

How to Participate

What can you do now?

The Draft plan for the Bighorn Basin will be released to the public for feedback sometime in Spring 2011. Your comments will influence the decisions that Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will make in its final plan, which will affect energy development, air and water quality, public health, grazing, fish and wildlife, and land use designations in the Bighorn Basin for the next 15-20 years.

How will you know when the draft plan is released?

The Worland and Cody BLM field offices will announce on their [website](#), and likely in local newspapers, that the Draft plan is available for public review. The Outdoor Council will also announce the release of the Draft on this planning webpage and to its email list. Contact [Jamie](#) to be added to this list.

Where can you get a copy?

You can then write to or visit the Cody or Worland BLM offices (see [Contact Information](#)) and request a copy, or retrieve a copy on their [website](#). Additionally, you can get a copy of the draft from the Wyoming Outdoor Council either by visiting our website or [contacting us](#).

What to do with your copy once you have it?

This is a BIG document, but please don't get discouraged - you don't have to read the whole thing!

First, it is important to understand that this Draft will include a **spectrum of alternative plans**. Of these alternatives, the **BLM will have identified its preferred alternative**, which will most closely reflect what is likely to go into the final plan. We would recommend that you **pay the most attention to the preferred alternative** during your review. However, if and when you come across something that you do NOT like in the preferred alternative, look to one of the other alternatives to see if they might include an option that you like better. If this is the case, you should point it out to the BLM in your comments. More about how to comment later...

Step-by-step process to quickly navigate the Draft...

1. Go to the table of contents and identify the topic/s that are of interest or concern to you, or those for which you have experience or knowledge.
2. Browse these ID'd topics' pages and mark or highlight particular sections, paragraphs, or phrases that you have a strong reaction to, either positive or negative.
3. Go back through the areas you have marked and determine how many separate comments you feel you should write to address your reactions/concerns.
4. Write your comment/s.

What makes an effective comment?

The BLM provides official comment forms, which are helpful in setting up your comments. Fill in all of the requested information, and be sure to consider the following when writing your comment:

1. The more specific, the better. Refer to the page numbers, sections, paragraphs, or even direct quotes that you marked. This way the BLM knows exactly what you are talking about, and there is not only less ambiguity in interpreting your comment, but also more ease on the part of the BLM in considering, and thus, hopefully incorporating it into the final plan. When appropriate, it is also highly recommended that you be specific about place or geographic location.
2. It is most effective to demonstrate your connection to geographic area and/or issue to which you are referring.
3. Clearly describe what you do or do not advocate regarding the topic or section on which you are commenting, and WHY. You can do this by expressing criticism of or concern or support for a current, proposed, or desired but not proposed management scheme for the area and/or resource at hand (e.g., a campground, trail, or other recreation area; a particular wildlife species or habitat; grazing allotment or regulation; water resources; oil and gas field, etc.). Once you've done this, you need to provide reasoning for your stance.
4. Longer is not always better. If you can clearly and thoroughly convey your comment to BLM in a brief manner, the easier, and thus more likely it is that they will seriously consider it.
5. Always be polite and respectful, even when expressing criticism.
6. Give your comment/s a second look, and make changes as needed.

How do you get your comment to BLM?

The comment forms typically include address information so that you can send them directly back to BLM. You can mail the forms, or submit them electronically. More detailed information on comment submission will be provided once the Draft plan is released.

If you have questions, or want help going through the Draft and/or writing your comments, the Outdoor Council is here to help. Please contact Jamie Wolf, 307.721.7610 or jamie@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org, or Nathan Maxon, 307.332.7031 X11 or nathan@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org.