

Brent Ralston

From: Mackey, Dennis
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 5:08 PM
To: Pyron, Jason
Cc: Robb Mickelsen; Katie Powell; Kathleen Hendricks; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: FW: Infor for Upcoming Great Basin Federal Family Meeting

I have a FWS call at 3pm mtn to discuss the table and I'll need to explain the apparent BLM/USFS inconsistency. Brent, feel free to join the call with Robb and I if you want. Thanks all.

Dennis

On Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 4:34 PM, Pyron, Jason <jason_pyron@fws.gov> wrote:
Robb,

Please take a look at the attached document that is being discussed by the Service in regards to the Fed Fam meeting next week. The document identifies several areas (green text) where the FS is inconsistent in ID with BLM proposed direction. Will you please call Dennis tomorrow morning to discuss this as it was "news" to me based on our conversations earlier this week here in Boise. I'm hoping that this is a pretty easy fix and just some missed communication based on your National template.

Thanks!
Jason

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matt Kales** <matt_kales@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 3:46 PM
Subject: FW: Infor for Upcoming Great Basin Federal Family Meeting
To: Michael Carrier <michael_carrier@fws.gov>, Dennis Mackey <dennis_mackey@fws.gov>, Jason Pyron <jason_pyron@fws.gov>
Cc: Theresa Rabot <theresa_rabot@fws.gov>, Dawn Davis <dawn_davis@fws.gov>, Kathy Hollar <kathy_hollar@fws.gov>, Jesse DElia <jesse_delia@fws.gov>

Folks,

As discussed just now on the FMT call, here's the GB roll up packet, minus the maps. I have extra hard copies of the maps here but am hoping R1 RO can more expeditiously provide same. Thanks.

Matt

From: Stangl, Kathryn [mailto:kstangl@blm.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 7:13 AM
To: Noreen Walsh
Cc: James Lyons; Jon Raby; Edwin Roberson; Frank Quamen
Subject: Infor for Upcoming Great Basin Federal Family Meeting

Good Morning Noreen,

Attached you will find the information (navigation tool, meeting agenda, pop. summaries, acronyms, definitions, etc.) that will accompany the maps that Frank Quamen from the NOC will be providing you today. The population summaries are based on the information found in our Draft Preferred Alternatives as it relates to the threats identified in the COT Report. We will be providing this information (hard copy via mail) along with the maps to all participants who will be attending the Federal Family meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks, Kathy

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Jason Pyron
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1 - Informational Packet Navigation Tool

Each Informational Packet contains the following materials:

Ref #	Document Title	Packet Page Number
1	Informational Packet Navigation Tool	Pages 1-2
2	Great Basin Federal Family Meeting Agenda	Pages 3-9
3	Great Basin ADPP Map Packet (30 11X17 Total)	<i>Separate 11”X17” Packet</i>
4	Population Summary Tables (7 total)	Pages 11-32
5	Acronyms and Abbreviations List	Page 32
6	Land Use Plan Allocations Cheat Sheet	Pages 33-34

Great Basin Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) Map Packet

- ✓ Map 1 in the separate Great Basin ADPP Map Packet is a reference map that depicts GRSG populations, sub-regional boundaries, and surface management.
- ✓ Map 2 is also a reference map depicting where the Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs), Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH), and Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) (or other management area/habitat classifications) are located in the Great Basin Region.
- ✓ The following 28 maps display two sets of 14 ADPP land use plan allocations being applied to PPH and PGH in the Great Basin Region. The sets include one map highlighting the allocation decisions being applied in the PACs (maps on the left), and the other displaying the specific allocation being proposed for all PPH and PGH (maps on the right).

Population Summary Tables

- ✓ There are a total of seven population summary tables that are part of this informational packet. The tables are organized in two different ways: 1) by populations fully within a sub-region (a total of five tables), and 2) by populations that span across more than one sub-region (such as the Western Great Basin and Northern Great Basin Populations).
- ✓ Population Statistics: At the top of each table, there is a list of statistics relative to the population (or multiple populations that are solely within a sub-region). In order to provide context as to how the PACs correlate with the populations, this table provides the land status acre figures split by PPMA, PGMA, and Non-habitat for lands within the PACs and lands not within the PAC.
- ✓ Threats: The threats posed to each population are presented in the left-hand column of each table. The threats identified in this column are those threats cited as “present and widespread” in Table 2 of the USFWS’s 2013 Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. Although not identified as “present and widespread”, additional threats were addressed as they relate to the National Policy Team (NPT) allocation guidance.



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- ✓ **Red text:** The red text indicates areas where the sub-regional ADPP allocation deviates from the NPT guidance provided to the sub-regional teams in April 2014. Rational as to why there is a deviation from the NPT guidance is also provided in red text in the right hand column of the table.
- ✓ **Green text:** The green text indicates areas where the Forest Service is deviating from the BLM's allocation or management direction to address that threat.
- ✓ **Purple text:** The purple text is only displayed in the Montana population for the Idaho/SW Montana ADDP and depicts where the BLM has different management decisions in Idaho and Montana.

Acronyms and Abbreviations List & BLM Land Use Plan (LUP) Allocations Cheat Sheet

Throughout the population summary tables, many sub-regional titles, allocation types, agency names, and other terms have been abbreviated. This list provides a description for all acronyms and abbreviations presented in the population summary tables. The BLM LUP Allocation Cheat Sheet lists all of the BLM LUP allocations specific to BLM program areas and provides a brief definition for each of these allocations (per BLM's Lands Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1).



