

## Sage Riders Motorcycle Club response to the BLM Price Field Office Proposed RMP:

After reviewing the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) and final impact statement and in meeting with officials from Price BLM Field Office, it appears that the proposal is workable. On September 9, 2008, Alan Peterson, Scott Wheeler and Wade Allinson met with officials to discuss some of our concerns. We had a very productive and informative meeting. It was refreshing to have a meeting in which our opinions and concerns were heard by a sincere ear. After talking with the BLM officials, we feel comfortable with the travel routes, unfortunately we haven't had time to research other portions of the plan that would impact grazing, camping, mineral exploration, or oil & gas extraction. We've focused our study primarily on the proposed travel routes with an emphasis on the Price River Area.

We have some concerns in a couple of areas where routes were not designated, mainly in the Mounds and Green River area. We mentioned our concern that the Blue Castle Trail was not included in the proposed routes. We discussed the opportunity that this single track trail is for the citizens and visitors of Green River. The BLM took notes; however, it is doubtful this trail will be included in the Record of Decision (ROD). If it is not, it is possible that with the support of Emery County and Green River City, an EA could be done on this trail.

To help everyone follow the process, we need to point out that the 2003 San Rafael Motorized Route Designation Plan (Travel Plan) was incorporated into the PRMP in its entirety without modification. That Travel Plan includes 670 miles of routes that were previously designated as "open" to motorized use. Some of the more popular routes include the Temple Mountain Single Track Trail System, Waterfall Trail, Sid's Mountain Trail System, Behind the Reef Trail and other roads. We were disappointed with the 670 miles when it came out in 2003; however, that is a done deal.

The PRMP includes 605 miles of designated routes. These include single track, double track and full-size routes. Most of the 605 inventoried miles were obtained through GPS data from the Sage Riders Motorcycle Club, Carbon and Emery Counties. The Sage Riders focused efforts in the Chimney Rock as the Sage Riders and other clubs had held permitted events (Races, Enduro, Poker Rides, etc.) in this area. Events were held between 1982 and 2003. In addition, the Sage Riders M/C, BookCliff Rattlers M/C and USRA invested over \$30,000.00 in this area conducting Level III Cultural and Archaeological Studies on the trails located in the Chimney Rock area. That said, we feel that the routes included in the PRMP in the Chimney Rock area will constitute a workable trail system with some great riding opportunities. We are very optimistic with what is included in the PRMP.

We discussed a few concerns about certain routes with the BLM officials. Specifically with the Chimney Rock Trail System, we are concerned that the PRMP doesn't differentiate between routes for motorcycle (singletrack), ATV, (50" width) and full-sized vehicles (Jeeps, trucks, autos). We were told by the officials that this would be

addressed on the ground after the ROD is made. This was encouraging to hear, as we feel that the public will need to know what type of vehicles can be used and what level of difficulty is associated with each route. We would like to see the single track trails preserved for single track use. In addition, there are routes in this area that cannot be safely navigated by ATVs. We have previously submitted data to the BLM showing which routes can accommodate ATV, which are suitable for full-sized use, and which routes should be limited to motorcycles.

Our second concern is that of the previously designated “open” areas. The officials stated that the PRMP doesn’t designate any routes within the previously “open” areas. He stated that initially, 122 miles of routes were proposed to be designated “open”. However, all of these routes had to be removed because the BLM had failed to provide data to the public for them to comment on these routes. We were advised that upon signing of the ROD, the BLM would conduct an EA on these areas dealing only with the proposed 122 miles of routes. I wish that I had a more optimistic report in this area. It is good to see the BLM commit to addressing this area. The 122 miles might include some of the San Rafael Mail Run desert trails (hopefully).

Multiple-Use advocates scored a huge victory in the arena of Wilderness Characteristics (WC). The Price Field Office RMP was put on hold a couple of years ago because SUWA sued the BLM claiming that the RMP had failed to address areas that had WC. So, the RMP was delayed while the BLM looked at all of the land for WC. After reviewing this issue, the BLM identified (data was from SUWA) 27 areas that could possibly have WC. These 27 areas contained 937,440 acres. This was a very scary proposal. Combined with the existing Wilderness Study Areas, an addition 937, 440 acres would have represented over 50% of the public land managed by the Price Field Office. That would have been a train wreck for the economies of the Carbon-Emery area.

The Sage Riders Motorcycle Club, namely Scott Wheeler, Alan Peterson, Dick Brass, Paul Anderson and Wade Allinson took the WC issue to task. After three months of riding and gathering on the ground data, we were able to supply the BLM with over 1,500 photographs and waypoints disproving many of the areas claimed to have Wilderness Characteristics. Our hard work seems to have paid off. The BLM reviewed all the data submitted by different groups and determined that only 5 areas contain Wilderness Characteristics for a total of 97,000 acres. This is a huge victory.

Another concern is that one of the WC areas includes some very important motorized routes. Namely, The Horse Valley Road, Upper Little Wild Horse Road and The Waterfall Trail. We were told that even though this area has been determined to possess “Wilderness Characteristics”, the routes will remain open as designated in the 2003 San Rafael Travel Plan. This is an uneasy situation for the future of these routes.

The PRMP is open for 30 days for protest. Keep in mind that routes cannot be protested; however, after the ROD is signed they can be appealed. I would imagine that SUWA will chime in at that point. In order to file a protest, a person must have commented during the scoping or draft processes. For now, protests must be related to the BLM not

following proper procedure. For example, having designated routes in the open areas, without prior opportunity for public comment would be cause for protest. The letter campaign is over for now. We have been asked about letters and none are needed at this point.

At the end of the 30 day protest period, the BLM will attempt to settle or resolve all of the protests. It will take at least two to three months to resolve any protests. Once the protests have been resolved a ROD (record of decision) will be signed. It is possible that the ROD can be signed around the first of the year.

After discussing the PRMP with local members of the Sage Riders, we feel that this plan is workable and that we will not be filing a protest.

We wanted to thank all of those who took the time to make comments during scoping and planning process. We noticed that many individuals, clubs and land users from all across the United States submitted comments. A BIG THANKS to each and every one of you! It is also important that we thank Emery County Public Lands Manager Ray Petersen and all of the Emery County Officials for their support as well. This has truly been a battle that has been fought on many fronts. All public land users who believe in “Multiple Use” must stay involved and help guide management plans. The world is run by those who get involved.....so, JOIN – PARTICIPATE – DONATE !!