Sally Wisely is available. Please contact Jim Sample at 303-239-3861, e-mail james_sample@blm.gov

For Immediate Release on November 27, 2007
Contact: Mel Lloyd, 970-244-3097

BLM seasonal road closures in effect December 1

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo.—The Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office will implement seasonal road closures on December 1. These roads will reopen to motorized use on May 1, 2008, with the exception of the Coal Canyon road, in the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Area, which will reopen May 30, 2008. Affected areas include: Coal Canyon, the Beehive, Grand Mesa Slopes, Lands End, Chalk Mountain, Sunnyside, Big Salt Wash/Coal Gulch, Blue Mesa, Demaree and Rapid Creek. The BLM closes roads and access routes on an annual basis for a variety of reasons, ranging from protecting critical big-game winter range to protecting other natural resources in sensitive areas.

While some affected areas will have locked gates, other areas will be closed through signing. The public is asked to respect the closures to protect wildlife values and avoid disturbing winter-stressed deer and elk.

Public access remains to all areas via foot or horseback. For more information, contact BLM Wildlife Biologist Heidi Plank at 970-244-3012.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 20, 2007
Contact: Tom Gorey BLM 202-452-5137
Denise Adamic BLM 303-239-3671

Nominations Open for Wild Horse & Burro Advisory Board

The Bureau of Land Management is extending to December 7, 2007, the deadline for submitting public nominations to fill three vacancies on the national Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board. The categories to be filled are: Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy, Veterinarian Medicine, and General Public Interest. The Board advises the BLM (an agency of the Interior Department) and the Forest Service (an agency of the Department of Agriculture) on the management, protection, and control of wild free-roaming horses and burros on public lands administered by those agencies.

The nine members on the Advisory Board represent a balance of interests. Each member has knowledge or special expertise that qualifies him or her to provide advice in one of the following categories: wild horse and burro advocacy, wild horse and burro research, veterinarian medicine, natural resources management, humane advocacy, wildlife management, livestock management, and general public interest. Members must also have a demonstrated ability to analyze information, evaluate programs, identify problems, work collaboratively, and develop corrective actions.

Any individual or organization may nominate one or more persons to serve on the Advisory Board; individuals may also nominate themselves. In accordance with Section 7 of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, Federal and state government employees are not eligible to serve on the Board, whose members serve three-year terms, on a staggered-term basis, with one-third of the Board subject to appointment each year.

The Board meets at least two times a year and the BLM Director may call additional meetings when necessary. Members serve without salary, but are reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses according to government travel regulations.

The BLM is accepting nomination letters plus resumes that include the nominee's name, address, profession, relevant biographical information, references, endorsements, and specific category of interest. Nominations should be sent by December 7, 2007, to the National Wild Horse and Burro Program, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520-0006, Attn: Ramona DeLorme; phone: 775-861-6583 or fax: 775-861-6711.

The 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act mandates the protection, management, and control of wild horses and burros to ensure healthy free-roaming herd populations at levels consistent with the land's capacity to support them. The BLM manages about 29,000 wild horses and burros that roam public rangelands in 10 Western states. (See Wild Horse and Burro Fact Sheet at http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/wild_horse_and_burro/Fact_Sheet.html)

The BLM manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by

conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

-BLM-

Date: November 16, 2007

Contact: Ken Smith, BLM - Public Affairs, (719) 269-8553

Mike Smith, U.S. Forest Service (719) 269-8704

Christmas Trees available from US Forest Service and BLM

CANON CITY, COLORADO... The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Royal Gorge Field Office and U.S. Forest Service, San Carlos Ranger District will be selling Christmas trees again this year.

The BLM will have specific areas where trees can be cut while U.S. Forest Service permits will allow for cutting trees across National Forest lands within the San Carlos Ranger District. Cutting within Wilderness areas and/or administrative, sites such as campgrounds, will be restricted. The use of chainsaws will be permitted on BLM public lands but not on U.S. Forest Service lands.

Beginning November 19 through December 21 permits for BLM or Forest Service trees will be available at \$10/tree with a limit of 2 trees per household. Permits will be issued weekdays at - the BLM and Forest Service office in Canon City between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and at the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Visitor Center (719-539-7289) in Salida between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Forest Service tree permits will also be available at Forest Service offices in Westcliffe, La Veta, and Pueblo during normal business hours. The BLM/Forest Service Office in Canon City will be open until 5:30 pm on Friday, November 23 and 30. Maps of designated BLM cutting areas are available at both the Canon City and Salida locations and can be picked up with the permit.

