

For Immediate Release: April 28, 2008
Mel Lloyd, 970-244-3097

BLM Grand Junction seeks input on fee proposals

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. — The Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) is seeking public comment on its proposals to initiate user fees for the 18 Road campground in the North Fruita Desert, as well as to revise user fees for the Mud Springs campground and day-use area on Glade Park. The fee structures are being proposed in an effort to increase BLM's capacity to maintain and improve the areas. Visitation to these sites continues to increase significantly as public lands are seen, more than ever, as popular destination points.

"We are at the point that the quality of the public's visits to these areas is being impacted because we don't have the ability to properly maintain the areas and protect the natural resources," Field Manager Catherine Robertson said. "BLM has received informal comments in recent years that a small fee in exchange for maintained facilities would be welcomed by the public—we want to confirm if that remains the general consensus.

The BLM will present the fee site proposals to its Northwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC) next month at its May 22 meeting in Steamboat Springs. As required by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), the BLM will then formally present the fee site proposals to the new Colorado Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RRAC) later this year. The RRAC is administered by the USDA Forest Service in cooperation with the BLM.

The fee proposals are available for public review at the GJFO, located at 2815 H Road, in Grand Junction, or online at www.blm.gov (select Grand Junction from interactive map). Comments may be e-mailed to GJFO_webmail@blm.gov, attention RRAC, or dropped off or mailed to BLM GJFO, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506. Comments will be most helpful to the BLM if they are substantive and received by May 15, 2008. For further information, contact Ken Straley at (970) 244-3031 or Chris Pipkin at (970) 244-3024.

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For Immediate Release: April 25, 2008
Contact: Jaime Gardner, (303) 589-2795;
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Environmental Assessment on West Douglas Gather released

MEEKER, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management today released an environmental assessment for public review, which addresses the removal plan for a small herd of wild horses south of Rangely.

Under the proposed plan, BLM would begin gathering approximately 150 wild horses in the West Douglas Herd Area this fall. Gathering methods could include helicopter drive-trapping, helicopter assisted roping and water and hay trapping.

The majority of the horses gathered will be available for adoption through BLM's wild horse and burro program. The remaining horses will be placed in long-term holding facilities.

The gather plan follows a decision resulting from a 2005 Land Use Plan Revision and Environmental Assessment that concluded the herd should be removed. The 1997 Resource Management Plan for the BLM White River Field Office also directed the removal of the West Douglas Herd while expanding a larger wild horse management area in better habitat to the east.

"Wild horses are an integral part of the multiple use management of the 1.5-million acre White River Resource Area," said Field Manager Kent Walter. "We will continue to manage for wild horses in the better-suited, 190,000-acre Piceance/East Douglas Herd Management Area west of Meeker. In 1997, we expanded the appropriate management level of that area by 65 percent – from 140 to 235 horses."

Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available at <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/wrfo.html>, or by contacting the BLM White River Field Office at (970) 878-3800. BLM will accept public comment on the Environmental Assessment until May 25, 2008.

Under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, BLM manages, protects, and controls wild horses and burros as part of its overall multiple-use mission. The Bureau works to ensure that population levels are in balance with rangeland resources and other uses of the public lands. BLM removes wild horses and burros from the range each year to control the size of herds. Wild horses have virtually no predators and can double in population about every four years if not managed.

BLM manages four Herd Management Areas in western Colorado for wild horses: The Piceance/East Douglas herd west of Meeker, the Little Bookcliffs herd northeast of Grand Junction, the Sand Wash herd west of Craig, and the Spring Creek herd southwest of Montrose.

The Bureau's goal is to place as many of the wild horses and burros gathered from the range into private care. Since 1973, the BLM has placed more than 219,750 animals into private ownership through adoption. Under a December 2004 amendment to the 1971 law, the Bureau also seeks good homes through sales of horses and burros that are more than 10 years old or have been passed over for adoption at least three times. Since that amendment took effect, the BLM has sold more than 2,700 eligible horses and burros.

BLM encourages those who are interested in providing good homes to wild horses or burros to visit http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/wild_horse_and_burro.html for information about adoptions or sales.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 7, 2008

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Anasazi Heritage Center, (970) 882-5600

"GESTURE OF KINSHIP" EXHIBIT OPENS AT ANASAZI HERITAGE CENTER

The Anasazi Heritage Center will unveil a new exhibit called A Gesture of Kinship on April 15th in museum's Special Exhibit gallery. It weaves the thoughts and experiences of 20 young Navajos as they grew from children to adults in recent decades. Their maturation is captured in photographs and their own voices. The exhibit continues through October 31.

Photographer and self-described "art coach" Bruce Hucko taught the means of self-expression to children at Montezuma Creek Elementary School in southeast Utah between 1978 and 1989. He developed lifelong friendships with many of his students, who are now adults with children of their own. The interaction with the children and their parents spurred his interest in exploring their world within a world. His students' art was chronicled in the book "Have You Ever Seen A Rainbow at Night?" published during the 1990s.

In time, Hucko accumulated some six thousand photos of his students and their families, a record of how time has passed and individual lives have unfolded. Meanwhile, his friend Donna Deyhle—now a professor at the University of Utah—was interviewing Montezuma Creek residents about their thoughts, feelings, and points of view. She was trying to understand something about the issues and conflicts local people faced in staying on the reservation or in choosing to live elsewhere. The rapidly-changing world, both on and off the reservation, affects the foundations of traditional culture. External influences are changing the way recent generations of Navajos see their land, their people, the world, and themselves.

