

To: John Husband
From: Northwest Colorado Stewardship (NWCOS)
Date: March 2, 2006
Re: Next Steps for NWCOS

In follow-up to our conversation at the NWCOS meeting on February 15 and 16, we wanted to formalize our requests regarding next steps. Due to the interest in NWCOS demonstrated by Colorado State Director Wisely, BLM Director Clarke, and Deputy Secretary Scarlett, we would appreciate you informing them of the contents of this letter and our request for additional support.

NWCOS has been instrumental in the development of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) by providing input into the range of alternatives for the draft RMP, feedback on the ecological and socioeconomic impact analyses, and clarity about the concerns and priorities of the Little Snake community and communities of interest. As our discussions have progressed in recent weeks, we have come to the realization that there are some intractable differences of values and opinion regarding land use allocation amongst various NWCOS participants that will prevent us from forming a complete community alternative by our previous deadline of the end of February. Although we may return to these difficult issues at a later time, for the next few months we would like to focus our energy on getting consensus community recommendations on three specific issues that we believe have the most potential for success. These are:

- Wildlife habitat/vegetative communities
- Energy development—how to do it, not where
- Adaptive management (AM)—how to incorporate the system level AM into the RMP

We think the above topics are key to the foundation of the RMP and are essential for laying the ground work for any long-term adaptive management efforts that BLM pursues in the Little Snake area. As part of our effort to increase local problem-solving capacity, NWCOS members are facilitating these small working groups with assistance and direction from facilitators at The Keystone Center. For each working group, we have prepared action plans (attached) that outline the specific tasks each group will be undertaking and their approximate timelines for accomplishing these tasks.

Specific Request

NWCOS has very specific work plans for each of these above areas, which we are in the process of finalizing. Each of these includes specific tasks, deliverables, and deadlines that would be accomplished by no later than October 31, which is the end of the public comment period on the draft EIS. If NWCOS develops consensus input before October, it will be forwarded to BLM with the hope of it being included in the Draft RMP/EIS. In order to progress, we would need the following from BLM:

- BLM interest and commitment to considering NWCOS products in the RMP; and
- Facilitation support for NWCOS. NWCOS believes this that facilitation support could come in one of two ways:

- Combining Heather Bergman of The Keystone Center with Karen Simms of BLM
- Combining Heather Bergman of The Keystone Center with a senior facilitator from Keystone

In addition, we realize that BLM's Little Snake Field Office (LSFO) may need additional resources for its contractors and staff to help support the process. NWCOS has requested that the LSFO and Keystone provide some financial estimates and specific staffing options to NWCOS and BLM for consideration. This information is attached for your reference.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in this process. We know that you are busy, but we are without a facilitator until further funds are allocated and will have difficulty moving forward without one. Because of this, we would greatly appreciate a timely reply.