Species available, depending on the cutting area, include: Douglas-Fir, Ponderosa Pine, Pinyon Pine, White Fir and Rocky Mountain juniper. BLM sites are located near: Salida, Howard, Cotopaxi, Texas Creek, Canon City, Penrose and Gardner. Permits must be purchased before trees can be cut. Additional information regarding Christmas trees or other Special Forest Products are available from the BLM by contacting Ken Reed (Forester) at (719) 269-8576 and the Forest Service by contacting Mike Smith at (719) 269-8704.

Cutting your own Christmas tree can be fun, but be prepared for winter conditions, there can be more snow in the high country than in town. Plan to do some walking through snow to get your tree and make sure everyone in your party has warm clothes and boots. Pack emergency supplies, carry the appropriate map and leave word with friends or relatives of your planned destination. Take a vehicle equipped for winter conditions with 4-wheel drive, snow tires or chains and start early, since winter days are shorter. Remember, tree cutting is only permitted in specified areas for BLM permits and all National Forest lands within the San Carlos Ranger District.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 19, 2007

Contact: Mel Lloyd BLM 970-244-3097

Gunnison sage grouse working group to meet in Hotchkiss

MONTROSE, Colo. — The Bureau of Land Management Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) is coordinating a working group meeting to discuss the Crawford population of the Gunnison sage grouse. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, at the Hotchkiss Annex for Delta County, located at 196 W. Hotchkiss Ave., in Hotchkiss.

Interested parties, including the public-at-large, are invited to participate in the meeting. The working group's objective is to look at what should be done for the management of the Gunnison sage grouse in the Crawford area. BLM issued a progress report in 2006 entitled the Crawford Sage Grouse Population; Habitat Improvement Projects and Conservation Plan Progress Evaluation.

“We will be reviewing the Crawford Area Gunnison Sage Grouse Conservation Plan, which was originally developed by the Uncompahgre Field Office and its partners in 1998,” Biological Staff Supervisor Missy Siders said. “There will also be discussions regarding the current status of the Crawford area population.” Other meeting topics include updates on BLM's Healthy Lands Initiative, as well as a briefing on potential projects in the area.

Throughout the past several years, a number of partners have worked closely with the BLM toward improving habitat and ensuring the future of the Gunnison sage grouse population of the Crawford area. Those partners include: Black Canyon Audubon Society, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Consolidated Woolgrowers Association, Delta County Livestock Association, Delta and Montrose Counties, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument and Curecanti National Recreation Area, as well as members of the public-at-large.

For more information about the Crawford Sage Grouse Working Group or to add your name to the mailing list, contact Missy Siders at (970) 240-5332 or by e-mail at msiders@blm.gov.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 14, 2007

Contact: Mel Lloyd, 970-244-3097

Dave Stevens, 970-244-3009

BLM Grand Junction Christmas tree permits available beginning Nov. 19

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo.—Bureau of Land Management Christmas tree permits will go on sale Monday, Nov. 19, at the BLM Grand Junction Field Office, at 2815 H Road, as well as at the Glade Park Store. Permits will be available for purchase from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the BLM office, and seven days a week at the Glade Park Store. The deadline for purchasing a permit is Friday, Dec. 22, and all permits expire Dec. 25.

Permit cost is \$10 per tree, and pinyon and juniper are the only types of trees that can be harvested on BLM Grand Junction public lands. At the time of purchase, you will receive a map and travel directions, as well as rules for cutting your tree. Trees are for personal use only and may not be resold. The same individual may purchase more than one permit for friends and family.

Areas open this year to Christmas tree gathering are: Dominguez-Farmer's Canyon (Uncompahgre

Plateau), Gateway, Round Mountain (De Beque) and Tom's Canyon (Glade Park). Trees may be cut in designated areas only. All areas are within an hour's drive of Grand Junction, depending on weather and road conditions. All areas will require parking along the road, walking in, and carrying out the tree. Cross-country, motorized travel to retrieve a tree is not allowed, but there are many accessible side roads. The public should be prepared to hike to find the perfect tree, especially in the Tom's Canyon area on Glade Park where a number of fuel reduction projects have been conducted.

