

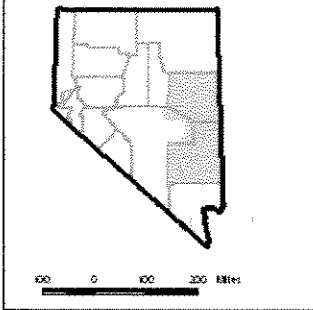


Ely RMP Planning Bulletin

Volume 1, Issue 4

January, 2007

Regional View



Planning Area for the Ely RMP/EIS

RMP Management Focus

The restoration and maintenance of healthy ecological systems within watersheds is a primary focus for the future management of the Ely RMP planning area. Healthy ecological systems are geographically diverse and change over time. They are compatible with soil potential and are resilient to disturbance.

Resources and resource uses will be managed to restore or maintain ecological health. Certain resource management changes and active treatments may need to be implemented, in portions of watersheds to accomplish this objective. Adaptive management will be pursued to avoid deteriorating conditions favoring invasive plants and catastrophic fires. Any projects will be implemented so as to result in a mosaic of vegetation within a watershed.

In the long term, natural disturbance (such as drought or fire) will occur and fewer treatments will be needed to maintain ecological health. The result will be a variety of vegetation phases within a watershed, which will provide diverse, healthy conditions for future generations.

Release of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS Delayed

Previously, the Proposed RMP/Final EIS was scheduled to be released to the public in September of 2006.

Prior to release, the BLM determined that the document did not satisfy all of the criteria in the Land Use Planning Handbook. In light of this, revisions were undertaken to ensure compliance with the Handbook. Part of that revision included a new format for presentation of management actions.

In November and December, BLM staff members met with Cooperating Agencies to apprise them of the changes to the document and schedule. This advance communication was initiated to make sure that any Cooperating Agency issues and concerns are addressed before the document is released as the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

A summary of the schedule for key milestones follows:

- Notice of Availability of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS—Summer 2007;
- Protest Period—30 days;
- Governor's Consistency Review—60 days;
- Protest Resolution—Undetermined;
- Release of Approved RMP and Record of Decision—Winter 2007

RMP Project Management

In May of 2006, **Gene Kolkman** retired from the BLM. As the Ely Field Manager, Gene had a pivotal role in setting the direction of the RMP. In November, new leadership was established as **John Ruhs** became the Ely Field Office Manager.

Another retirement occurred in September of 2006, when **Gene Drais** retired to Idaho after 30 years with the BLM. Gene played a key role as the head of the RMP Project Management team. Although Gene will be missed, a management structure has been put in place to ensure completion of the RMP.

A dual-leadership team consisting of **Jeff Weeks** and **Bruce Flinn** will manage the project through the Record of Decision. This team will ensure that the proper resources are applied to the project and that the current schedule is adhered to as closely as possible.

Jeff Weeks has worked for the BLM for the past 26 years. He started in Canón City, Colorado, then moved to Nevada. His path to Ely included the Carson City and Battle Mountain Field Offices. Although Jeff's degree is in Range Ecology, his diverse career has allowed him to also work in the Forestry, Wild Horse and Burro, Riparian, Weeds, and Fire programs.

Jeff has held positions as Associate District Manager and as Assistant Field manager for both Renewable and Non-renewable Resources.

Many of you will recognize Bruce Flinn's name from his tenure as BLM Project Manager on the Southern Nevada Water Authority Project. Due, in part, to his time on that project, Bruce is well versed on the issues that currently are being faced by the Ely Field Office. Bruce will utilize his extensive project management experience from past work for the BLM in Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Washington, D.C.