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Great Basin Region Federal Family Meeting Agenda

August 19-21, 2014 – BLM Oregon State Office, Portland, OR

Objectives of this Meeting

- Identify threats to Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) for each PAC/population within the BLM/FS planning area as identified in the COT Report
- Determine how each BLM and FS plan addresses these threats through land use allocations and other conservation actions
- Discuss the adequacy of the land use allocation decisions and other conservation measures to address these threats and any changes in plans required to address inadequacies and/or inconsistencies in response
- Provide clear and specific guidance to develop draft final administrative plans that are adequate to address the threats to each GRSG population identified in the COT Report

DAY ONE – TUESDAY AUGUST 19, 2014

- 8:00 am **Welcome**
Jerry Perez, BLM Oregon State Director
- 8:05 am **Introductions**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 8:10 am **Opening Remarks**
Neil Kornze, BLM Director
Noreen Walsh, USFWS Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region
Chris Iverson, USFS Deputy Regional Forester
Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director
- 8:30 am **Process, Expectations, and Outcomes**
Jim Lyons, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, DOI
Michael Bean, Counselor for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, DOI
- 9:00 am **Agenda Review (Logistics)**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 9:15 am **BLM Approach to Developing ADPP's**
Ed Roberson, BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning
- 9:25 am **Forest Service Approach to Developing their DPPA's**
Chris Iverson, USFS
- 9:40 am **Major Changes between BLM/FS DEIS' and ADPPs in Great Basin**
Lauren Mermejo, Great Basin Regional Project Manager
- 10:00 am 15 Minute Break**



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10:15 am **5-Minute ADDP Overview by BLM State Directors**
NV - Amy Lueders, BLM NV State Director
CA - Jim Kenna, BLM CA State Director
OR - Jerry Perez, BLM OR State Director
UT - Juan Palma, BLM UT State Director
ID - Tim Murphy, BLM Acting ID State Director
MT - Jamie Connell, BLM MT State Director

11:00 am **Information Packet Orientation**
Frank Quamen, BLM-NOC Wildlife Biologist
Matt Mageletti, BLM- WO Planning

WAFWA Management Zone V

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within OR

- 11:15 am
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00 pm 1 Hour Lunch

Review of Conservation Strategies for the Western Great Basin Population (NV/NE CA and OR)

- 1: 00 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each**



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- PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

3:00 pm **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

3:30 pm 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Utah

- 3:45 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

5:45 pm **Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator



DAY TWO – WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20, 2014

8:00 am **Recap from day 1**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

Continuation of WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Nevada

- 8:15 am ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

9:15 **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

9:45 am 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone IV

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Idaho

- 10:00 am ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00pm 1 Hour Lunch



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Review of Conservation Strategies for Northern Great Basin Population (ID, NV/CA, and OR)

- 1:00 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population** *Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti*
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale** *Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads*
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns** *Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)*
- 2:30 pm** **15 Minute Break**
- 2:45 pm
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans** *Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)*
- 4:00 pm
- Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie
- 5:00 pm
- Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator



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2:45 pm

15 Minute Break

3:00 pm

Outcome Summary and Follow-up Actions

Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

4:00 pm

Closing Remarks

Jim Lyons, DOI

Ed Roberson, BLM

Noreen Walsh, USFWS

Chris Iverson, USFS

Great Basin Region Roll-Up Attendees:

- BLM States (12): State Directors: **Amy Lueders, Jerry Perez, Juan Palma, Jim Kenna, Tim Murphy and Jamie Connell**
Project Managers: Joe Tague, Joan Suther, Mike Haske, Quincy Bahr, Brent Ralston, John Carlson
 - BLM Regional (2): Lauren Mermejo and Johanna Munson
 - BLM WO/NOC (8): **Neil Kornze, Steve Ellis, Ed Roberson, Kathy Stangl, Frank Quamen, Joe Stout, Steve Small, and Matt Magaletti**
 - DOI (3) **Jim Lyons, Michael Bean, and Sarah Greenberger**
 - SOL (3): **Bret Birdsong, Ted Boling, and Sarah Shattuck**
 - USFS National (5): **Chris Iverson, Glen Stein and Madelyn Dillon**
Project Managers: Ron Rodriguez, Rob Mickelson
 - OGC (1): Kathryn Guillou Bergenholtz
 - FWS (11): **Noreen Walsh, Pat Deibert, Nicole Alt, Paul Henson, Dennis Mackey, Ted Koch, Mary Grim, Michael Fris, Terry Rabot, Larry Crist and Jesse Delia**
 - NRCS National (1): Tim Griffiths
 - Facilitator (1): Penny Mabie
 - EMPSI Rep (1): David Batts
- TOTAL: 48 (16 Principals at the table)**



**Page intentionally left blank, please refer to
3 - *Great Basin ADPP Map Packet (30 11" X 17" Maps)***



4 – Population Summary Tables

- 4a – Oregon Sub-region (Populations 17 and 18)
- 4b – Population 31: Western Great Basin (Sub-regions NV/NE CA & OR)
- 4c – Utah Sub-region (Populations 9b 9c 10a 10b 11 12 13a 13b 13c 15a 15b and 26b)
- 4d – Nevada/Northeast California Sub-region (Populations 14, 15c, and 30)
- 4e – Idaho Portion of the Idaho/Southwestern Montana Sub-region (Populations 18, 23, 25, and 27)
- 4f – Population 26a: Northern Great Basin (Sub-regions Nevada/NE California, Idaho, and Oregon)
- 4g – Southwest Montana Portion of the Idaho/Southwestern Montana Sub-region (Populations 19-22)



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4a - Oregon Sub-region
Populations (fully within Oregon sub-region): 17 and 28

