



# NEWS RELEASE

Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management  
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## **BLM Seeks Comments about Off Highway Vehicle Use Schedules Meetings in Datil, Albuquerque and Socorro**

SOCORRO – The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has scheduled a series of meetings to discuss Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use on publicly managed land. The meetings are related to work by the BLM-Socorro field office to write a land-use plan for Socorro and Catron Counties.

“Because OHV issues were mentioned often during earlier public meetings about the revised land use plan, we believe these meetings will help us focus on current and future public interest,” according to Kate Padilla, BLM-Socorro field office manager.

Meeting dates and locations are: March 26, Datil Fire Station/Training Center, Datil; March 27, BLM-Albuquerque Field Office, 435 Montano Road NE, Albuquerque; and April 2, Macey Center (Gallena Room) at New Mexico Tech in Socorro. The meetings will begin at 5 p.m. with an “open house,” followed at 6:30 p.m. with a brief presentation about BLM’s OHV program and issues the public has identified. The meetings will conclude with additional public comments and questions.

“Motorized OHV use has increased substantially in recent years because of technological advances, greater public interest in outdoor recreation and the rapid growth of the West’s cities and suburbs,” according to Environmental Planner Charles Carroll of the BLM-Socorro field office.

The number of OHVs registered in New Mexico has grown by about 240 percent since 1990, according to the new Mexico DMV.

As the public increasingly relies on public lands for motorized recreation, the impacts associated with this use continue to grow. “Balancing public use and enjoyment with the protection of important resources requires more effective management of the vast network of roads and trails,” Carroll said.

The BLM received more than 200 letters and comment forms and input from about 50 people who attended “scoping meetings” that the BLM hosted from May through September 2002. The meetings were an integral part of the BLM’s approach to writing the revised land-use plan, called a Resource Management Plan Revision/Environmental Impact Statement (RMPR/EIS).

The summary of comments and letters is available in the “Scoping Report,” available at the BLM-Socorro field office, 198 Neel Ave, NW, in Socorro, or online at: [www.nm.blm.gov](http://www.nm.blm.gov).

“The Socorro Field Office wants to ensure a positive, inclusive approach to OHV decision making and better OHV management. Good planning outcomes require the help of local communities and residents and lots of cooperation; we hope that as many people as possible can join us at one or all of these meetings,” Padilla said.

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages about 13 million acres in New Mexico. The BLM’s Socorro field office is responsible for about 1.5 million acres of that total in Socorro and Catron Counties.

Additional information about the RMPR/EIS process and the OHV meetings is available by calling Carroll, 838-1278, or BLM Outdoor Recreation Specialist Rob Jagers, 835-0412.