

Reclamation released the Draft EA for public and agency review in September 2003. The purpose of the Draft EA was to evaluate potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action – in this case, implementing the RMP. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the EA examined a reasonable range of alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, against which the effects of the "action" alternative could be compared. The Draft EA also identified a Preferred Alternative.

Through its public involvement program, Reclamation actively sought input and comment on the contents and analyses presented in the Draft EA. To facilitate public comment on the Draft EA, Reclamation hosted a public meeting/workshop, held in Emmett, Idaho in October 2003. Approximately 10 people attended the meeting, which was structured to incorporate the public's concerns and input into the planning process. The public meeting/workshop was part of a 45-day public review period, during which time 16 letters were received. The Final EA includes an appendix with copies of all letters received, as well as Reclamation's detailed responses to each comment.

Feedback received at the meeting and during the review period is summarized below.

- **Dog Training** – Several people requested that Reclamation designate specific areas for year-round dog training, especially a wetland/pond area. One commentator suggested re-evaluating seasonal closures around the wetlands if surveys show that diving ducks are not using the area as intended.
- **No Wake Zones** – Commentors expressed concerns about the proposed no wake zone(s), indicating that it starts too far downstream and that boat access will be hindered by shallow water.
- **Need for Grazing** – One commentator noted that when grazing is permitted, the North and East fields in the north part of

Montour WMA are especially good for multiple uses (e.g., Boy Scout use, dog training, silhouette target shooting [bows], and other activities).

- **Special Events** – Several commentors noted a need to better define "special events," establishing fair criteria for potential users and a fee/permit system.
- **Public Information** – People indicated a need for more public information about camping opportunities at Montour Campground.
- **Focus of Habitat Management** – Some commentors expressed a concern that the plan is too heavily focused on upland bird management, excluding other uses such as trails, recreation, and hiking. Conversely, other commentors indicated that the plan is too focused on hunting and fishing, at the expense of habitat management and non-consumptive activities.
- **Other Comments** – Other comments noted included a need to clearly delineate the "no shooting" area; a need to better manage noxious weeds, especially Canada thistle; and a need to better designate site closures.

The Ad Hoc Work Group (AHWG) was also instrumental in providing comments on the Draft EA and revising it from draft to final, as well as identifying and refining the Preferred Alternative. In this capacity, the AHWG represented its various constituencies and helped represent the public's interest.

The Final EA, released in June 2004, also includes a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), indicating that implementing the Proposed Action (that is, the Preferred Alternative) would not result in significant impacts to the natural and human environment. In fact, it is likely that implementation of the RMP over the long term will protect and enhance natural, cultural, and recreation resources on Reclamation lands.

ers. RMP Goals for land management and implementation include:

- Allow for expanded recreation opportunities and other uses at Black Canyon Reservoir, and continued opportunities at Montour WMA while balancing the need for the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and open space and scenic values.
- Ensure that reservoir operations are not disturbed as a result of other uses and activities.

- Ensure protection of the public and public resource values and facilities.
- Provide informational, educational, and interpretive materials to increase public awareness of recreational opportunities, use restrictions, safety concerns, and natural and cultural resource values.
- Achieve timely implementation and coordination of RMP programs and projects.

Where to Find the Final RMP and EA Documents

Copies of this Newsbrief have been sent to all who are on the Newsbrief mailing list, which currently includes nearly 200 addresses. The RMP and Final EA documents are each over 200 pages long, plus appendices; therefore, they are not being mailed to everyone on the mailing list. Digital versions of the RMP and EA documents can be accessed on Reclamation's website (<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/>) – follow links to Black Canyon and Montour WMA Resource Management Plan. Hard copies of the RMP and EA may be requested from Vicki Kellerman at (208) 378-5326. In addition, hard copies of the RMP and Final EA documents are being sent to several places where the public can review them. Locations were chosen for their convenience and public accessibility. Copies of the documents are available at the following locations:

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
PN Regional Office  
1150 N Curtis Rd., Suite 100  
Boise, Idaho 83706-1234

City of Emmett Public Library  
275 S Hayes Avenue  
Emmett, ID 83617

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Snake River Area Office - Boise  
230 Collins Road  
Boise, Idaho 83702

City of Boise Main Library  
715 S Capitol Blvd.  
Boise, ID 83702

Eagle Public Library  
100 N Stierman Way  
Eagle, ID 83616

Updated Information can be found on the World Wide Web: [www.usbr.gov/pn/](http://www.usbr.gov/pn/).  
Follow the links to the Black Canyon and Montour WMA RMP.

**A Final Note**

Reclamation wants to thank you for your input and continued interest in the preparation of the RMP. We also want to extend a special thanks to members of the Ad Hoc Work Group, who met a total of four times over the course of the planning process and provided valuable input to the successful development of the Plan. The final Work Group meeting was held in October 2003 to get comments on the Draft EA and invite input on the further development of the RMP, as well as the planning process in general.



