U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

RIO GRANDE NATURAL AREA COMMISSION

CHARTER

1. **OFFICIAL DESIGNATION:** Rio Grande Natural Area Commission (Commission).

2. **AUTHORITY:** The Commission is an advisory committee established under Section 4 of the Rio Grande Natural Area Act (Act) (16 U.S.C. 460rrr-2), and Section 309 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), as amended (43 U.S.C. 1739). The Commission is also established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2.

3. **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES:** The Commission provides advice to the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) with respect to the Rio Grande Natural Area (Natural Area) and on matters concerning the preparation and implementation of a management plan relating to non-Federal land in the Natural Area, as required by the Act.

4. **DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:** The Commission will:

   a. advise the Secretary with respect to the Natural Area;

   b. prepare a management plan relating to non-Federal land in the Natural Area;

   c. submit the management plan to the Secretary for approval or disapproval.

   If the Secretary disapproves the management plan, the Secretary shall:

   a. notify the Commission of the reasons for the disapproval; and

   b. allow the Commission to submit to the Secretary revisions to the management plan.

   In assisting with the implementation of the management plan, the Commission may:

   a. assist the State of Colorado in preserving State land and wildlife within the Natural Area;

   b. assist the State of Colorado and political subdivisions of the State in increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for, the natural, historic, scientific, scenic, wildlife, and recreational resources in the Natural Area;

   c. encourage political subdivisions of the State of Colorado to adopt and implement land use policies that are consistent with:

1. the management of the Natural Area; and

2. the management plan; and

d. encourage and assist private landowners in the Natural Area in the implementation of the management plan.

e. hold such hearings, meet and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this Act.

f. enter into a cooperative agreement with the State of Colorado, a political subdivision of the State, or any person for purposes of carrying out the management plan on non-Federal land in the Natural Area.

The Commission may not acquire any real property or interest in real property.

The Secretary and the Commission shall cooperate to ensure that the management plans relating to the management of Federal and non-Federal lands are consistent.

5. **OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMISSION REPORTS:** The Commission reports to the Secretary of the Interior through the Designated Federal Officer (DFO).

6. **SUPPORT:** Administrative support and funding for activities of the Commission will be provided by the BLM.

7. **ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS AND STAFF YEARS:** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Commission's activities are estimated to be $40,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and .40 staff years.

8. **DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER:** The DFO is BLM's San Luis Valley Field Manager who is a full time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will approve or call all of the Commission and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Commission and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the Commission reports.

9. **ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:** The Commission shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the chairperson, and at such other times as designated by the DFO.

10. **DURATION:** In accordance with the Act, statutory authority for the Commission will terminate October 12, 2016. All appointments will terminate with the Commission.

11. TERMINATION: The Commission will become inactive 2 years from the date the Charter is filed, unless, prior to that date, the Charter is renewed in accordance with Section 14 of the FACA. The Commission will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter. In accordance with its establishing statute, the Commission will terminate on October 12, 2016, unless the statute is amended by Congress.

12. MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATION:

a. Commission members shall be composed of nine members appointed by the Secretary of whom:

1. one member shall represent the Colorado State Director of the BLM;

2. one member shall be the manager of the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), ex officio;

3. three members shall be appointed based on the recommendation of the Governor of Colorado, of whom:

    a. one member shall represent the Colorado Division of Wildlife;

    b. one member shall represent the Colorado Division of Water Resources; and

    c. one member shall represent the Rio Grande Water Conservation District; and

4. four members shall:

    a. represent the general public;

    b. be citizens of the local region in which the Natural Area is established; and

    c. have knowledge and experience in the fields of interest relating to the preservation, restoration, and use of the Natural Area.

b. The Commission shall elect a Chairperson of the Commission.

c. Members of the Commission serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, members engaged in Commission or subcommittee business approved by the DFO may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in Government service under Section 5703 of Title 5 of the United States Code.

13. **ETHICS RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS:** No Commission or subcommittee member will participate in any specific party matter including a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the Department in which the member has a direct financial interest.

As provided in 43 CFR 1784.2-2, members of the Commission shall be required to disclose their direct or indirect interest in leases, licenses, permits, contracts, or claims that involve lands or resources administered by the BLM, or in any litigation related thereto. For the purposes of this paragraph, indirect interest includes holdings of a spouse or dependent child.

14. **SUBCOMMITTEES:** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the Commission for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. The Commission Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.

15. **RECORDKEEPING**: The records of the Commission, and formally or informally established subcommittees of the Commission, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Sally Jewell

Secretary of the Interior

JUN 02 2014
Date

JUN 03 2014
Date Filed