



BLM-Carson City Field Office 2004 Priority Projects

The BLM-Carson City Field Office is responsible for the stewardship of approximately 5.3 million acres of Federal public lands in eleven counties: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Storey, and Washoe counties in Nevada, and Alpine, Lassen and Plumas counties in eastern California. The lands range from mountainous timberlands in California to the deserts and rugged mountain chains within the Truckee, Carson and Walker River watersheds in western Nevada.

Few Field Offices face the kind of complex ownership pattern of private, other Federal, Native American, state and local agency lands found within this Field Office area. Population pressure along the Sierra Front's urban/wildland interface causes Carson City to focus on a number of issues in the western part of the Field Office area, including: fire suppression, recreation, lands and realty, open space and urban sprawl, law enforcement and cooperative relationships with local governments and interest groups. The eastern portion of the Field Office area is more typical of central Nevada issues focusing on range management, wild horse and burros, mining, wilderness and wildlife habitat, as well as our daily coordination with NAS Fallon.

Sand Mountain Recreation Area

Increasing resource impacts have been documented to the threatened Blue butterfly and its host Kearney Buckwheat plant at the popular Sand Mountain Recreation Area (SMRA), located 25 miles east of Fallon, Nevada. The Sierra Front Resource Advisory Council (RAC) passed a resolution in July 2003 recommending short-term management actions and long-term planning efforts to the BLM for immediate implementation to mitigate future impacts. BLM adopted the resolution and continues to work on the following projects:



- Develop programs and practices that encourage OHV users to prevent disturbance of buckwheat habitat within and outside the SMRA. One of these practices has been to sign travel routes through Kearny buckwheat habitat to connect OHV use areas within and outside the SMRA and to discourage OHV use within the habitat area off of these travel routes. Informational and travel route signs have been posted and are being monitored.
- Continue scientific investigations into the Sand Mountain ecosystem, including remote sensing surveys, compliance monitoring, cultural inventories, and plant/animal life history studies. Remote sensing will establish the distribution and location of Kearney buckwheat

EXHIBIT C Lands	Document consists of 4 pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entire document provided.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Due to size limitations, pages _____ through _____ provided.	
A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775-684-6827 or e-mail library@lcb.state.nv.us).	
Meeting Date	03/26/04

on the Sand Mountain dune system. Route compliance monitoring will document the success of the Encouraged Route system. Cultural inventories will help document cultural resources. Life history studies on the Kearney buckwheat and Sand Mountain blue butterfly will help BLM in sensitive species resource management.

- Begin efforts to restore and rehabilitate disturbed Kearney buckwheat habitat. Our primary method of dune plant restoration will be the lack of motorized vehicle disturbance and lack of trail growth resulting from the Sand Mountain Encouraged Route system. Seeds of many of the dune plants (including Kearney buckwheat) will be collected this year. Testing on seed, seedling and growth requirements will happen within the next few fiscal years.
- Work closely with the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, develop management strategies for Sand Mountain that honor the spiritual values associated with the area, and that allow for appropriate uses of Sand Mountain by the Tribe consistent with their traditions.
- Initiate a revised management plan for the Sand Mountain landscape to update the current Recreation Area management plan, reflecting the increasing amount and variety of uses and demands of the area.

Wild Horse Gathers in 2004

<u>HMA</u>	<u>Current Est. Population</u>	<u>AML</u>	<u>Est. # to be Removed</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>FY2004</u>				
Lahontan	24	7-10	NA	Completed
Desatoya	127	127-180	NA	Completed
<u>FY2005</u>				
Dogskins	50	10-15	40	Budget dependent
Pilot Mt.	526	227-346	299	Budget dependent
Garfield	213	83-125	130	Budget dependent

Yerington Mine

The Yerington Mine site is an abandoned copper mine site of mixed surface land ownership-roughly 51 percent of the site is privately owned by Arimetco Inc., and 49 percent is public land managed by the BLM-Carson City Field Office. Arimetco filed for bankruptcy in 1997.

The Yerington Mine is less than a mile from the City of Yerington and adjacent to the Walker River. The Yerington Paiute Tribal Reservation is about 2 miles north of the mine site. The approximate population of Yerington is 3500 and less than 500 people live adjacent to the mine site. Some agricultural land exists next to the mine site, but the majority of the adjacent land is used for residential with more homes being constructed immediately north and adjacent to the mine site.

The Anaconda Copper Company operated the mine from 1953 to 1978 and disposed of mining wastes, including acid brines and tailings into evaporation ponds located on site. Liquid waste from Anaconda's operations over the years has infiltrated and impacted the groundwater quality.