Be sure to bring along a handsaw and rope or twine. Make sure your vehicle is equipped with tire chains, a shovel and emergency supplies such as extra food and blankets.

Many of the areas will have limited vehicle access depending on snow depths. Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended for all cutting areas. Be aware of changing weather and road conditions before you head out.

For more information, call the BLM Information Desk at 970-244-3000 or BLM Forester Dave Stevens at 970-244-3009.

-BLM-

Contact: Mel Lloyd: 970-244-3097
For Immediate Release, Nov. 13, 2007

BLM and Forest Service Christmas tree permits available

MONTROSE, Colo.—Bureau of Land Management and Ouray Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service Christmas tree permits go on sale Monday, Nov. 19, at the Montrose Interagency Office, 2505 S. Townsend Avenue. Permits will be available for purchase from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The deadline for purchasing a permit is 4:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 21, and all permits expire Dec. 25.

Permit cost is \$8 per tree. On public lands managed by the BLM, only pinyon and juniper trees are available for harvesting. On Forest Service-managed lands all species are permitted to be harvested and those include sub-alpine fir, Engelmann spruce, pinyon pine, Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine and juniper. At the time of purchase you will be provided with information to assist you in locating suitable trees, and you will also receive the rules for cutting trees. Cutting is permitted on all public lands except in the following areas: riparian, closed, developed campgrounds, wilderness areas or the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area. Cutting is not permitted on tree plantations or on private land.

Trees are for personal use only and may not be resold. Permit purchase is limited to two trees per household. All areas will require parking along the road, walking in and carrying the tree out. Cross-country motorized travel to retrieve a tree is not allowed.

Play it safe. Make sure your vehicle is equipped with tire chains, a shovel and emergency supplies such as extra food and blankets. Many of the areas will have limited vehicle access depending on snow depths. Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended for all cutting areas. Be aware of changing weather and road conditions before you head out to find your Christmas tree.

For more information, call the Montrose Interagency Information Desk at 970-240-5300.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 8, 2007

Contacts: Jaime Gardner 303-589-2795
Denise Adamic 303-239-3671

BLM Colorado's November 2007 oil and gas lease sale nets \$9.6 million

DENVER - Today, the BLM Colorado State Office sold 112 parcels of 126 offered at its quarterly oil and gas lease sale, or 102,989 acres out of the 114,950 acres of public lands offered. The high bonus bid, for a 200-acre parcel in Garfield County, was \$26,000 per acre, for a total bid of \$5.2 million. The lease sale earned \$9,609,710.50 in proceeds, of which 50 percent will go to the State of Colorado.

“Natural gas production from Colorado’s federal lands continues to play an important role in meeting the nation’s energy needs,” said Lynn Rust, BLM Colorado Deputy State Director for Energy, Lands and Minerals. “Our focus is on smart up-front planning, solid implementation of best practices and working with industry to reduce environmental impacts.”

Land-use plans, which govern all BLM-managed lands, involve an extensive environmental review process that determines which lands will be available for specific uses, and what conditions will be applied to minimize impacts. The public has opportunities to provide input throughout the process. BLM also consults with other federal, State and local agencies, environmental groups and industry throughout the land-use planning process.

When preparing or revising land-use plans, or when parcels are nominated for leasing, the BLM considers available new information to determine whether any significant new circumstance or impact has occurred since the completion of the most recent land-use plan. The parcels offered for lease in this sale were analyzed individually to determine whether the existing environmental analysis was adequate.

Leases for oil and gas development come with general requirements to protect the environment from adverse impacts; additional site-specific stipulations are also included, such as limits on seasons when drilling can occur and restrictions on surface occupancy by oil and gas operators. These stipulations protect resources and values such as wildlife habitat and scenic vistas. Once an operator proposes exploration or development on a BLM-issued lease, the Bureau conducts further environmental analysis to determine what impact-limiting measures are needed.

“Protections are in place to minimize potential impacts from oil and gas exploration, development and production.” said Rust. “It’s important to remember that energy development and protection of natural resources are not mutually exclusive. BLM ensures that the development of energy resources is done in an environmentally sound manner on all lands we manage.”