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
 PN Regional Office PN-3906  
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# BLACK CANYON Reservoir

## MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Newsbrief #4

July 2004

U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

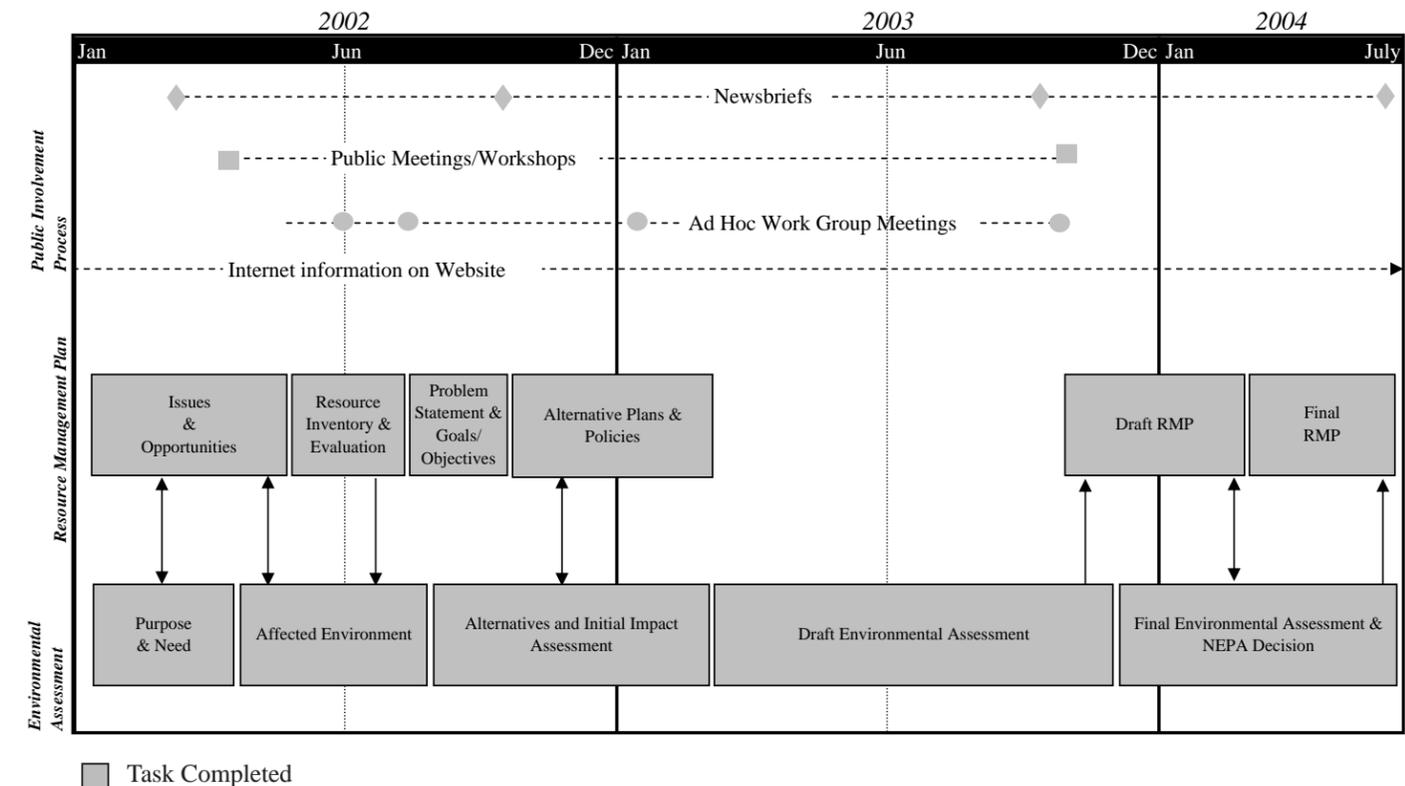
### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