The presence of a contaminated groundwater plume resulting from mining activities has been known for some time, but its extent remains unknown. The primary source of the plume is several evaporation ponds from which liquid mining waste has infiltrated into the groundwater table. Though the entire extent of the groundwater plume has not been fully characterized, the portion of the plume extending north and off-site is known to contain elevated concentrations of sulfate, total dissolved solids, iron, and chloride. Additional groundwater quality information is needed to determine the extent of off-site plume migration. BLM has recommended to EPA and NDEP that a comprehensive evaluation for radionuclides in air, soil and groundwater should be undertaken.

Concentrations of uranium found at the mine site could pose a health risk to the public and the environment. These risks may include airborne particulates that contain radionuclides (uranium and associated decay daughter products) and infiltration of radionuclides into the local groundwater aquifer. Tests could be expanded to develop an accurate risk assessment to the public and the environment (a public meeting was scheduled for March 24, 2004, in Yerington to brief local officials and residents on what preliminary test results have shown).

In March 2002, the BLM-Nevada State Office signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NDEP and EPA Region 9 to coordinate investigations and remediation of the Yerington Mine by Atlantic Richfield. Pursuant to the MOU, the regulatory agencies agreed to work together to ensure a unified approach to site characterization. However, the BLM retained its jurisdiction on the public lands at the site. Per the MOU, ARCO has submitted draft work plans directly to NDEP, which in turn has distributed them to the BLM and EPA for review and comment. In addition, copies have been distributed to other members of the Yerington Mine Technical Work Group. NDEP consolidated and forwarded the agency comments to ARCO for incorporation into its draft work plans. No final work plans for mine site characterization have been submitted for approval.

BLM will continue to coordinate with EPA and NDEP to address the radiological issues at the Yerington Mine, and will continue to work with all concerned to characterize and remediate the mine site in accordance with the MOU.

Churchill County RMP Amendment

In September 2002 the BLM Carson City Field Office (CCFO) completed an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze all geothermal lease applications pending up to May 2002. Although approximately 58,680 acres were determined suitable for leasing, another 36,320 acres were deferred pending completion of an environmental impact statement (EIS). Through the environmental analysis process it became clear that the decisions in the existing resource management plan do not adequately address or analyze energy resources on a site-specific basis. The decision was made, in consultation with the BLM Nevada State Office, that a comprehensive plan amendment and associated EIS would be prepared for all energy resources in the CCFO.

But this new comprehensive plan amendment will go far beyond analyzing energy resources. Issues identified at this point include: energy development; Navy base expansion; open space preservation; conservation easements; recreational opportunities and impacts; OHV designations; VRM designations; historic roads and trails protection; sacred and religious site protection; land tenure; public access; and utility corridors. Although the plan amendment will address energy resources for the entire CCFO, all other issues described will be analyzed for Churchill County only. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement should be completed and ready for public review by July 2004.

Proposed Inter-basin Water Transfers

CCFO has received two applications for inter-basin transfers of water into the north valleys of Reno. Vidler Water Company has proposed to bring in 8,000 acre-feet per year from Fish Springs. Bob Marshall is proposing an additional 4,000 ac/ft/yr from Dry Valley and Bedell Flat. Both share most of the same proposed pipeline route into Reno, and the same terminus. Both claim their proposal is much smaller than the original Honey Lake project (which was denied in 1994 and upheld in a U.S. Court of Appeals decision on January 28, 2003).

A single EIS is being prepared for the projects under the following schedule:

- Public Scoping... .. Sept/Oct. 2003
- Draft EIS... .. June 2004
- Final EIS... .. October 2004
- Record of Decision... .. December 2004

Denton Rawhide Mine

Kennecott Rawhide Mining Company (KRMC) submitted a Final Permanent Closure Plan for the Denton Rawhide Mine addressing the procedures that KRMC will initiate over the next several years to stabilize, reclaim and permanently close the mine site and its associated facilities. Under the current mine plan, cessation of precious metals production from the heap leach facility is not anticipated until the end of 2005 or early 2006. KRMC proposes to permanently close the mine in phases concurrent with active mining and ore processing operations. Final site reclamation and closure, including leach pad stabilization, site revegetation and bond release could extend into 2011. BLM plans to initiate the environmental review related to the subject closure plan this month in conjunction with KRMC's environmental contractor who will be preparing the Environmental Assessment.

The possible transformation of all or part of the privately owned surface into a municipal landfill was not addressed in the Final Permanent Closure Plan. The Mineral County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) is negotiating with Nevada Resource Group of Reno to purchase the mine for use as a site for disposal up to 5,000 tons of daily non-hazardous waste, most of it coming from California. MCED hopes to have the facility up and running sometime in 2004 and remain open for 30-40 years.