BLM Colorado notifies the public of each land sale through the media, internet and other means. Anyone may file a protest on a parcel nominated for inclusion in a lease sale; however, all protests must contain the specific serial number of the parcel being protested and must have been received via mail or fax at the Colorado State Office by 4 p.m. (close of business), on October 24, 2007 to be considered. This policy allows the Bureau to review protests in advance of the sale, provides for an appropriate announcement of protests at the sale, and helps the agency meet its statutory deadline for issuing leases. Protested parcels may still be offered, although bidders are notified that BLM will not issue a lease until the protests are resolved.

BLM manages more than 8 million acres of public lands for multiple uses in Colorado, as well as over 27 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 and the 1987 Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act authorize leasing of federal oil and gas resources; the 1987

law, which amended the Mineral Leasing Act, requires each BLM state office to conduct oil and gas lease sales on at least a quarterly basis where there is an interest in such sales. The degree of interest is driven by market demands. In addition to overseeing mineral leasing on BLM public lands, the Bureau also administers mineral leasing on all other federal lands.

Under the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, energy production and mineral development, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural and other resources on the public lands.

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Fact Sheet: November 8, 2007

**Contacts: Jaime Gardner 303-239-3681
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Fact Sheet: November 2007 Oil & Gas Lease Sale

- 126 parcels totaling about 114, 950 acres of land were offered at the BLM November 8, 2007 quarterly oil and gas lease auction. Of those parcels offered, 112 were sold, totaling 102,989 acres.
- Of the 126 parcels offered, 123 parcels were protested.
- BLM Colorado listens to the concerns of those impacted by oil and gas leasing. We rely on input from the public in the planning process and we make every effort to work with local communities, municipalities and other State and federal agencies to ensure any leasing that may occur is conducted with adequate safeguards in place to protect the environment.
- Federal and State protections are in place to minimize potential impacts from oil and gas exploration, development and production. Oil and gas exploration and development is one of the most regulated activities on public lands.
- Energy development and protection of natural resources are not mutually exclusive activities. BLM ensures that development of energy resources is done in an environmentally sound manner on all lands we manage.
- BLM manages more than 8 million acres of public lands for multiple-use in Colorado. BLM also administers mineral leasing for other federal agencies with lands throughout the state.
- Federal laws, including the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, require BLM to offer lands for lease on a quarterly basis.
- Any U.S. citizen, 18 years-old or older, may bid on the parcels offered at quarterly lease auctions, provided the individual is a registered bidder. Typically, BLM does not select lands to offer for lease. In Colorado, lands nominated by an interested party are made available for leasing, if oil and gas development is allowed by the approved land use plan. Information about BLM oil and gas lease sales, as well as the posting of the official results (available by November 16, 2007) can be obtained at the BLM field offices, on our web site (www.blm.gov/co), or at the Colorado State Office Public Room.