The result is a unique exhibit of images and interviews. Some participants have clung to their roots, while others who have found another kind of life away from homeland and family. A Gesture of Kinship shows the subjects as youngsters then and as adults today. In many cases, they were photographed in the same spot each time.

Hucko's perspective on culture change is unique. Unlike the postcard perspective of the tourism industry, his work does not judge or romanticize the people or their traditions. Hucko says: "Stereotypic scenes permeate books and magazines, but they overlook the rich day-to-day experiences of life. This exhibit is an average slice of life from the Navajo reservation. It's a vision and a conversation that most people have no access to."

Hucko has maintained contact with nearly all of his former students. Some of them will share the stage with him during a special presentation called "Growing Up in Montezuma Creek" on Sunday, May 18th at 2:00 p.m. in the museum theater.

The Anasazi Heritage Center is operated by the Bureau of Land Management, and is open seven days a week from 9 to 5. For more information, call the Center at (970)882-5600 or visit the Center's web site at www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ahc.html.

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Mel Lloyd 970-244-3097
April 8, 2008

Volunteers work to restore public lands damaged by paint vandals

FRUITA, Colo. — Nearly 60 volunteers spent a recent weekend assisting in the clean up and restoration of public lands located in Kodels Canyon of the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (NCA) and the Colorado National Monument. The lands are managed by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. Vandals struck last fall, spray painting a series of graffiti along the picturesque canyon's rugged rock ledges.

"We couldn't have accomplished what we did in such a short time frame without the help of a lot of great folks volunteering their time," NCA Park Ranger Troy Schnurr said. "We had three crews working, with no injuries, and were successful in cleaning off all 22 tags from the sandstone."

BLM investigators were able to piece together several leads to quickly find those responsible for the vandalism. Last week the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Colorado, finalized a civil settlement agreement with the three parties responsible for the vandalism. As part of the penalty, the parties participated in the clean-up effort and are required to reimburse the U.S. Government for restoration costs expected to total approximately \$8,200.

The BLM Grand Junction Field Office is the steward of 1.2 million acres of public lands, including 123,430 acres encompassing the McInnis Canyons NCA and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. The BLM depends on the public to watch for illegal or unsafe practices on public lands and asks you to report incidents by dialing 911, or contacting the nearest field office.

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Editor's Note: Photos of clean-up effort available upon request.

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David Boyd, Public Affairs Specialist, (970) 947-2832
April 7, 2008**

Wolford Mountain travel restrictions continue through April 30

KREMMLING – This year's high snow pack and a forecast for more moisture in the coming weeks have led the Bureau of Land Management to extend the motorized travel restrictions on Wolford Mountain through April 30.

"We're extending the restrictions a couple of extra weeks this year to continue protect wintering wildlife as well as prevent erosion and other resource damage," said Dave Stout, Field Manager for the BLM's Kremmling Field Office.

State and federal biologists note that deer and elk are still using the lower elevation winter range because of the snow pack at higher elevations. Wintering big game are particularly sensitive to disturbance. Motorized travel on the wet, muddy roads on Wolford Mountain right now could create substantial road damage and erosion problems.

"It's been a long winter and I think we all have spring fever," Stout said. "We're asking folks to be patient for a little while longer until conditions improve on Wolford Mountain."

Motorized travel on the single track motorcycle trail over Wolford Mountain is expected to open June 1.

BLM will be actively enforcing the restrictions. The affected area includes public lands between Highway 40 and Grand County Road 2 (Gunsight Pass).

Maps showing open travel routes are available for viewing at the Kremmling Field Office as well as information kiosks on County Road 224 near the landfill, County Road 26 off of Highway 40, County Road 227, and at the intersection of County Roads 22 and 25.

To report violations or for further information regarding the Wolford Mountain area travel restrictions, please visit or call the Kremmling Field Office, 2103 E. Park Ave., 970-724-3000.

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For Immediate Release:

April 1, 2008

Mel Lloyd BLM 970-244-3097

Public comment period opens on natural gas exploration proposals

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. — Black Hills Exploration and Production, Inc. has proposed drilling seven natural gas exploration wells on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office. Public comments are being sought on the proposals, which involve three different areas in northern Mesa County near the town of De Beque.

"Before BLM completes Environmental Assessments for each of these proposals, we want to hear from the public up front on specific issues and concerns they might have," said Field Manager Catherine Robertson.

Two proposed wells are in the Homer Deep Field south of Dry Fork Road, about 6 miles northwest of De Beque; three proposed wells are in the Horseshoe Canyon Unit west of the De Beque Cutoff road; and two proposed wells are in the Winter Flats Unit, about 14 miles west of De Beque.

Detailed descriptions and maps of each proposed exploration well are available at the BLM Grand Junction Office, at 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506, as well as online at

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www.blm.gov/co (select Grand Junction on the interactive map). Comments may be mailed to the above address or e-mailed to GJFO_webmail@blm.gov, and should be submitted by April 30, 2008. For more information, contact Julia Christiansen at (970) 244-3093.