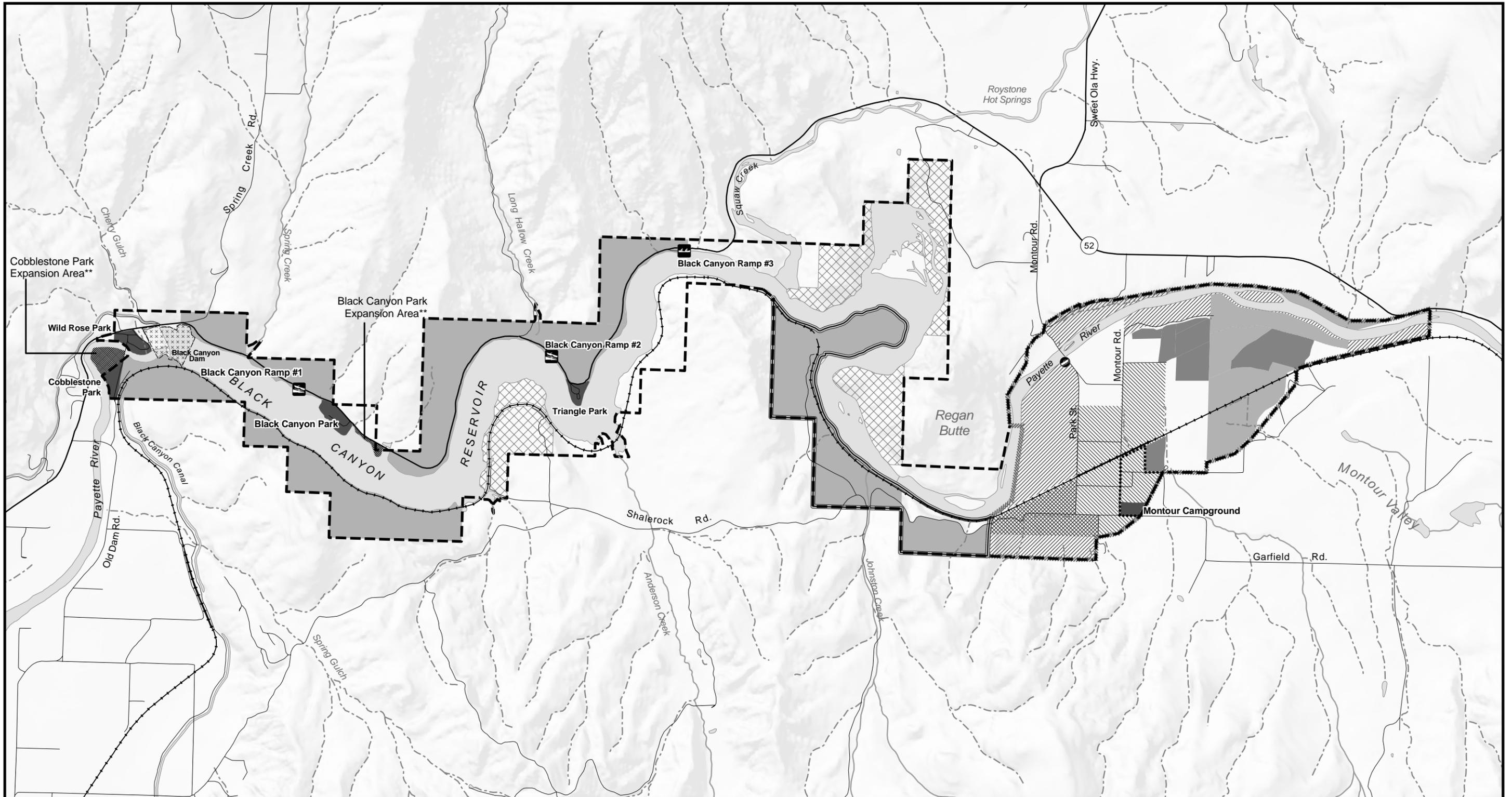
## Reclamation Releases Final Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment

This is the fourth – and final – Newsbrief prepared as part of the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Resource Management Plan (RMP) process. The Final RMP and Environmental Assessment (EA) are the culmination of a 2+ year planning process by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to plan for the future use and management of Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA. Reclamation prepared the RMP to manage resources, facilities, and access on their lands and waters. The RMP will be the blueprint for the future use, management, and site development of Reclamation lands at the reservoir and WMA for the next 15 years.

Previous Newsbriefs focused on the various studies and earlier products of the planning process, such as a detailed resource inventory, issues and opportunities identified, development of the alternatives examined, information presented in the Draft EA, and information on the planning process itself. This final Newsbrief focuses on the findings of the EA and the management direction provided in the RMP itself, as presented in the Preferred Alternative, as well as the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions.

### Schedule and Workplan





RMP Study Area	Previous Montour WMA Boundary (Managed by IDFG)	Proposed Montour Historic District	Railroad
Recreation Area	WMA Expansion Area (managed by IDFG)	Open Water	Roadside Boat Ramp
Potential Recreation Expansion **	Private with Flowage Easements	Highway	Paddling Take-Out Site
No-Shooting Area	Grazing Lease	Road	Proposed Put-In Site Expansion
Reclamation Zone (O&M area surrounding dam)	Nesting Season Closure (2/1 - 7/31)	Perennial Stream	
	Agriculture/Wildlife Food	Intermittent Stream	

**BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2004**

Neither the authors, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, nor any other party involved in preparing the material and data displayed here warrant or represent that all information is in every respect complete and accurate, and are not held responsible for errors or omissions. This map may graphically depict property boundaries for general reference only and does not necessarily represent legal descriptions.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2004  
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- Protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife habitat and natural resources on Reclamation lands.
- Protect water quality in the Montour WMA, Black Canyon Reservoir, and associated segments of the Payette River and its tributaries.
- Control soil erosion in priority areas where erosion causes concern for water quality, safety, and damage to resources and facilities.

