

Public comment period begins for BLM/BIA resource management plan

The Bureau of Land Management's Oklahoma Field Office, in coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office and Bureau of Indian Affairs Southern Plains Regional Office, has released for public comment a revised framework for how certain public lands will be used in parts of Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas. The document, called the Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Resource Management Plan and Bureau of Indian Affairs Integrated Resource Management Plan, addresses resource management issues, resource data, laws, regulations, and policies applicable to the public lands under the jurisdiction of the BLM and BIA. The BLM invites the public to participate in the planning process by providing comments on the draft plan during a 90-day public comment and review period, which begins today.

Taken together, the two draft plans enable the agencies to manage land in a planning area that comprises 15,100 acres of BLM-managed public land and 4,810,900 acres of federal sub-surface mineral estate; 394,200 surface acres and 2,033,500 sub-surface mineral estate acres within the BIA Eastern Oklahoma Region; and 457,500 surface acres and 632,000 sub-surface mineral estate acres within the BIA Southern Plains Region. The BIA trust lands include multiple tribal jurisdictional boundaries.

This planning effort will update management decisions in existing plans for vegetation, fish and wildlife, energy and minerals, lands and realty and other issues. In addition, the document will facilitate future BLM and BIA environmental analysis and permitting of Indian and tribal mineral development.

Copies of the Draft Joint EIS/BLM RMP and BIA IRMP are available for review at the following BLM offices: Oklahoma Field Office, 201 Stephenson Parkway, Suite 1200, Norman, Oklahoma, and the New Mexico State Office, 301 Dinosaur Trail, Santa Fe, New Mexico. The draft plan and supporting information is available online at:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/plans-in-development/new-mexico/oklahoma-rmp>

The BLM will host a series of public meetings to provide information and answer questions about the Draft Joint EIS/BLM RMP and BIA IRMP. These meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

Comments will be accepted through Feb 7, 2019. Comments can be submitted via the web address above, or by mail to: BLM Oklahoma Field Office, Attn.: Patrick Rich, RMP Team Lead, 201 Stephenson Parkway, Suite 1200, Norman, Okla., 73072.

For more information on the planning process, please contact Patrick Rich, Oklahoma Field Office RMP Team Lead, at 405-579-7154.