

# UPDATE- BLM Threat to Rural Life in Placitas

**Time extension - Public has until Monday 11/26/12. Your comments are needed.**

The Placitas BLM lands are up for sale/exchange, development, mining, gas & oil development, highways, and energy corridors: 3143 acres to the north, 917 acres to the east (Crest of Montezuma) and 200 acres by Overlook. This is the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan (RPRMP) update. Your voice is needed again. *News Flash! WHOA has filed the notice of appeal in our court case.*

## BLM DEIS Substantive Issues Summary

WHOA has identified several substantive problematic issues (below) from the BLM's RPRMP Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) we want the public to be aware of. We invite you to submit your own comments, utilizing if you like, our educational info below. We have enclosed a pre-addressed envelope to the BLM for this purpose. Alternatively, you may email comments to: [nm\\_rpfo\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:nm_rpfo_comments@blm.gov) or [a1martinez@blm.gov](mailto:a1martinez@blm.gov). Please mail or email your comments by Nov. 26, 2012.

**1. Wild Horses:** The BLM is neglecting to manage the Placitas wild horses that roam BLM public lands. WHOA has asked the BLM to inventory the horses and designate them a herd management area or wild horse sanctuary so the horses are not sold off or slaughtered. Instead, the agency refuses to cooperate or recognize their duty to manage these wild horses. Pls. tell the BLM how important it is to keep the Placitas wild horses on public lands!

**2. Land Exchanges:** The BLM proposes under Alternative D to dispose of all public land holdings in Placitas. There has been no discussion of impacts to wildlife, or a discussion of what impacts will result from any development scenarios. The BLM has kept secret whether land will be going toward a certain tribe, agency, land grant, etc. We believe the BLM is acting irresponsibly considering the decision will impact over 3000 acres of your public lands.

**3. Mining:** North of Placitas, BLM Sections 13 and 18 **remain open to fluid minerals and gravel mining development** under the preferred alternative. If you don't want to see oil towers and pollution next door to Placitas, please write to the BLM and tell them you support Alternative B regarding Placitas minerals management—closure to minerals and no surface occupancy.

**4. Lack of Alternatives:** The vast majority of Rio Puerco BLM lands remain open to mining, off-road vehicle use, and cattle grazing under all the alternatives considered. We proposed the BLM close critical environmental areas, popular hiking areas, and important waterways to these harmful impacts.

For you environmentalists, (that's most of you!) out of 23 surveyed aquatic sites in the DEIS, 8 are functioning properly, 11 are at risk, and 4 are not functioning at all. We would like to see the BLM come up with a plan and timeline for restoring critical aquatic areas. Another issue the BLM rubber stamps is off-road vehicles in wilderness study areas—these areas are under consideration for wilderness designation and need to be managed accordingly. Wilderness study areas make up a small portion of federal lands, yet **over 80 % of Rio Puerco Field Office lands will be open to off-road vehicles!**

**Please tell the BLM to do a better job managing public land for multiple uses—that streams need to function properly and wildlife corridors need to be protected!**

**5. Future Development:** Under law, the BLM needs to include reasonably foreseeable development scenarios in the DEIS. The agency has not discussed the Northwest loop road, which numerous Placitas residents do not support. Please voice your concerns to the BLM regarding their secrecy around this Right of Way development. There was no discussion in the DEIS regarding the Western Expansion Project III, the natural gas pipeline that will cross 246 miles of NM land, including land north of Placitas. Construction on the pipeline is scheduled to begin

April of 2013. This is precisely the type of future development the DEIS should have discussed. Instead, the public is left in the dark as to where in Placitas it will be constructed, whether eminent domain (taking private land for public purpose) will be employed, and whether the gas will be for domestic use or sold overseas.

**6. Impacts: A primary purpose behind the BLM conducting environmental review is to disclose any potentially harmful environmental impacts to the public.** We found that the DEIS failed to discuss impacts from cattle grazing in aquatic areas, impacts from gravel from right-of-way development and land exchanges, and impacts from off-road vehicle use. There was no discussion or mapping of valuable wildlife corridors, or a discussion of how certain uses may harm sensitive ecological species. In their Resource Land Management Plan, the BLM needs to have the big picture of how to manage public resources and wildlife before they can begin authorizing future development projects.

Please tell the BLM specifically what you want to see them do a better job managing before they approve this Resource Management Plan. We have enclosed a sheet for submitting written comments. Please be aware that your name on the submitted comments will become part of the public record.

## PZP Immuno-Contraception Update!

The New Mexico Livestock Board has received all that was requested or “required” from the manufacturer in order to be able to “expedite” PZP registration here in NM. It took many months just to obtain a process for “registration”, from the NM Livestock Board (NMLB). The NMLB is appointed by NM Governor Susanna Martinez. We are now awaiting this promise of expedited approval though the statutory authority here is questionable.

**Please call Susanna Martinez and the Executive Director of the NM Livestock Board Myles Culbertson** and respectfully ask that New Mexico timely register non-sterilizing PZP in the state of NM. Please let WHOA know their response at [wildhorsesnm@yahoo.com](mailto:wildhorsesnm@yahoo.com) or 505-610-7644. Much appreciated!

**Governor Martinez:** Call 505-476-2200 or email [gloria.marquez@state.nm.us](mailto:gloria.marquez@state.nm.us)  
**Myles Culbertson (NMLB):** Call 505-841-6161 or email [myles.culbertson@state.nm.us](mailto:myles.culbertson@state.nm.us)

## Update: Tribal Land Exchanges

**WHOA is still in support of the San Felipe Pueblo in the event of a land exchange.**

**The Santa Ana Pueblo** did kindly hold an informational meeting for various Placitas Groups by invite. At this meeting, Santa Ana proudly announced that they have initiated seasonal hunting rather than year round. Significantly, however, this presentation also included the following: **No public access. No horses.** And, forty five percent (45%) of Santa Ana lands are currently used for cattle grazing. Santa Ana did however propose to release Placitas BLM lands from cattle grazing.

**Yes, the Pueblo of San Felipe will allow wild horses and will also allow public access** at the current level. San Felipe has made the leap to immuno-contraceptive darting for wild horse population management which starts February-March in 2013. Understanding the law of unintended consequences, they have not re-introduced another large grazing ungulate (such as antelope), and will not without first analyzing forage and predator availability.

**Very Special Thanks to:** Gordon Environmental Inc. support for Windmills for Wildlife Project & Kevin Quail for ongoing Wild Horse & Wildlife habitat support and stewardship!

**Contributions to WHOA – PO Box 932, Placitas, NM 87043, Walk in deposits at the US Bank in Placitas, or PayPal online at [whoanm.org](http://whoanm.org)**