Population Statistics (17 and 28)			
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 472,596 (11%)	BLM: 0 (0%)	BLM: 0 (0%)
	FS: 19,312 (0%)	FS: 0 (0%)	FS: 116 (0%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)
	Other Federal: 19 (0%)	Other Federal: 0 (0%)	Other Federal: 0 (0%)
	Private: 491,640 (11%)	Private: 0 (0%)	Private: 8,464 (0%)
	State: 28,279 (1%)	State: 0 (0%)	State: 0 (0%)
	Other: 578 (0%)	Other: 0 (0%)	Other: 0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 0 (0%)	BLM: 1,256,921 (28%)	BLM: 438,555 (10%)
	FS: 0 (0%)	FS: 58,425 (1%)	FS: 597,892 (14%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 173 (0%)	BIA: 280 (0%)
	Other Federal: 0 (0%)	Other Federal: 14,622 (0%)	Other Federal: 2,172 (0%)
	Private: 0 (0%)	Private: 525,683 (12%)	Private: 455,066 (10%)
	State: 0 (0%)	State: 28,259 (1%)	State: 16,427 (0%)
	Other: 0 (0%)	Other: 3,597 (0%)	Other: 9,366 (0%)
TOTAL	1,012,424 (23%)	1,887,679 (43%)	1,528,338 (34%)
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>	
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 17)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRS habitat. 	
Sagebrush Elimination (Applicable to: 17)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRS habitat, See other management actions for applicable threats. 	
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 17)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA in federal ownership. 	
Fire (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. 	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances around leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: Open with moderate constraints (CSU with TLs) with NSO for 1 mile around leks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
Mining (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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	<p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open</p>	
Disturbance	<p>3% disturbance threshold. BSU: PPMA within 21 Oregon PACs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss applied to PPMA and PGMA (with benefit to GRSG habitat).



4b - Population: 31 – Western Great Basin
Sub-regions: Nevada/NE California and Oregon*

Population 31 Statistics						
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat			
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4,809,659 (34%)	BLM:	222,377 (2%)	BLM:	200,199 (1%)
	FS:	22,662 (0%)	FS:	1 (0%)	FS:	0 (0%)
	BIA:	9,600 (0%)	BIA:	345 (0%)	BIA:	568 (0%)
	Other Federal:	703,402 (5%)	Other Federal:	23,825 (0%)	Other Federal:	11,264 (0%)
	Private:	315,140 (2%)	Private:	12,126 (0%)	Private:	9,435 (0%)
	State:	36,176 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)
	Other:	415,230 (3%)	Other:	15,811 (0%)	Other:	63,776 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	60,052 (0%)	BLM:	2,294,184 (16%)	BLM:	2,299,840 (16%)
	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	31,840 (0%)	FS:	622,779 (4%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	21,982 (0%)
	Other Federal:	2,428 (0%)	Other Federal:	43,713 (0%)	Other Federal:	233,636 (2%)
	Private:	2,232 (0%)	Private:	484,492 (3%)	Private:	452,878 (3%)
	State:	5 (0%)	State:	43,492 (0%)	State:	49,429 (0%)
	Other:	179 (0%)	Other:	75,885 (1%)	Other:	640,922 (5%)
TOTAL	6,376,765 (45%)	3,248,341 (23%)	4,606,708 (32%)			
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated – unless noted, these apply to NV/CA, OR, and ID. <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>				
Fire	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance. 				
Conifers	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year (except Oregon). Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks. 				



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Weeds/Annual Grasses	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. • Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Mining (NOT A PRESENT OR WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Closed</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT OR WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p>NV/CA-PPMA: Avoidance OR-PPMA: Avoidance</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Avoidance OR-PGMA: Avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p>NV/CA-PPMA: Avoidance OR-PPMA: Avoidance</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Avoidance OR-PGMA: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • Worked across sub-regional boundaries to develop consistent ROW avoidance criteria.
Grazing	<p><u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Available <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Available (some RNAs will be unavailable to grazing)</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Available <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Available (some</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly/Coates quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Using HAF indicators for monitoring. • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG.



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	RNAs unavailable to grazing)	
Free-roaming Equids	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing WHB gathers to stay within AMLs. • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Modify AML if not meeting objectives.
Energy (NOT A PRESENT & WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Exclusion</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Exclusion <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Avoidance</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation</u></p> <p><u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: NSO <u>OR-PPMA</u>: NSO</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: NSO <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Open with moderate constraints (CSU/TLs) with 1 miles NSO around leks</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Closed</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Disturbance	<p><u>NV/CA</u>: 3%** within BSU (18 population management units)</p> <p><u>OR</u>:3% within BSU (21 Oregon PACs encompassing all PPMA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • No Net Unmitigated Loss will be applied to PPMA and PGMA for Oregon, Nevada and California. • 3% disturbance threshold being discussed.
*No FS Lands within this population		



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4c – Utah Sub-region

Populations fully within Utah Sub-region: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b

Population Statistics (9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)						
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat			
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	1,992,834 (27%)	BLM:	13,350 (0%)	BLM:	816,406 (11%)
	FS:	745,919 (10%)	FS:	3,184 (0%)	FS:	526,041 (7%)
	BIA:	27,990 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	3,853 (0%)
	Other Federal:	13,394 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	44,048 (1%)
	Private:	2,062,374 (28%)	Private:	13,120 (0%)	Private:	508,498 (7%)
	State:	556,422 (7%)	State:	2,064 (0%)	State:	157,482 (2%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4 (0%)	BLM:	0 (0%)	BLM:	2,725 (0%)
	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	0 (0%)
	BIA:	19 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	138 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)
	Private:	1 (0%)	Private:	0 (0%)	Private:	274 (0%)
	State:	0 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)	State:	404 (0%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)
TOTAL	5,398,957 (72%)	31,718 (0%)	2,059,869 (28%)			

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13c, 15a, 15b)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRS habitat.
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 13b and 13c)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA in federal ownership.
Fire (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire



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		<p>intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites’ resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 9b, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13b, 13c, and 15a)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u> PPMA: Exclusion (Solar), Exclusion (Wind) PGMA: Exclusion (Solar), Open (Wind) FS: Same as BLM, except Avoidance in PGMA for wind</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u> PPMA: NSO PGMA: Same as no action (Open, CSU, TL) FS: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM: The rationale for not avoiding wind development in PGMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are only 32 breeding males in PGMA. PGMA is already largely disturbed by anthropogenic disturbances. Subject to No Net Unmitigated Loss.
Mining (Applicable to: 9c, 10b, 13b, 13c, 15a, and 26b)	<p><u>Mineral Materials</u> PPMA: Closed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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	<p><u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u> <u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	
<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)</p>	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u> – Same as BLM, except General is avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale for not avoiding HV transmission ROWs in PGMA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are only 32 breeding males in PGMA. ○ PGMA is already largely disturbed by anthropogenic disturbances. ○ Subject to No Net Unmitigated Loss. • In PPMA – Utah will be identifying new corridors. • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 11, 13c, 15a, and 15b)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>BLM (none on FS lands):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize gathers in PPMA. • Manage to AML. • Apply RLH Standards.
<p>Recreation (Trails and Travel Management) (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Limited to Existing and Designated Roads and Trails <u>PGMA</u>: Limited to Existing and Designated Roads and Trails <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM, except all limited to designated Roads and Trails</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing management decisions that have limited roads/trails to designated routes in populations 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, and 13a of the states will be carried forward in the ADPP in PPMA. • Making a commitment to complete travel management plans for the other populations in the state. • Currently completing travel management inventories for GRSG habitat areas identified by the USFWS.
<p>Urbanization (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, and 13c)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Retention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain PPMA in federal ownership.



