

Now, we would like to turn our attention to how the planning process and the guidance are intertwined. And for, that we will ask Sam some questions and first one, Sam, is how -- let's talk about the guidance for considering the inventories and land use planning process.

What is some of that guidance?

>> S. Gaugush: Well, so, as I mentioned earlier, Section 202 of FLPMA directs us to consider our inventory when we are doing land use planning and the planning guidance sort of walks through the planning process with regards to lands with wilderness characteristics.

What I would like to emphasize, it's important to think of lands with wilderness characteristics early on in the process, for instance, confirming that your inventory is, indeed, up to date, thinking about lands with wilderness characteristics as you are going through the scoping process and as you are developing planning issues and planning criteria that will form the scope and the planning boards.

The inventory information should be used when you are developing analysis of the management situation and also helps with crafting the affected environment discussions for these -- for these areas and the lands with wilderness characteristics section of the planning document.

Once you have that information, we mentioned before that manageability is not something that goes into the calculations during the inventory process, but it is something that you should consider in planning.

Manageability is very important, obviously.

So you want to think about things like access needs for state or private and holdings within an L.W.C. Sometimes there are other statutory requirements, the Oregon and California lands acts that apply to western Oregon is one such example.

You want to think about other resources and uses and their compatibility or incompatibility with protection of wilderness characteristics.

And finally in developing alternatives, it's important to provide a reasonable range of alternatives for the management of lands with wilderness characteristics.

>> D. Charpio: Okay, Sam.

So we looked the manageability.

Now we are looking at some of the planning issues, some the opportunities and so forth, but you mentioned a key word or words.

You said reasonable range of alternatives.

What would be a reasonable range of alternatives if the land use planning process with respect to wilderness characteristics or areas with wilderness characteristics?

>> S. Gaugush: Well, what you would want to provide in this -- in this instance would be a range of alternatives sufficient to provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives and then it explores the options for managing these lands, and provide a basis for comparing impacts to lands with wilderness characteristics across the alternative.

In many cases, it would protect all or almost all of the LWCs for their wilderness characteristics and another alternative that protects few or none of the lands with wilderness characteristics and then there's the other alternatives in between those two alternatives that provided some middle ground.

>> D. Charpio: So not just one or the other we need to have a variety there and we can choose to not protect those characteristics.

Correct?

>> S. Gaugush: Yes.

>> D. Charpio: Okay.

But can we decide to protect those characteristics in the land use planning process?

>> S. Gaugush: Yes.

We definitely can.

Protecting lands with wilderness characteristics is one of the BLM's management options for this resource.

In fact, FLPMA in its policy section states that certain lands should be preserved and protected in their natural condition and the concept of multiple use as outlined in FLPMA includes the concept that some lands should be managed for less than all of the resources or all of the resource uses.

>> D. Charpio: So, Sam, just a side question here, so if it's not to protect, we are not classifying it as wilderness, we are just deciding to protect those characteristics in the land use plan many some way, shape or form, correct?

>> S. Gaugush: That's correct, Don.

Formal wilderness designation is an action that's done by Congress.

When we are deciding to protect wilderness characteristics of an area, it's a land use plan decision and it's only valuable for the life of the plan or until the plan is amended to change those allocations.

>> D. Charpio: Okay.

So if the -- if we decide to protect, how do we describe those lands in the land use plan?

>> S. Gaugush: Well, there's no consistent name that will be used bureau wide, but we're encouraging state offices to use whatever terminology was in place prior to the secretarial order.

Some states, that is the term natural areas and in other places, it's lands managed to protect wilderness characteristics and there's other examples as well.

I mentioned it before, but it's important to -- I will repeat it again, that these lands should be identified on a map with a discreet boundary.

>> D. Charpio: Very good.

Thank you.

So many people out there know about wilderness study areas, and those have been released in some cases.

So how will release wilderness study areas be considered in relation to this new policy?

>> D. Harmon: I will take that one.

Sometimes when Congress passes legislation, they designate some WSAs as wilderness areas and they release one or more WSAs from wilderness consideration.

So when they -- when they do that, when they release an area, the date of the legislation is the date that the WSA ceases to exist and becomes just a part of the public land base.

However, that doesn't mean that any wilderness characteristics that were identified through a previous inventory disappear.

So when there's a planning process or a NEPA analysis for a project ongoing, or subsequent later on after the legislation, then you would want to make sure that you analyze the wilderness characteristics impact and opportunities, that sort of thing, like you would any other resource.

It doesn't go away.

It may go away if conditions change over time.

So you need to stay on top of the situation there.

