

mixed ownership pattern of lands managed by the BLM, Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA), and several private property owners. The area encompassed by the closure is primarily used by residents of Utah County and southern Salt Lake County for target shooting.

The target shooting closure is necessary to protect persons, property, and the public lands and resources in the area. An existing target shooting closure of the area will expire on December 15, 2016 (see 79 FR 74111, December 15, 2014). The Eastern Lake Mountains Target Shooting Plan Amendment (plan amendment) is currently underway and is expected to be completed by March 2017. This plan amendment process is analyzing management of target shooting in the Lake Mountains. Following the final agency decision on the plan amendment, the promulgation of supplementary rules may be necessary to implement the plan amendment.

Prior to the 2012 closure, the Lake Mountains received about 4,000 target shooters each month; on weekends, as many as 400 shooters concentrated into 5 areas, and other dispersed locations. The slopes of the Lake Mountains provide a natural backstop that is ideal for target shooting; however, some shooters chose to target practice in the relatively flat terrain on the lower slopes. Given the topography of the area and the number of people who visit it, the area subject to this Order is not conducive to safe target shooting. Target shooting in the area has resulted in nearby private residences being shot and near-misses of automobiles and people. An additional danger is the annual threat from target shooting-related wildfires adjacent to private residences, a major power line, communication towers on the ridge top, and public land resources.

The previous two-year closure proved effective in redirecting target shooting to safer locations, allowing cleanup of the area, eliminating illegal dumping and significantly reducing target shooting-related wildfires. Since the implementation of the closure in August 2012, no near-misses from errant gunfire have been reported to law enforcement.

Since the implementation of the 2012 target shooting closure, several additional actions have been taken by private landowners, other agency partners and the BLM to augment the closure. Regular patrols have been conducted by the Utah County Sheriff's Office, BLM law enforcement rangers and private property owners. Barricades have been installed to identify the

closure boundary, especially along private property and in areas receiving recurring violations, such as the Little Cove area. In 2014, Utah County installed a six-mile fence along the west side of Highway 68 with gates to allow public access on a few controlled routes. Utah County also has started planning for development of a nearby managed target shooting range. In April 2014, SITLA closed approximately 1,500 acres of state lands adjacent to and near the BLM closure to recreational access. Additionally, the BLM is nearing completion of an amendment to its land use plan to develop a long-term solution for the target shooting issues in this area. With the closure and these subsequent actions, volunteers have been able to clean up the large amounts of trash and household appliances in these areas.

This closure is made under the authority of the regulations in 43 CFR 8364.1 which states: "To protect persons, property, and public lands and resources, the authorized officer may issue an order to close or restrict use of designated public lands." The closure only applies to the discharge or use of firearms or dangerous weapons for the purposes of recreational target shooting and does not affect legal hunting.

Any person who violates the above restriction may be tried before a United States Magistrate and fined in accordance with 18 U.S.C. 3571, imprisoned for no more than 12 months under 43 U.S.C. 1733(a) and 43 CFR 8360.0-7, or both. Such violations also may be subject to the enhanced fines provided for in 18 U.S.C. 3571.

**Authority:** 43 CFR 8364.1.

**Edwin Roberson,**  
State Director.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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#### Notice of Availability of the Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment/Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument, AZ

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of

1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lower Sonoran Field Office, Phoenix, Arizona, has prepared a draft resource management plan (RMP) amendment/draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM). By this notice the BLM is announcing the opening of the public comment period.

**DATES:** To ensure that comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS within 90 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will announce future meetings or hearings and any other public involvement activities at least 15 days in advance through public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments related to the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS addressing Recreational Target Shooting in the SDNM by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://1.usa.gov/1ZPyFSA>.
- *Email:* [blm\\_az\\_sdnmtargetshooting@blm.gov](mailto:blm_az_sdnmtargetshooting@blm.gov).
- *Fax:* 623-580-5580
- *Mail:* Wayne Monger, Project Manager, Lower Sonoran Field Office, 21605 North 7th Avenue, Phoenix AZ 85027

Copies of the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS addressing Recreational Target Shooting in the SDNM are available in the Lower Sonoran Field Office at the above address.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dave Scarbrough, Monument Manager, telephone 623-580-5651 or, Wayne Monger, Project Manager, telephone 623-580-5683; address 21605 North 7th Avenue, Phoenix Arizona 85027; email [blm\\_az\\_sdnmtargetshooting@blm.gov](mailto:blm_az_sdnmtargetshooting@blm.gov).