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	<u>PGMA</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	
Disturbance:	3% disturbance threshold. BSU: PPMA within the 11 population areas (Parker Mtn. Emery Population = 12 and 13a) <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss in all habitats.



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4d – Nevada/NE California Sub-region

Populations (fully within Nevada/NE California sub-region): : 14, 15c, and 30

Population Statistics (14, 15c, and 30)						
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat			
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4,075,403 (17%)	BLM:	1,193,253 (5%)	BLM:	1,995,940 (8%)
	FS:	548,796 (2%)	FS:	125,898 (1%)	FS:	866,949 (4%)
	BIA:	11,448 (0%)	BIA:	9,119 (0%)	BIA:	14,451 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	6 (0%)
	Private:	375,412 (2%)	Private:	190,959 (1%)	Private:	207,587 (1%)
	State:	51 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)	State:	158 (0%)
	Other:	300 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	648 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	808,526 (3%)	BLM:	1,718,784 (7%)	BLM:	8,575,055 (35%)
	FS:	103,312 (1%)	FS:	168,247 (1%)	FS:	1,373,050 (6%)
	BIA:	34,960 (0%)	BIA:	3,350 (0%)	BIA:	43,023 (0%)
	Other Federal:	11,532 (0%)	Other Federal:	5,880 (0%)	Other Federal:	183,561 (1%)
	Private:	153,184 (1%)	Private:	187,889 (1%)	Private:	1,653,278 (7%)
	State:	5,347 (0%)	State:	221 (0%)	State:	17,008 (0%)
	Other:	3,461 (0%)	Other:	812 (0%)	Other:	12,968 (0%)
TOTAL	6,131,732 (25%)	3,604,413 (14%)	14,943,682 (61%)			
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>				
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 14 and 30)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Retention FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat. 				
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 30)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Retention FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA in federal ownership. 				
Fire (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. 				



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 15c and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRS habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 30)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: Exclusion <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: NSO <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
Mining (Applicable to: 14)	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing WHB gathers to stay within HMLs. • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Apply Rangeland Health Standards.
<p>Recreation (Trails and Travel Management) (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>PGMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM except limit to designated roads and trails</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a commitment to complete travel management plans. • Currently completing travel management inventories for GRSG habitat areas identified by the USFWS.
<p>Urbanization (Applicable to: 30)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Retention <u>PGMA</u>: Retention <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain PPMA and PGMA in Federal ownership.
<p>Disturbance</p>	<p>3%* disturbance threshold BSU: 18 Population Management Units from State Conservation Plan</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance, at this point. • No Net Unmitigated Loss applied to PPMA and PGMA.



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4e – Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region

Populations (fully within Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana sub-region): 18, 23, 25, and 27

Population Statistics (18, 23, 25, and 27)			
	Core (Includes Important)	General	Non-Habitat
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 2,941,568 (22%)	BLM: 86,279 (1%)	BLM: 64,802 (0%)
	FS: 313,417 (2%)	FS: 5,100 (0%)	FS: 102,363 (1%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)
	Other Federal: 402,626 (3%)	Other Federal: 5,104 (0%)	Other Federal: 98,493 (1%)
	Private: 817,310 (6%)	Private: 27,191 (0%)	Private: 62,875 (0%)
	State: 302,901 (2%)	State: 4,113 (0%)	State: 26,288 (0%)
	Other: 240 (0%)	Other: 1,114 (0%)	Other: 383 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 467,106 (3%)	BLM: 855,232 (6%)	BLM: 550,225 (4%)
	FS: 81,821 (1%)	FS: 100,714 (1%)	FS: 2,100,542 (15%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 37,083 (0%)	BIA: 29,523 (0%)
	Other Federal: 39,377 (0%)	Other Federal: 126,059 (1%)	Other Federal: 397,648 (3%)
	Private: 97,876 (1%)	Private: 673,236 (5%)	Private: 2,392,700 (18%)
	State: 28,984 (0%)	State: 195,543 (1%)	State: 216,321 (2%)
	Other: 28 (0%)	Other: 1,196 (0%)	Other: 19,079 (0%)
TOTAL	5,493,353 (40%)	2,177,962 (16%)	6,061,242 (44%)

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 18, 25, and 27)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain Core and important, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat.
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 18)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain Core and Important habitat in federal ownership.
Fire (Applicable to: 23)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas.



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		<p>Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites’ resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance. <p>FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No prescribed fire in Wyoming big sage habitat or in less than 12” precipitation zones.
Conifers (Applicable to: 18)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 23 and 25)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRS habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 18, 23, and 25)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>Core:</u> Exclusion <u>Important:</u> Avoidance <u>General:</u> Open</p> <p><u>FS:</u> Same as BLM in Core, <i>Important is Exclusion and General is Avoidance</i></p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>Core:</u> Closed & NSO <u>Important:</u> NSO <u>General:</u> Open with moderate constraints (CSU & TL) <u>FS:</u> All NSO in Core, otherwise, same as BLM</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The rationale for not excluding Important areas to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria.</i> <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRS. Presence of development resources within general zones is sparse to non-existent.</i> <p>Important Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. If not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; The project does not result in a net loss of GRS habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant



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		<p>Conservation Area; and</p> <p>d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and</p> <p>e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs;</p> <p>f. The project should not exceed the disturbance threshold.</p>
<p>Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM, except Important is Closed.</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not closing important areas to mineral materials in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria (see above under the threat: “Energy”).</i>
<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 18 and 27)</p>	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Avoidance <u>Important</u>: Avoidance <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Core is Exclusion, otherwise, same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Avoidance <u>Important</u>: Avoidance <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRS. Any proposed development in general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRS or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Grazing (Applicable to: 18, 23, 25, and 27)</p>	<p><u>Core</u>: Available <u>Important</u>: Available</p>	<p>BLM and FS (with variation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly.