**Goals for Cultural Resources, Indian Sacred Sites, and Indian Trust Assets**

"Cultural Resources" is a broad term that includes prehistoric, historic, and traditional properties that reflect our heritage. Sacred sites are places that have recognized religious significance or ceremonial use by an Indian religion. Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in property held in trust by the U.S. for Indian Tribes, or individuals, such as lands, minerals, and hunting and fishing rights. When formulating Goals for these resources, Reclamation considered relevant legislation, in particular the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Specific Goals include:

- Seek to protect and preserve cultural resources, including prehistoric and historic-period archeological sites and traditional cultural properties.
- Comply with requirements of Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites).

- Protect Indian Trust Assets as specified in applicable Federal mandates.

**Goals for Recreation and Access**

Many of the issues that arose during the planning process were related to recreational use on, and access to, Reclamation lands, and balancing these with competing uses (e.g., protection of natural and cultural resources). Specific Goals for recreation and access include:

- Provide adequate sites and facilities for land-based recreational uses while affording the public a quality recreational experience, consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.
- Work with IDFG to provide appropriate recreation opportunities in the Montour WMA, consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.
- Provide adequate shoreline and water-based facilities to address demand for boating and other water-based uses consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.
- Manage the Black Canyon Reservoir water surface to accommodate a variety of uses in a safe manner while minimizing conflicts among users.
- Provide appropriate vehicular and non-motorized access to recreation sites at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA consistent with natural resource, cultural resource, and safety and security objectives.

**Goals for Land Management and Implementation**

Reclamation's overall approach to land management is to manage its lands in a manner consistent with Federal laws and regulations and the principles of good stewardship to accomplish Project purposes and serve the public interest. At Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA, land management is coordinated among the agencies with management responsibilities in the study area, especially Reclamation, Gem County, IDFG, among oth-

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The Preferred Alternative is identified thematically as "**Alternative B - Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values.**" This alternative emphasizes natural and cultural resource enhancement while maintaining current recreational opportunities. Some facility improvements are proposed, but recreation facility expansion or significant improvements would only be undertaken if Reclamation entered into an agreement with a non-Federal (public entity) managing partner.

**Highlights of the Preferred Alternative**

- *Improve habitat quality by eliminating grazing in wetland and riparian areas.*
- *Implement an informal monitoring, assessment, and response program to deal with crowding and the potential for associated user conflicts on the reservoir from boating.*
- *Expand the WMA boundary on the south side of the river downstream to the mouth of Squaw Creek (along the opposite shore).*
- *Develop and implement a program for up to an additional 25 to 50 pond acres within the WMA, and develop and implement a long-term pond maintenance plan for all ponds within the WMA.*
- *Continue agricultural leases within the WMA for habitat values as determined by IDFG, and evaluate existing agricultural leases as they expire to determine if a change in management practices is necessary to comply with WMA goals and objectives.*
- *Allow no special events in the WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives, but continue to allow such events at reservoir parks (particularly at Triangle Park).*
- *Designate the Marsh-Ireton Ranch and the Old Montour Townsite and archeological sites as historic districts.*

The RMP is designed to balance resource management at Black Canyon Reservoir, Montour WMA, and surrounding lands by establishing resource management goals. To implement the Preferred Alternative, the RMP presents broad Goals, organized by six resource categories: (1) Natural Resources; (2) Cultural Resources; (3) Indian Sacred Sites; (4) Indian Trust Assets; (5) Recreation and Access; and (6) Land Management and Implementation.

For each resource Goal, the RMP presents specific Objectives to achieve the Goal, as well as relevant Management Actions that apply. Goals and Objectives represent the broader management intent, whereas Management Actions often provide site-specific guidance or strategies. As an example, a specific Management Action related to recreation resources is to improve facilities at Triangle Park to better accommodate day use and group-related activities.

The map of Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA (on pages 4 and 5) illustrates many of the RMP Management Actions. The Objectives and Management Actions, too numerous to list in this Newsbrief, form the core of the RMP for Reclamation's future management of these lands.

**Natural Resources Goals**

Reclamation's approach to managing natural resources is to work with land management partners and agencies to preserve and enhance native wildlife populations and their habitat in accordance with any land use or resource management plans. When formulating Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions, Reclamation considered Federal and State laws, such as the Endangered Species Act, and regulations and policies. Specific Goals include: