



## **Summary of Proposed Camping/Travel Management Alternatives for Chaffee County's BLM lands**

**Sept. 19, 2022**

One of the top goals of the Chaffee County Outdoor Recreation Management Plan is to attain better managed camping on all our lands. The Bureau of Land Management is accepting public comments on the proposed Alternative D until **Oct. 8, 2022**. To help you understand what is being proposed, Envision provides this simple summary of Alternative D and the other alternatives that were considered.

### **What is the BLM's proposal?**

The BLM's proposed alternative is called the "Proposed Action" (Alternative D). Here is what it proposes for camping:

- Transition the camp "anywhere you want" current state to camping in designated sites only for all vehicle-accessed camping. Designated sites would be signed and ultimately include a steel fire ring for safety and barriers to keep the site from spreading. Walk-in camping – where you walk in more than ½ mile from the road — would still be allowed as it is today.
- The proposal is to retain 100% of current camping capacity, which would be defined by roughly the number of regular and recurring-use sites that exist now. This baseline would exclude sites where camping is only occasional. It would include roughly this number of sites by area: Shavano (100), Pass Creek (5), Burmac (10-15), other areas near Salida (8-12), Fourmile CR375/376 (8-12), an expansion of the Turtle Rock Campground, CR307/376 (8-12), and continued allowance for camping at Dudbob and Carnage Canyon Trailheads – about 180 to 200 campsites in total. In all, this supports the current demand. Additional sites could be added in future years as demand increases and with community engagement.
- The designated sites would be selected by BLM professionals and would avoid wetland and riparian areas, minimize erosion, minimize conflicts with neighbors, avoid agricultural infrastructure such as stock tanks, and include a 100-foot buffer from water.
- The plan includes creating "overflow areas" for extra capacity on busy weekends (a concept known as "camping corrals" in other communities).
- The BLM would immediately assess the opportunity to add a vault toilet at Burmac and expand facilities at Turtle Rock, and would consider fees to cover these expenses. In other areas, voluntary contributions could be considered in the near term, but a move to fees would occur only if monitoring indicates that additional management/infrastructure is needed and would require a multi-step process.
- In the near term, the BLM would use community volunteers and partner organizations plus BLM staff to monitor the sites. If issues with human waste, trash, site expansion and similar

continue, then the BLM would have the option to add more management and infrastructure such as restrooms, and to potentially charge a fee to cover expenses at such developed sites.

- The plan provides for added education, such as signage to clarify regulations and inform better behaviors.

The plan also includes “travel management,” or clarification of what roads can be used/when and by whom for areas that do not already have this definition. In general, the proposed plan seeks to address short routes that are harmful or do not have legal access. This includes only 2% of all roads in the BLM Field Office. For more information on what exact routes are open, closed or have seasonal restrictions, you can look at the tables on Pages 56 and 64, or view the map at <https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f433384da1f849a384792b83566bf31a>.

### **What are the other Alternatives?**

The BLM considered three additional alternatives:

**Motorized Access Priority (Alternative C)** – In this version, additional motorized routes would remain open compared to the proposed alternative, and there are also fewer seasonal closures to protect wildlife. Camping management is the same as in the proposed Alternative D.

**Resource Priority (Alternative B)** – This alternative proposes to decrease the number of designated campsites to 75% of the current number. This means closing 25% of sites that currently have recurring use. Additional closures or seasonal management of specific routes also are proposed.

**No Action (Alternative A)** — No action would be taken to change the current state.

Everyone should comment to let the agency know what you think about their proposed and considered alternatives. We are asking you to consider: Will it work to address the current issues you see related to dispersed camping? Do you have any specific ideas to make the proposed alternative address current needs?

Please engage to be sure your thoughts are heard. You can do that by visiting BLM’s ePlanning website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2012291/510> by **October 8<sup>th</sup>**. If you cannot access the website, you may also send a direct email to [jlenard@blm.gov](mailto:jlenard@blm.gov) but the website is best.

**Thank you for participating in Chaffee County’s future!**