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	<u>General</u> : Available <u>FS</u> : Available	quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using HAF indicators for monitoring.• Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG.
Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 23)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs.• Manage to AML in all HMAs.• Prioritize gathers in Core habitat.
Disturbance	ID BLM: 3% within BSU (Nesting and wintering habitat within CMZs/IMZs in four Conservation Areas in Idaho) <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss will be applied to all Core, Important, and General management zones.



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Southwest Montana Portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region
Populations (fully within SW Montana portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region): 19-22

Population Statistics (19-22)				
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	458,924 (15%)	BLM:	0 (0%)
	FS:	147,667 (5%)	FS:	163 (0%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)
	Other Federal:	41,410 (1%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)
	Private:	450,756 (15%)	Private:	321 (0%)
	State:	222,405 (8%)	State:	0 (0%)
	Other:	8,088 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	2,392 (0%)	BLM:	117,513 (4%)
	FS:	11,705 (0%)	FS:	395,626 (13%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	15,786 (1%)
	Private:	625 (0%)	Private:	322,445 (11%)
	State:	393 (0%)	State:	69,483 (2%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	934 (0%)
TOTAL	1,344,365 (45%)	697,125 (24%)	922,270 (31%)	
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>		Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>	
A. Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to:19-22)	N/A		FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. <i>(Montana BLM still questioning the need to rely on FIAT Report and conduct assessments).</i> BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives. 	



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<p>B. Grazing (Applicable to:19-22)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Available <u>PGMA</u>: Available <u>FS</u>: Available</p>	<p>BLM and FS (with variation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards. • Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Use HAF methodology for monitoring. • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG. <p>FS: Manage livestock grazing according to Connelly quantitative vegetation objectives. <i>(BLM Montana not committed to quantitative vegetation objectives table.)</i></p>
<p>C. Energy (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: <i>Avoidance</i> <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: Open with Major and Moderate Constraints (CSU with TLs) <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All consistent with NPT guidance. • <i>Purple differs from portion of planning area in Idaho for General Habitat.</i>
<p>D. Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Consistent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>E. Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: <i>Open</i></p>	<p><i>BLM:</i> <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Montana (from Idaho rationale):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in</i>



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	<p><u>FS</u>: Same as BLM except PGMA is Avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p><i>general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Montana is still working thru discussions on whether or not to make High Voltage Transmissions and Major Pipeline ROWs an “avoidance” area for General Habitat.</i>
Disturbance	<p>3% within 1 BSU – All PPMA</p> <p><u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• Purple differs from the BSUs in Idaho.• Using DDCT for disturbance calculation.• Ongoing discussions concerning No Net Unmitigated Loss in all PPMA and PGMA.



5 -Acronyms/Abbreviations List

Planning Units/Sub-regions			
NV	Nevada/NE California Sub-region	ID	Idaho/Southwest Montana Sub-region
OR	Oregon Sub-region	UT	Utah Sub-region
Sage-grouse Habitat/Management Areas			
PPMA	Preliminary Priority Management Area	PGMA	Preliminary General Management Area
PH	Priority Habitat	GH	General Habitat
Core	Core Sage-grouse Habitat <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>	Non-core	Non-core Sage-grouse Habitat <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>
CMZ	Core Management Zone <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>	IMZ	Important Management Zones <i>Idaho portion of the Idaho/SW MT Only</i>
PAC	Priority Area for Conservation	BSU	Biologically Significant Unit
Agencies / Groups			
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	FS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NPT	National Policy Team	NTT	National Technical Team
FIAT	Fire and Invasives Team		
Others			
BSU	Biologically Significant Unit	RDF	Required Design Feature
ROW	Right-of-Way	RLH	Rangeland Health
R&T	Routes and Trails	LUP	Land Use Plan
GRSG	Greater Sage-grouse	VDDT	Vegetative Dynamic Data Tool
PMU	Population Management Unit	NSO	No Surface Occupancy
CSU	Controlled Surface Use	TL	Timing Limitations
HMA	Herd Management Area	WHB	Wild Horse and Burros
AML	Appropriate Management Levels (Grazing)	HAF	Habitat Assessment Framework
HV	High-Voltage Transmission Line	DPPA	Forest Service Draft Proposed Plan Amendment
ADPP	BLM Administrative Proposed Plan		



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6 - BLM LAND USE PLANNING PROGRAM AREA

ALLOCATIONS/DESIGNATIONS CHEAT SHEET

(Per H-1601-1 BLM Land Use Planning Handbook)

Livestock Grazing

- **Available:** areas where livestock grazing would be permitted under the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 4130.2(a).
- **Not Available:** areas where livestock grazing would not be permitted due (but not limited to) conflicts with other land uses, terrain/soil/vegetation/watershed characteristics, the presence of undesirable vegetation, and the presence of resources that require special management.

Recreation and Visitor Services

- **Recreation Management Areas (RMAs):** areas where Recreation and Visitor Services (R&VS) objectives are recognized as a primary resource management consideration and specific management is required to protect the recreation opportunities.
- **Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs):** RMAs managed to protect and enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences, benefits, and desired recreation setting characteristics. The SRMAs may be subdivided into recreation management zones (RMZ) to further delineate specific recreation opportunities.
- **Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs):** areas managed to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and the associated qualities and conditions of the ERMA. Management of ERMA areas is commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses.
- **Public Lands Not Designated as RMAs:** area not designated as RMAs are managed to meet basic R&VS and resource stewardship needs. Recreation is not emphasized however recreation activities may occur. The R&VS are managed to allow recreation uses that are not in conflict with the primary uses of these lands.

Travel and Transportation

- **Open areas:** intensive OHV use areas where there are no special restrictions or where there are no compelling resource protection needs, user conflicts, or public safety issues to warrant limiting cross-country travel (see 43 CFR 8340.05).
- **Limited areas:** areas where OHV use must be restricted to meet specific resource management objectives. Examples of limitations include: number or type of vehicles; time or season of use; permitted or licensed use only; use limited to designated roads and trails; or other limitations if restrictions are necessary to meet resource management objectives, including certain competitive or intensive use areas that have special limitations (see 43 CFR 8340.05).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to all vehicular use to protect resources, promote visitor safety, or reduce use conflicts (see 43 CFR 8340.05).

Lands and Realty (Land Tenure, ROWs, Solar and Wind)

- **Lands identified for disposal:** land or interest in lands that are available for disposal under a variety of disposal authorities, provided they meet the criteria outlined in FLPMA (Sales, Section 203, 43 U.S.C. 1713(a); Exchanges, Section 206, 43 U.S.C. 1716(a); and Reservation and Conveyance of Minerals, Section 209, 43 U.S.C. 1719(a)) or other statutes and regulations.
- **Lands identified for retention:** lands or interest in lands that will be retained under Federal ownership.
- **Lands identified for acquisition:** land or interest in lands that are suitable for acquisition under Federal ownership, based on acquisition criteria identified in the land use plan; FLPMA Section 205(b)).
- **Withdrawals (non-discretionary):** areas that have been transferred in total or partial jurisdiction to another Federal agency and/or areas closed (segregated) to operation of all or some of the public land laws and/or mineral laws. Withdrawals are only made by the President, the Secretary of the Interior, or other authorized officer of the Executive branch of the Federal government. BLM land use plans can only “recommend” areas for the Secretary of Interior to consider pursuing for withdrawal.
- **Utility corridors:** linear areas with the potential for at least one additional facility and thus can be considered a corridor (if not already designated) to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate right-of-ways.
- **ROW Avoidance areas:** areas to be avoided but may be available for location of right-of-ways with special stipulations.
- **ROW Exclusion areas:** areas which are not available for location of right-of-ways under any conditions.

Coal

- **Unsuitable areas:** areas where coal leasing would not be permitted under the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 3461.5
- **Suitable areas:** areas found to be suitable for development by all mining methods or by only certain stipulated mining methods, such as surface or underground mining (see 43 CFR 3461).

Fluids (oil and gas, tar sands, and geothermal resources)

- **Open:** areas open to leasing with minor to no constraints, subject to existing laws, regulations, and formal orders; and the terms and conditions of the standard lease form.
- **Open with moderate constraints:** areas open to leasing, subject to moderate constraints. These are areas where it has been determined that moderately restrictive lease stipulations may be required to mitigate impacts. These stipulation include:
 - **Timing limitations (TL):** areas open to leasing but would be closed to surface disturbing activities during identified time frames. This stipulation



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would not apply to operation and maintenance activities, including associated vehicle travel, unless otherwise specified.

- **Controlled Surface Use (CSU):** areas that are open to leasing but would require proposals for surface disturbing activities to be authorized only according to the controls or constraints specified.
- **Open with major constraints:** areas open to leasing, subject to major constraints. These are areas where it has been determined that highly restrictive lease stipulations are required to mitigate impacts.
 - **No Surface Occupancy (NSO):** areas open to leasing but surface disturbing activities cannot be conducted on the surface of the land. Access to oil and gas deposits would require horizontal drilling from outside the boundaries of the NSO areas. The NSO areas are avoidance areas for rights-of-way; no rights-of-ways would be granted in NSO areas unless there are no feasible alternatives.
- **Closed:** areas where it has been determined that other land uses or resource values cannot be adequately protected with even the most restrictive lease stipulations; appropriate protection can be ensured only by closing the lands to leasing.

Locatable Minerals

RMPs can only recommend areas for closure related to locatable exploration or development. Withdrawals are managed under the Lands and Realty program.

Mineral Materials

- **Open areas:** areas open to mineral material disposal (these areas are still subject to mitigation and RMP objectives).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to mineral material disposal due to protection of natural resources within the planning area.

Non-energy Leasables

- **Open areas:** areas open to non-energy leasables (these areas are still subject to mitigation and RMP objectives).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to non-energy leasables due to protection of natural resources within the planning area.

Wild Horse and Burro Management

- **Herd Areas (HAs) (non-discretionary):** areas of the public lands identified as being habitat used by wild horses and burros at the time of the passage of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, as amended (16 USC 1331).
- **Herd Management Areas (HMAs):** established only in HAs, within which wild horses and/or burros can be managed for the long term.
- **Herd Areas Not Designated as Herd Management Areas:** areas where horses/burros will be removed from all or part of a HA due to intermingled and unfenced lands within HAs where private landowners do not want to make them

available for wild horse or burro use; or essential habitat components are not available for wild horse or burro use within a HA.

- **Wild Horse and Burro Ranges:** all or portions of an HMA where there is a significant public value present, such as unique characteristics in a herd or an opportunity for public viewing.

Wilderness Characteristics

- **Lands with Wilderness Characteristics:** areas to be managed to protect or preserve wilderness characteristics (naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation).

Special Designations

- **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs):** areas that require special management to prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems. To qualify, the resources at risk must have substantial significance or values beyond local concerns.
- **Wilderness Study Areas (non-discretionary):** roadless areas of five thousand acres, identified during the inventory required by section 201(a) of the Wilderness Act as having wilderness characteristics. These areas are required to be managed to maintain their wilderness characteristics until Congress decides whether it should either be designated as wilderness or should be released for other purposes.
- **Eligible wild and scenic river segments:** river segments that are free flowing and, with its adjacent land area, possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values.
- **Scenic and Back Country Byways (non-discretionary):** byways that traverse remote country, providing solitude and spectacular scenery in landscape settings.
- **National Scenic, Historic, and Recreation Trails (non-discretionary):** trail segments established and designated by either the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, subject to the consent of the Federal agency, State, political subdivision, or other appropriate administering agency having jurisdiction over the lands involved.

