

**DECISION NOTICE and
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

AMENDMENT 30 to the Land and Resource Management Plan
USDA Forest Service, Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche
National Grasslands, Pueblo, Colorado

August 8, 2005

Deciding Officer: Robert J. Leaverton, Forest Supervisor

SUMMARY

This decision amends the Land and Resource Management Plan, Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands [PSICC] (the Plan) by modifying its list of Management Indicator Species (MIS). This amendment serves as an interim measure until the current revision of the Plan is completed; a final revised Plan for the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands is scheduled for 2006 and for the Pike and San Isabel National Forests for 2009.

Implementation of this decision shall not occur for seven (7) calendar days following the date of publication of this legal notice.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this amendment is to establish an updated MIS list. An updated list is needed to ensure better alignment with the 1982 planning regulations, to adequately serve the PSICC's monitoring of management activities' potential effects, and to adequately ensure that the appropriate monitoring is feasible, useful and not redundant.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

It is my decision to implement Alternative 2 as described in the environmental assessment (EA). This alternative is selected because its implementation will result in improved efficiency and effectiveness in monitoring the appropriate MIS, and will improve our ability to detect population trends and effects to habitats represented by the eight species. Alternative 2 includes the following action items:

1. Eight of the original 40 species listed in Chapter III-28 of the Plan will retain MIS status and will be used to monitor and evaluate the effects of major management activities subsequently authorized by the PSICC. The retained species are Abert's squirrel, black-tailed prairie dog, brook trout, Bullock's oriole, elk, greenback cutthroat trout, lesser prairie chicken, and long-billed curlew.
2. Eight of the 32 species removed as MIS do have Forest Service sensitive species status and will continue to be managed based on the direction and guidelines that apply to sensitive species management (FSM 2670.22 and 2672.1).
3. All 32 species removed from the MIS list continue to be protected by the general viability requirements of NFMA and the Plan Standards and Guidelines. Impacts to these species will not increase under this decision.
4. The Plan Monitoring and Evaluation requirements (Chapter IV-6) are modified to pertain to only the eight species that are retained as MIS.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

After reviewing the analysis and consideration of the environmental effects, I have determined that implementing Alternative 2 is not a major Federal action, either individually or cumulatively, and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals must be postmarked or received no later than 45 days after the publication date of this legal notice in the Pueblo Chieftain (as specified in 36 CFR 217.8(b)(1)). This decision is subject to administrative review pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9, "Content of a Notice of Appeal", and must meet the following requirements:

1. State that the document is a "Notice of Appeal" filed pursuant to 36 CFR 217;
2. List the name and address of the appellant and a telephone number;
3. Identify the decision about which the requester objects;
4. Identify the document in which the decision is contained by title and subject, date of the decision, and name and title of the Deciding Officer;
5. Identify specifically that portion of the decision or decision document to which the requester objects;
6. State the reasons for objecting, including issues of fact, law, regulation, or policy, and, if applicable, specifically how the decision violates law, regulation, or policy; and
7. Identify the specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks.

Appeals must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer: USDA Forest Service, PO Box 25127, Lakewood, Colorado 80225-0127.

A concurrent copy must be sent to me: Robert J. Leaverton, Forest Supervisor, USDA Forest Service, PSICC, 2840 Kachina Drive, Pueblo, CO 81008

A copy of the complete Decision Notice and the Final EA may be obtained at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Pueblo, or on the PSICC web at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/projects/> under "MIS Amendment".

/s/Robert J. Leaverton, Forest Supervisor on August 8, 2005