- BLM is mandated by the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act to manage public lands for multiple uses - which may include energy development - under existing, approved land use plans developed with considerable public input, and extensive environmental analysis.
- BLM consults with other federal, state and local agencies, partners, environmental groups and industry throughout the land use planning process. These collaborations result in measures to protect all uses and resource values, such as wildlife, Threatened and Endangered species' habitat, recreation, cultural resources, grazing, and others, while still allowing for environmentally sound energy development.
- In all of the areas where parcels were offered, the current land use plans allow energy development. When preparing land use plans, revisions, or when parcels are nominated for leasing, the BLM considers available new information to determine if any significant new circumstances or impacts have occurred since the completion of the most recent land use plan. Every parcel offered for lease in this sale was analyzed to determine whether existing environmental analysis was adequate.
- BLM leases carefully. Every lease contains standard terms and stipulations designed to protect Threatened and Endangered species habitat. Leases also may include any number of additional stipulations to further protect air, water, wildlife, Wilderness, historic and cultural resources as well as require reclamation. For example, No Surface Occupancy stipulations can protect against any surface disturbance. Other stipulations can protect viewsheds, water quality, cultural resources, or may require operations only during certain seasons to protect wildlife or wildlife habitat in the winter or during the breeding season or birthing times.
- Issuing a lease does not necessarily result in drilling. The drilling of an exploratory well doesn't guarantee there will be widespread development of wells. Economics, supply versus demand, and geologic information drive industry to nominate areas for leasing, exploration and mineral resource development. Some leases are never drilled, and are allowed to expire due to changes in supply vs. demand, company finances, or new/updated geologic information.
- BLM Colorado has increased its outreach efforts prior to each lease sale. In response to requests from the public and interest groups, BLM Colorado provides the public with the oil and gas lease sale notice 15 days earlier than required by law (60 days). BLM notifies media outlets statewide when the lease sale notice is posted and informs county commissioners of parcels being offered for lease in an upcoming sale through individual notification and through the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission's county liaison program. BLM Colorado also offers presentations at county meetings throughout the state on the oil and gas leasing process, and we post a map of parcels and other lease sale information on the BLM Colorado website: <http://www.blm.gov/co/oilandgas/leasinfo.htm>.
- Where data and technology allow, BLM field offices are collaborating with county governments to provide information on federal minerals ownership via the internet (see <http://gis.mesacounty.us/minerals.aspx> and <http://www.southwestdata.org/projects/dip/interagency.htm>).
- BLM Colorado follows its national policy concerning split-estate Application for Permit to Drill (APD) processing, which requires: a copy of or evidence of a signed surface use agreement between the surface owner and the oil and gas operator (but not the actual agreement itself). If an agreement cannot be reached; the operator can gain access to the property through reclamation bonding. BLM Colorado has not had to use the bonding process for any APDs on split estate lands.
- The private surface owner is always invited to the on-site pre-drill inspection, and their concerns are

incorporated into BLM approved APDs. BLM Colorado worked with the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission on their onsite inspection policy for split- estate wells on private minerals. The State's policy, adopted with industry support, took effect February 15, 2005, and addresses road placement, planning concerns, and gives landowners the right to an on-site meeting about a proposed drilling site. Such procedures have long been in effect for split-estate involving Federal minerals.

- Wilderness Areas can only be designated by Congress. In Colorado, BLM has four existing Wilderness Areas, comprising 149,000 acres, and 50 Wilderness Study Areas, encompassing 623,000 acres. Citizens or interest groups have proposed new areas for wilderness status; these proposals have recommended additional areas for consideration, or, in some cases, additional lands to be added to existing Wilderness or wilderness study areas. The November lease sale includes portions of three areas (13 parcels) proposed for Wilderness designation by the environmental community.
- The federal government returns one-half of what is collected on federal bonuses, rentals and royalties from energy development on the public lands to the State of Colorado. The money is used to help fund counties, schools, cities and some State offices.
- BLM aims to help meet our country's needs for sustainable energy development, while effectively managing the other natural resources that are under our care. The U.S. Department of the Interior is a significant contributor to America's energy supplies, with about one-third of all domestic energy produced from federal minerals. Environmentally sound energy development on public lands is one vital part of BLM's national strategy to ensure economic and national security.
- Anyone may file a protest; however, all protests of parcels nominated for inclusion in the lease sale must be received by mail or fax at the Colorado State Office by 4 p.m., 15 days prior to the date of the sale to be considered (October 24 for this sale). This policy allows the Bureau to review protests in advance of the sale, allow for an appropriate announcement of protests at the sale, and attempt to meet the statutory deadline for issuing leases. Protested parcels may still be offered; however, bidders are notified that BLM will not issue a lease until the protests are resolved.
- BLM Colorado attempts to resolve all protests within 60 days; however, some protests have taken as long as a year to resolve. Before a final decision is reached to issue any leases, a thorough review of the protests on the parcels is undertaken by the appropriate BLM field office and/or the Colorado State Office. If a protest is denied, the protesting party has 30 days, from receipt of the decision, to appeal to the Interior Board of Lands Appeals in Washington, D.C. If a protest is upheld, the lease is not issued and the winning bidder's money is refunded.

For Immediate Release: Nov. 9, 2007
Contact: Mel Lloyd BLM 970-244-3097
Chris Herrman COPMOBA 970-640-2359

BLM gives freeriders a "Free Lunch" - But they'd better not eat it!