Visual Resource Management (VRM)

- **VRM Class I:** areas that preserve the existing character of the landscape.
- **VRM Class II:** areas that retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be low.
- **VRM Class III:** areas that partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate
- **VRM Class IV:** areas that provide for management activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high.

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 10:07 AM
To: John Carlson
Subject: RE: Fed. Fam. meeting
Attachments: ID swMT ADPP Appendices 063014 Review.pdf; ID swMT ADPP Decisions 063014 Review.pdf; Idaho Response Memo.pdf; ID Memo 060414 Draft v2a.docx; Call w Roberson_Idaho response to NPT guidance 6_4_14.docx

John,

Here are a few documents that may be helpful – I’ve attached the proposed plan decisions (draft) and the supporting appendices that we released for Cooperating Agency review a short time ago. I am working to incorporate changes based on comments during that review – most of which are word smithing and not substantive changes.

I also located the response memos we provided to WO.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Carlson, John [<mailto:jccarlso@blm.gov>]
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 9:47 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Brooks, Sandra S
Subject: Fed. Fam. meeting

Hey Brent,

I am trying to get caught up a bit since it looks like I will be attending the Great Basin Fed. Fam. meeting with our SD for MT.

Wondering if you could send me the questions and responses for ID from the recent chapter 2 review to get started? Any other summary type docs you could share would be helpful too.

Thanks - John

John C. Carlson
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Appendix A – Required Design Features and Best Management Practices

The following required design features (RDFs) and best management practices (BMPs) are included for consideration and use based upon review of current science and effects analysis (circa 2014) (Table A-1). These made be reviewed and updated through plan maintenance as new information and updated scientific findings become available.

The table is organized by program area grouping the RDFs and BMPs most relevant to that program; however, all relevant RDFs and BMPs, regardless of which program they are grouped under, should be considered during project evaluation and applicable RDFs and BMPs should be applied during implementation. The table identifies the specific measure (numbered) and its appropriate application – as an RDF – required all the time everywhere; as a BMP required when the applicable resources are present; and as a BMP when appropriate and application would reduce impacts and not conflict with other RDFs or BMPs. In some cases the BMPs may not all be appropriate based on local conditions and would be assessed in the appropriate site specific NEPA analysis, these all should be considered and were determined to be beneficial to achieving GRSG habitat objectives included as part of the site specific project. In other cases additional project design criteria or best management practices could be incorporated into project implementation to address site specific concerns not fully addressed by the RDFs or BMPs described here.

