

influence decisions on the content of a proposed rule are:

1. Comments and recommendations supported by quantitative information or studies; and
2. Comments that include citations to and analyses of the applicable laws and regulations.

We are particularly interested in receiving comments and suggestions

about the topics listed under III. Description of Information Requested. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. We will honor such requests to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals

identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

We will conduct public scoping meetings on the Environmental Impact Statement associated with this proposed rulemaking. The meetings will be held on the following dates at the specified locations and times:

Location	Date and time	Address of meeting	Contact person
Billings, Montana	March 18, 2003 6–10 p.m.	Holiday Inn Grand Montana, 550 Midland Road, Billings, MT 59101.	Mary Apple (406) 896–5258
Reno, Nevada	March 20, 2003 6–10 p.m.	Reno Sparks Convention Center, 4590 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV 89502.	JoLynn Worley (775) 861–6515
Albuquerque, New Mexico	March 25, 2003 6–10 p.m.	Hilton of Albuquerque, 1901 University Blvd., NE., Albuquerque, NM 87102.	Kitty Mulkey (505) 438–7511
Washington, DC	March 27, 2003 1–5 p.m.	Courtyard By Marriott (General Scott Room), 1600 Rhode Island Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20036.	Tom Gorey (202) 452–5137

The sites for the public meetings are accessible to individuals with physical impairments. If you need a special accommodation to participate in one or all of the meetings (e.g., interpreting service, assistive listening device, or materials in alternative format), please notify the contact person listed in this notice no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Although we will attempt to meet all requests received, the requested accommodations may not always be available.

If you plan to present a statement at the meetings, we will ask you to sign in before the meeting starts and identify yourself clearly for the record. Your speaking time at the meeting(s) will be determined before the meeting(s), based upon the number of persons wishing to speak and the approximate time available for the session. You will be provided at least three minutes to speak.

If you do not wish to speak at the meetings but you have views, questions, and concerns about regulations for the BLM's Range Management Program, you may submit written statements for inclusion in the public record at the meeting. You may also submit written comments and suggestions regardless of whether you attend or speak at a public meeting. See the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice for where to submit comments.

II. Background

In this issue of the **Federal Register** BLM is also publishing a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on the changes we are considering making to the regulations governing BLM's Grazing Administration Program. BLM is committed to making the changes to reflect the Secretary's "4C's" philosophy of "consultation, cooperation, and communication all in the service of conservation." BLM is issuing this Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and the NOI to give the public and interested parties early information about the proposed action, the potential range of alternatives, and the nature of impact analysis being considered in the EIS. We will hold meetings during which the public will be able to comment on the scope, proposed action, and possible alternatives BLM should consider when drafting the proposed rule. BLM seeks comments on this Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

Since the first set of grazing regulations was issued after passage of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. 315, 315a–315r), the regulations have been periodically modified, revised, and updated. The last major revision effort culminated when BLM published and implemented comprehensive changes to the grazing regulations in 1995.

The changes BLM is considering would encourage partnerships in public land stewardship and establish new options for BLM and rangeland users in the administration and management of public lands. Our goals are to:

- (1) Enhance community-based conservation and citizen-centered stewardship;
- (2) improve BLM business practices; and
- (3) provide greater flexibility for the manager and the permittee.

III. Description of Information Requested

BLM is committed to carrying out the Secretary's objectives and the Rangeland Management Program established by the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 (43 CFR 1740), the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (43 U.S.C. 1901–1908), and the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. 315, 315a–315r). We encourage the public to participate in planned public meetings and to provide comments and suggestions to help us clearly define needed changes in the Grazing Administration Program. We specifically are requesting comments on the topics we are considering for the proposed rule. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. Definitions: We are considering revising or creating definitions of the following terms:

Active use
Authorized use
Base property
Grazing lease
Grazing permit
Grazing Preference or Preference
Livestock kind or kind of livestock
Monitoring
Reserve common allotment