Grand Junction, Colo. — Thanks to the combined efforts of the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, Bicycle Colorado, and volunteers from the local mountain bike community, the Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office is formally opening a new mountain bike trail called "Free Lunch." Business sponsors REI and All Metals supported the trail project as well, providing funding and signs. Dedication ceremonies are scheduled for 12 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2007, at the beginning of the trail located near Little Park Road. The

Free Lunch trail is a unique, experts-only “freeride” bike trail that was recently constructed in the popular Lunch Loop area of the Bangs Canyon Special Recreation Management Area.

“This new trail is just one more example of how BLM is continually working with great partners, like COPMOBA, Bicycle Colorado, IMBA, REI, and All Metals, to provide quality recreational opportunities on public lands,” Field Manager Catherine Robertson said. “The Free Lunch Trail is the result of people coming together in the conceptual stage and then combining their resources to create smart, sustainable trails that will provide fun experiences for a long time to come.”

Free Lunch serves up some of the most technically challenging mountain bike terrain in the Grand Valley and is the first purpose-built, downhill-only freeride bike trail designed and built on public lands managed by the BLM.

"COPMOBA worked with BLM to develop this trail in response to the requests of several local riders who wanted more challenging trails. They were involved in the project from start to finish and we had many new faces show up at the work days to build the trail," former COPMOBA President Chris Herrman said. "I'm pleased that COPMOBA could be responsive to a new, younger group of riders, and hope that this trail helps bring the riding community closer together to work on future projects."

This trail is specifically designed to meet the rapidly increasing demand for gravity-fed mountain biking that tests the skills and equipment of riders on long-travel dual-suspension bicycles. The trail is 1.1 miles in length and open only to one-way downhill travel by mountain bicycle. It is closed to all other users because of safety issues associated with mixed use on this type of trail (higher speeds, drop-offs, etc.)

Along the route there are several designated alternate lines where riders can choose between a “black diamond” (most difficult) and double-black diamond (experts only) route. Some of these alternate lines have wall rides, gap jumps and vertical drops of up to 7 feet. The trail also offers two designated “Play Areas” of approximately one-half acre each in size where riders will have the option to choose their own line within an area marked with boundary signs. These two areas contain numerous rocky ledges and large boulders where riders can test their skills. The majority of the features along the length of the trail utilize the area’s naturally rocky terrain. Extensive signage conveys trail risks, rules, and directions.

To learn about recreational opportunities on public lands managed by the GJFO, contact Park Ranger Chris Pipkin at (970) 244-3024, or go to www.blm.gov/co. To find out more about COPMOBA or IMBA, go to www.copmoba.org and www.imba.com.

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Editor’s Note: Photo/interview opportunities! Meet on Little Park Road at 11:30 a.m. Wear hiking shoes & be prepared to pack your equipment uphill to the site. Contact Mel Lloyd or Chris Herrman for more information.

For Immediate Release: November 9, 2007

Contact: Leslie Cone 303-236-0815

BLM Enhances Features and Look of GeoCommunicator Website

The Bureau of Land Management recently released a new version of its National Integrated Land System’s (NILS) GeoCommunicator Website, which is accessible at www.geocommunicator.gov. In addition to many new and exciting enhancements such as those listed below, the Website also has a

fresh new look and feel to it – similar to the BLM’s other newly redesigned Websites. “Based on customer feedback, the Bureau has given its popular NILS GeoCommunicator Website a bold new look,” said Michael D. (Mike) Nedd, the BLM’s Assistant Director for Minerals, Realty, and Resource Protection. “Through this redesign, the Website is now easier for navigating and finding the information that is most important to our users. The Website has also added many new features in response to the President’s Energy Policy Act of 2005, helping to ensure an even greater online experience for our users.”

GeoCommunicator is the NILS publication Website that provides interactive mapping of data for Federal surface management boundaries, the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), and other survey-based land descriptions, range allotments, land- and mineral-use authorizations, conveyances, classifications, withdrawals, and much more.

The Energy Map Viewer has been enhanced to include stipulations, which have been broken out into 16 categories on all energy and oil and gas map viewers. The Energy Map Viewer allows users to see most of the energy-related authorizations that the BLM issues, all in one map viewer. The latest release of GeoCommunicator also includes new features such as:

Site Mapper, which provides interactive mapping of abandoned mines from many agencies, and also shows BLM facilities (recreation sites, campgrounds, buildings, and administrative sites).

