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### **Grazing Public Meeting to be Held in Billings**

The Bureau of Land Management will hold a public comment meeting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on its proposed grazing regulation changes on Monday, February 2, in Billings. The meeting, one of six to be held in the West and in Washington, D.C., will be at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana from 6-10 p.m.

The DEIS analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the Bureau's proposed grazing rule. The rulemaking proposal, published in the *Federal Register* on December 8, is aimed at improving grazing management and helping public lands ranching continue in the rural West. The proposed rule recognizes the economic and social benefits of public lands ranching, as well as its preservation of open space in the rapidly growing West.

The DEIS is a national-level analysis that documents the ecological, cultural, social, and economic effects of the proposed grazing rule, if implemented in its current form. The DEIS also examines the impact of two other management options -- a "No Action Alternative" and a "Modified Action Alternative." The "No Action Alternative" analyzes the effects of the BLM continuing to administer public lands grazing under current regulations. The "Modified Action Alternative" looks at the effects of regulatory changes that would be similar, but not identical, to the proposed rule. Details of the three management alternatives, as described in the DEIS, can be accessed at the BLM's Web site ([www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov)), as can the specifics of the proposed grazing rule.

The comment period on the DEIS will end on March 2, which is also the closing date for public comments on the proposed grazing rule.

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