But I -- I can't emphasize enough the fact that we need to give serious consideration to the fact that Congress chose not to designate the area as wilderness, not to protect it through legislation when they had the opportunity, they chose to release it.

So that should be -- have quite a bit of weight in the decision making process on what to do with those lands through a planning decision.

Likewise, though, you would want to factor in conditions that may have changed, maybe a lot of time has passed since that action has taken place so you need to factor that in as well.

>> D. Charpio: Thanks, Dave, that helps.

Sam, the new guidance, when we are looking at projects, what analysis -- or do we need to consider some analysis of the impacts when we are looking at the NEPA part of the process with respect to projects?

>> S. Gaugush: Well, Don, I would just broadly say that folks just do good NEPA and follow core NEPA principles.

You know, would you have to consider whether there's an LWC present and if your inventory was updated.

If there wasn't one present, you have to confirm that you updated inventory and give a brief discussion that the resource was not there.

If there was an LWC present, you would want to discuss the impact of proposed actions and the impacts on the wilderness characteristics in the area.

>> D. Charpio: We need to be looking at those characteristics and the impact on those characteristics. Okay, guys we want to change our focus just a little bit here.

Many of you may have seen the broadcast we just did on the new travel and transportation management guidance that's come out from Washington and I'm sure there's some questions out there about how these two things are integrated or how they are affected.

So how does travel and transportation management interface with the new guidance?

>> D. Harmon: Provide a little bit of context on answering that, let me remind folks that the wilderness inventory process uses a definition of wilderness inventory road that was developed during the passage of FLPMA, it came out of a report to help develop FLPMA and the road definition in our baseline inventories in the past, 30 years ago, and we used it since then and we have reaffirmed that that's the definition we use when we inventory for wilderness characteristics in our new guidance.

So when we are out on the ground identifying boundaries, we are using wilderness inventory road definition to determine the roadless area boundaries.

If we find that there's a route that transverses an area, lands with wilderness characteristics that doesn't meet the road definition, we refer to that as a primitive route.

That's something we used to call a way.

So this guidance refers to it as a primitive route.

Now the new travel and transportation manual has come out and we are really happy that -- I know that was a major effort to get that -- to get that out, and we worked closely with the transportation folks so we coordinated with them.

But this may be situations where a primitive road identified through the route designation process, on travel and transportation management does not meet the wilderness inventory road definition and so we don't want -- what we don't want is to identify areas that we're protecting with primitive roads in there because essentially it's saying we have a road in a roadless area and that would greatly confuse the public.

So we want to be careful to refer to any access routes within lands of wilderness characteristics as primitive routes.

So this is -- I recognize this as a -- this can be a complicated subject and it's something we will get into a lot more in our training sessions when we visit the state offices later on.

Today's broadcast is an overview of some of these issues.

>> D. Charpio: Thanks, Dave and I appreciate you mentioning the training because that's my final and last question.

Carl mentioned there would be some training coming up in the near future and the states are being contacted now for coordination.

What is the schedule for training and how soon can we expect it to be out in the field?

>> D. Harmon: Well, right now we've been contacting each state office, Lawrence Pado on our staff have been making calls and we are working that out right now.

I think in a couple of weeks we will be in Wyoming and Colorado, I believe, and if Wyoming and Colorado don't know that yet, my apologies.

We are going to be firming that up real soon.

I know you want a visit pretty quickly.

So by the week's end, I think we'll have a pretty good schedule put together based on the feedback we have gotten from each state.

Some of these trips will be in next fiscal years because the states didn't want -- didn't see -- didn't feel they could meet with us this fiscal year given the travel constraints.

>> D. Charpio: That's understood.

>> D. Harmon: So we will roll it out and try to meet everybody's needs.

Also I might add that we are developing a web-based training, desktop training at Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center with Chris Barnes and he's working up something that everybody can use at their desktops and that should be available late summer, early fall.

>> D. Charpio: Very good, Dave.

Thanks for the heads up.

We would be very interested in working with Chris to place that web-based training on our knowledge resource center here at the National Training Center so all the BLMers can have access to it as well.

Good luck with that training.

Guys, I want to thank you.

You did a great job of giving us an overview today and now we want to turn to some questions from the audience.

At this point, we would like to answer any questions you may have or that our -- for our panel on M Street.

If you have a question or a comment, please give us a call, send us a fax or shoot us a text message or email us using the numbers and addresses on your screen.

You can call us toll-free at 877-862-5346.

You can send a fax to us at 602-906-5701.

And you can send your text and email messages and questions to us at BLM_TC_telecast@blm.gov.