

December 12, 2005

Dear John:

The NWCOS Planning Committee would like to express our on-going frustration with the RMP schedule. Several times in the past two years, BLM has failed to deliver a document to review by the promised date, but still requires NWCOS to submit our comments within the original timeframe.

As you know, our most recent concern is regarding the summary table for the impact analysis. We were to receive this document on November 9, according to the BLM schedule. Although BLM did share the first 1200 pages of the document on November 10, the remaining 400 were not available for two full weeks after the deadline. We will continue to request that NWCOS deadlines be extended by the same amount of time that BLM is behind in delivering the document to us.

We think these on-going delays of documents, followed by painfully quick turn-around times for NWCOS, have serious implications for the RMP process, including:

- Break of promise. The Agency expects us to stay within our deadlines, when you repeatedly miss yours. Many believe this is the sixth time that BLM has done this to NWCOS.
- Lack of consensus. The Agency has repeated said that consensus language from NWCOS is more useful to you than individual comments. However, many in NWCOS feel as if the Agency is setting us up for failure. No community collaborative group is likely to reach consensus on a 1,600 page document, let alone with a one week period over the Thanksgiving holiday to review and discuss it.
- Good planning takes time. We are concerned that this schedule results in limited input from us. We are even more concerned that BLM has equally limited time to review these products to ensure the highest quality.
- Impedes Developing a Community Alternative. It was NWCOS's understanding that we would have the key elements of the Impact Analysis in November to help build our community alternative. It is now clear that the 1600 page summary table does not indicate when the significance criteria will be triggered and that such information will not be available until mid-January. The result is that NWCOS must develop its community alternative without this important information. Further, it means that NWCOS members will need to review the impact analysis document in January when we will be needing all our time to focus on the community alternative.

We appreciate that many of these problems are beyond your control, but as a group we did want to document our frustration regarding this continuing problem.

Sincerely yours,

NWCOS Planning Committee

Jeff Comstock  
Moffat County Government

Suzanne Jones  
The Wilderness Society

Brad Petch  
Wildlife Biologist

Marianna Raftopoulos  
Various oil and gas interests

Cc: NWCOS