The Healthy Lands Map Viewer provides interactive mapping of range allotments, watersheds, and BLM facilities. This map viewer supports the BLM’s Healthy Lands Initiative and lays the groundwork for the BLM to provide more resource layers on the Website.

New alternate source Public Land Survey System (PLSS) data for much of the Central and Eastern United States has been added to the Website. The PLSS data is downloadable and will allow the BLM to show more case parcels in the future.

For more information on the National Integrated Land System’s GeoCommunicator, please contact:

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The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The BLM’s multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on the public lands.

–BLM–

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, November 8, 2007
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Agencies Publish Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Energy Transport Corridor Designations in 11 Western States

WASHINGTON, DC – The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Departments of Energy, Agriculture, Commerce and Defense today released for public review and comment a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft PEIS) proposing designation of energy transport corridors on Federal lands in 11 Western States in accordance with Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The proposed energy corridors would facilitate future siting of oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution on Federal lands in the West to help address growing energy demand while protecting the environment.

“The agencies involved in designating these corridors worked for nearly two years to develop the locations presented in the Draft EIS,” said Assistant Secretary of the Interior C. Stephen Allred. “From the beginning, we were committed to avoiding the many unique areas and sensitive resources found on Western public lands, wherever possible. Designating these corridors will minimize the dispersal of rights-of-way for energy transport projects across Western landscapes.”

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 directs the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, and the Interior to designate energy transport corridors for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands in portions of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The Act further directs that environmental reviews be completed for the designation of such corridors, and that the designated corridors are incorporated into the relevant agency land use and resource management plans or equivalent plans.

“Meeting the Nation’s future energy needs will necessarily require some expansion of our capabilities for transporting energy resources,” said U.S. Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability Kevin M. Kolevar. “The infrastructure projects that could be constructed within these corridors may help assure the reliable delivery of electricity and fuels throughout the Western United States.”

Eighty-four percent of the corridors proposed and analyzed in the Draft PEIS are located on BLM-managed lands, while 14 percent are on USDA Forest Service lands. The remaining fractional percentages are on lands managed by the Department of the Interior’s Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service, or by the Department of Defense. The proposed corridors are agency-preferred locations for siting of future pipelines and transmission lines.

Interested members of the public, government agencies, American Indian tribes, States, and non-governmental organizations are invited to submit comments on the Draft PEIS.

The Draft PEIS evaluated factors that constrain where a network of energy transport corridors could be located – including topographical, environmental and regulatory constraints – as well as the overall suitability of particular lands to support development and operation of energy transport infrastructure. As a result of an inclusive public scoping effort over the past two years, including regional meetings and public review of preliminary corridor location maps, the Draft PEIS proposal avoids major known and designated sensitive resource areas including wilderness areas and national parks, tribal lands, national monuments and national recreation areas, wherever possible. The few locations where the proposed corridors could not avoid sensitive areas are located along existing transmission lines, highways, pipelines or other rights of way.

The agencies will solicit comments during a 90-day public comment period on the Draft PEIS. Public meetings will be held in each of the 11 states and in Washington, D.C. During this period, briefings and consultation will continue to occur with each Governor's office, Tribes, Congress, and historic preservation officials.

Public meetings to take oral comments on the Draft PEIS will be held:

January 8, 2008 – Portland, Ore., and Sacramento, Calif.
January 10 – Seattle, Wash. and Ontario, Calif.
January 15 – Phoenix, Ariz. and Grand Junction, Colo.
January 17 – Las Vegas, Nev. and Salt Lake City, Ut.
January 23 – Window Rock, Ariz.
January 24 – Albuquerque, N.M.
January 29 – Helena, Mont., and Cheyenne, Wyo.
January 31 – Boise, Id. and Denver, Colo.
February 5 – Washington, D.C. vicinity

To submit comments and to review the Draft PEIS and related documents, including detailed maps, visit the project website at <http://corridoreis.anl.gov>. Review copies are also available at libraries and agency regional and field offices. The Draft PEIS will also be published in the Federal Register on Friday, November 16, 2007, which initiates the 90-day public comment period.