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The Service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The planning area covers nearly 496,400 surface acres of south-central Arizona and lies within Maricopa and Pinal Counties. Population centers adjacent to the planning area include metropolitan Phoenix, and the communities of Ajo, Goodyear, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Mobile, and Maricopa. The planning area

encompasses Federal- and State-administered lands as well as private lands. The BLM manages 486,400 surface acres of public lands in the planning area, as well as 461,000 acres of (sub surface) mineral estate. The State of Arizona manages 3,900 surface acres in the planning area, and the remaining 6,100 surface acres are privately owned land.

The BLM has prepared the SDNM draft RMP amendment/draft EIS to address the management of recreational target shooting within the SDNM. The draft RMP amendment/draft EIS is needed to analyze recreational target shooting within the SDNM due to a ruling by the U.S. District Court-District of Arizona. The court vacated portions of the 2012 Record of Decision, approved RMP, and final EIS pertaining to the management of recreational target shooting throughout the SDNM and remanded the decision to the BLM for reconsideration. Pursuant to the court order, the BLM must complete the plan amendment by September 30, 2017. The formal public scoping process for the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS began on January 21, 2016, with the publication of a Notice of Intent in the **Federal Register** (81 FR 3463), and ended on March 21, 2016. The BLM held three public scoping meetings in February 2016. The BLM used public scoping comments to help identify planning issues that directed the formulation of alternatives and framed the scope of analysis in the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS. The BLM also used the scoping process to introduce the public to preliminary planning criteria, which set limits on the scope of the draft RMP amendment/draft EIS. Issues identified included, priority wildlife species and habitat, special status species, vegetation resources, lands with wilderness characteristics, designated wilderness, recreation, monument objects, hazardous materials, and public safety. The draft RMP amendment/draft EIS evaluates five alternatives in detail, including the No Action Alternative (Alternative A) and four action alternatives (Alternatives B, C, D and E). All alternatives provide for a hierarchy of mitigation that includes: 1) Avoiding impacts to the maximum extent compatible with the goals of the alternative; 2) Minimizing any impacts that are not avoided; and 3) Providing a range of responses commensurate to the level of unavoidable impacts. Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, provides that recreational target shooting on the SDNM will continue to be managed in accordance with the Lower Gila South RMP of 1988,

which does not include management restrictions on recreational target shooting. Under Alternative B, an area temporarily restricted from recreational target shooting, by order of the U.S. District Court, District of Arizona (approximately 10,599 acres or 2.1 percent of the SDNM) would be permanently restricted from recreational target shooting. Alternative C would make recreational target shooting available in the Desert Back Country Recreational Management Zone (RMZ) only, resulting in approximately 54,817 acres, or 11 percent of the SDNM restricted from this activity. Under Alternative D, recreational target shooting would be available only outside of designated wilderness areas managed for wilderness characteristics and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (NHT) RMZ resulting in approximately 320,317 acres, or 66 percent of the SDNM restricted for this activity. Alternative E, would restrict recreational target shooting from occurring across the entire SDNM. Following the public comment period, comments will be used to prepare the proposed RMP amendment and final EIS. The BLM will respond to substantive comments by making appropriate revisions to the document, or by explaining why a comment did not warrant a change.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10, 43 CFR 1610.2.

**Raymond Suazo,**

*State Director.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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### Notice of Public Meeting for the San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee (MAC) will meet as indicated below:

**DATES:** The MAC will hold a public meeting Monday, January 30th, 2017. The meeting will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Lopez Library at 2225 Fisherman Bay Rd, Lopez Island, WA 98261. A public comment period will be available in the afternoon from noon until 1 p.m.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marcia deChadenèdes, San Juan Islands National Monument Manager, P.O. Box 3, 37 Washburn Ave., Suite 101, Lopez Island, Washington 98261, (360) 468–3051, or [mdechade@blm.gov](mailto:mdechade@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service at 1 (800) 877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The twelve member San Juan Islands MAC was chartered to provide information and advice regarding the development of the San Juan Islands National Monument's RMP. Members represent an array of stakeholder interests in the land and resources from within the local area and statewide. All advisory committee meetings are open to the public. At noon members of the public will have the opportunity to make comments to the MAC during a one hour public comment period. Persons wishing to make comments during the public comment period should register in person with the BLM by 11 a.m. on the meeting day, at the meeting location. Depending on the number of persons wishing to comment, the length of comments may be limited. The public may send written comments to the MAC at San Juan Islands National Monument, Attn. MAC, P.O. Box 3, 37 Washburn Ave., Suite 101, Lopez Island, Washington 98261. The BLM appreciates all comments.

**Dennis Strange,**

*Spokane District Manager.*

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