Note to Editors: Volume 3 of the Draft is an atlas of maps showing the locations of the proposed corridors. The most powerful and flexible version of the map data is available on the project Web site within a geographic information system (GIS) database that allows users to merge, enlarge, and view multiple map data layers. Software and instructions to use the GIS data are available for free download from the Web site, which may be accessed from Internet-capable home or office computers, computers at public libraries, and from BLM and Forest Service public reading rooms.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 8, 2007
Contact: Mel Lloyd BLM 970-244-3097

Southwest Resource Advisory Council to meet

DELTA, Colo.—The Bureau of Land Management's Southwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will meet Friday, Nov. 16, at the Devil's Thumb Golf Club, located at 9900 Devil's Thumb Road on the northern edge of Delta.

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and is scheduled to adjourn at 4 p.m. The meeting is open to the public, with a public comment period scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Agenda topics include:

- Field manager updates
- Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Subgroup
- Hydraulic Fracturing 101
- Tamarisk Coalition: Working to Restore Riparian Lands
- Target Shooting Issues on Public Lands

· Healthy Lands Initiative Update

The Southwest RAC is one of three advisory councils to BLM Colorado. Composed of 15 members appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, individuals serving in each RAC represent a broad range of public land interests, ranging from environmental to local government to commercial activity. For more information on Colorado RACs, including this meeting's full agenda as well as a map, go to http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Resources/racs.html.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 2, 2007

Contact: David Boyd, Public Affairs Specialist, (970) 947-2832

Driver killed in accident Monday on Coffee Pot Road

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colo. – The driver of a 2007 Dodge pick-up was killed and his passenger injured Monday in a single-vehicle accident on Coffee Pot Road west of Dotsero, Colo.

The accident occurred near mile marker nine around noon Monday when the driver, 29-year-old Thomas Murray of Westville, Okla., swerved off the road, causing the truck to roll numerous times down a steep slope. Both he and his passenger, 23-year-old Randy Armine of Toledo, Wash., were ejected from the vehicle, which rolled approximately 200 yards down the slope.

Armine was able to crawl back to the road and contact a group of hunters, who called 911. Armine suffered minor injuries and was transported to Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs. He was released Tuesday.

Both men were employed by a lodge in the area but were not on duty at the time of the accident.

-BLM-

For Immediate Release: November 2, 2007

Contact: Denise Adamic BLM 303-239-3671

James Sample BLM 303-239-3861

BLM Colorado welcomes Dave Hunsaker as new Associate State Director

DENVER — The Colorado Bureau of Land Management State Office has announced the appointment of Dave Hunsaker as the Associate State Director. Hunsaker is currently the Deputy Director for the National Landscape Conservation System in the BLM Washington D.C. office. He replaces Doug Koza who retired from the BLM in October.

Hunsaker will assume his new duties in January.

“Colorado is pleased to welcome Dave to this position,” said Sally Wisely, BLM Colorado State Director. “Dave brings broad and extensive experience as well as proven management, leadership, and partnership skills that are so important to the Bureau.”

Born in Los Angeles, Hunsaker has spent 38 years of his career in federal service, 33 of those years have been with the Bureau. Prior to moving to his current position in April 2006, Hunsaker held positions as the Manager, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, BLM Utah; Associate Manager, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument; Director, National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, BLM Oregon; Manager, Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, BLM Nevada; Multi-Staff Supervisor, Stateline Resource Area, BLM Nevada; Outdoor Recreation Planner, Baker District, BLM Oregon; and Outdoor Recreation Planner, Price District, BLM Utah.

“The people who work for the BLM are what make the agency so special,” said Hunsaker. “BLM staffs truly appreciate and are committed to the public lands they manage as well as those communities in which they work.”

As the Associate State Director, Hunsaker’s position is analogous to the Chief Operating Officer of a private company. He will be responsible for ensuring the agency’s business components function smoothly throughout the state, including providing oversight and strategic vision of budget and financial management, attainment of performance goals, workforce planning and employee performance and conduct issues.

Hunsaker said he is looking forward to making the move to BLM Colorado.

“This state offers a premier collection of natural resources, good challenges and great opportunities for land managers,” said Hunsaker. “Colorado is a microcosm of all the best aspects of the Bureau and I’m looking forward to getting back to the field where all the important things happen.”

-BLM-

Editor’s note: a photo of Dave Hunsaker can be obtained by calling Denise Adamic at 303-239-3671.