Table A-1. Required Design Features and Best Management Practices

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
General			
1. Solicit and consider expertise and ideas from local landowners, working groups, and other federal, state, county, and private organizations during development of projects.			X
Wildfire Suppression			
2. Compile district-level information into state-wide sage-grouse tool boxes. Tool boxes will contain maps, listing of resource advisors, contact information, local guidance, and other relevant information for each district, which will be aggregated into a state-wide document.	X		
3. Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics. The Fire Planning and Fuels Management Division (FA-600) hosts a webpage containing up-to-date maps, instruction memoranda, conservation measures, BMPs, and spatial data specific to fire operations and fuels management/sage-grouse interactions. These resources can be accessed at: http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fpfm/sg/index.html . Additional BLM sage-grouse information can be	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
found at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/fish_wildlife_and/sage-grouse-conservation.html .			
4. Assign a resource advisor with sage-grouse expertise, or who has access to sage-grouse expertise, to all extended attack fires in or near sage-grouse habitat areas. Prior to the fire season, provide training to sage-grouse resource advisors on wildfire suppression organization, objectives, tactics, and procedures to develop a cadre of qualified individuals. Involve state wildlife agency expertise in fire operations through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructing resource advisors during preseason trainings; • qualification as resource advisors; • coordination with resource advisors during fire incidents; • contributing to incident planning with information such as habitat features or other key data useful in fire decision making 	X		
5. At the onset of an emerging wildland fire the Agency Administrators and Fire Management Officers will engage a local Resource Advisor to assess sage-grouse habitat that may be affected by the fire or suppression activities.	X		
6. If complexity of the wildland fire warrants the activation of an Incident Management Team, locally refined information regarding important sage-grouse habitat will be relayed during in brief and continually throughout the incident.		X	
7. On critical fire weather days, pre-position additional fire suppression resources to optimize a quick and efficient response in sage-grouse habitat areas.		X	
8. As appropriate, utilize existing fuel breaks, such as roads or discrete changes in fuel type, as control lines in order to minimize fire spread.		X	
9. During periods of multiple fires, ensure line officers are involved in setting priorities.	X		
10. To the extent possible, locate wildfire suppression facilities (i.e., base camps, spike camps, drop points, staging areas, heli-bases, etc.) in areas where physical disturbance to sage-grouse habitat can be minimized. These include disturbed areas, grasslands, near roads/trails or in other areas where there is existing disturbance or minimal sagebrush cover.	X		
11. Power-wash all firefighting vehicles, to the extent possible, including engines, water tenders, personnel vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) prior to deploying in or near sage-grouse habitat areas to minimize noxious weed spread.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
12. Minimize cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations in sage-grouse habitat.	X		
13. Minimize burnout operations in key sage-grouse habitat areas by constructing direct fireline whenever safe and practical to do so.	X		
14. Utilize retardant, mechanized equipment, and other available resources to minimize burned acreage during initial attack.	X		
15. As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.		X	
16. Adequately document fire operation activities in sage-grouse habitat for potential follow-up coordination activities.	X		
Fuels Management Unless otherwise specified as part of the land use plan consider the full array of fuels management treatment types (prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and biological) when implementing the following RDFs and BMP's.			
17. Where applicable, design fuels treatment objectives to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems, modify fire behavior, restore native plants, and create landscape patterns which most benefit sage-grouse habitat.	X		
18. Provide training to fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas utilized locally.	X		
19. Use burning prescriptions which minimize undesirable effects on vegetation or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of annual grass invasion).	X		
20. Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.	X		
21. Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.	X		
22. Where applicable, incorporate roads and natural fuel breaks into fuel break design.		X	
23. Power-wash all vehicles and equipment involved in fuels management activities, prior to entering the area, to minimize the introduction of undesirable and/or invasive plant species.	X		
24. Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency which facilitate firefighter safety, reduce the potential acres burned, and reduce the fire risk to sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, develop maps for sage-grouse habitat which spatially display existing fuels treatments that can be used to assist suppression	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
activities.			
25. Give priority for implementing specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands, first to sites which are adjacent to or surrounded by Core Management Zones or that reestablish continuity between Core Management Zones. Annual grasslands are a second priority for restoration when the sites are not adjacent to Core Management Zones, but within Important Management Zones. The third priority for annual grassland habitat restoration projects are sites within General Management Zones. The intent is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.	X		
26. As funding and logistics permit, restore annual grasslands to a species composition characterized by perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs or one of that referenced in land use planning documentation.	X		
27. Emphasize the use of native plant species, especially those from a warmer area of the species' current range, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions.	X		
28. Remove standing and encroaching trees within at least 110 yards of occupied sage-grouse leks and other habitats (e.g., nesting, wintering and brood rearing) to reduce the availability of perch sites for avian predators, as resources permit.		X	
29. Protect wildland areas from wildfire originating on private lands, infrastructure corridors, and recreational areas.		X	
30. Reduce the risk of vehicle- or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive species by installing fuel breaks and/or planting perennial vegetation (e.g., green-strips) paralleling road rights-of-way.			X
31. Strategically place and maintain pre-treated strips/areas (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, etc.) to aid in controlling wildfire, should wildfire occur near CMZ or priority restoration areas (such as where investments in restoration have already been made).	X		
32. Design treatments to provide a break in fuel continuity in large, at-risk, expanses of continuous sagebrush. Use local knowledge of fire occurrence, spread patterns, and habitat values at risk to determine the proper placement and size of the fuel break.	X		
33. Use existing agreements with local, county, and state road departments to improve and maintain existing fuel breaks during routine road maintenance. Examples include: blading, mowing, disking, grading, and spraying roadside vegetation.		X	
34. Form partnerships with linear right-of-way holders to		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
maintain fuel breaks, which reduce fuel continuity and serve to protect at-risk landscapes.			
35. Use existing NEPA documentation and authorities, where possible, when conducting road right-of-way maintenance. In many instances, existing authorizations for roads or linear rights-of-way contain provisions for maintenance activities that could be implemented and incorporated into a vegetation and habitat protection strategy without requiring additional NEPA analysis. Document this with a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA).			X
36. Enter into agreements with road departments which may help fund the construction and maintenance of fuel breaks adjacent to roads, as funding permits.		X	
37. Spatially depict the locations of existing and planned fuel breaks in a landscape fuel break map and label each vegetation polygon for reference. Offices will make these maps available to suppression resources for use in fire operations.	X		
Vegetation Treatment			
38. Utilize available plant species based on their adaptation to the site when developing seed mixes. (Lambert 2005; VegSpec).	X		
39. Utilizing the warmer component of a species' current range when selecting native species for restoration when available (Kramer and Havens 2009).		X	
40. Reduce annual grass densities and competition through herbicide, targeted grazing, tillage, prescribed fire, etc. (Pyke 2011).			X
41. Reduce density and competition of introduced perennial grasses using appropriate techniques to accomplish this reduction (Pellant and Lysne 2005).			X
42. Utilize techniques to introduce desired species to the site such as drill seeding, broadcast seeding followed by a seed coverage technique, such as harrowing, churning or livestock trampling, and transplanting container or bare-root seedlings.			X
43. Assess existing on-site vegetation to ascertain if enough desirable perennial vegetation exists to consider techniques to increase on-site seed production to facilitate an increase in density of desired species.		X	
44. Use site preparation techniques that retain existing desirable vegetation.	X		
45. Use "mother plant" techniques or planting of satellite populations of desirable plants to serve as seed sources.		X	
46. Utilize post-treatment control of annual grass and other invasive species.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
47. Utilize new tools and use of new science and research as it becomes available.	X		
<p>48. Give higher priority to vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites where environmental variables contribute to improved chances for project success (Meinke et al. 2009). • Areas where seasonal habitat is limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance (wintering areas, wet meadows and riparian areas, nesting areas, leks, etc.). • Re-establish sagebrush cover in otherwise suitable GRSG with consideration to local needs and conditions using the general priorities in the following order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently burned native areas • Native grassland with suitable forb component • Nonnative grassland with suitable forb component • Recently converted annual grass areas • Native grassland • Nonnative grassland • Where desirable perennial bunchgrasses and/or forbs are deficient in existing sagebrush stands, use appropriate mechanical, aerial or other techniques to re-establish them. Examples include but are not limited to, use of a Lawson aerator with seeding, harrow or chain with seeding, drill seeding, hand planting plugs, aerial seeding or other appropriate technique. • Cooperative efforts that may improve GRSG habitat quality over multiple ownerships. • Projects that may provide connectivity between suitable habitats or expand existing good quality habitats. • Projects that address conifer encroachment into important GRSG habitats. In general the priority for treatment is 1) Phase 1 ($\leq 10\%$ conifer cover), 2) Phase 2 (10-30%), and 3) Phase 3 ($>30\%$). • Replacing stands of annual grasses within otherwise good quality habitats with desirable perennial species. Other factors that contribute to the importance of the restoration project in maintaining or improving GRSG habitat. 	X		
Lands and Realty			

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
49. Where technically and financially feasible, bury distribution powerlines and communication lines within existing disturbance.		X	
50. Above-ground disturbance areas would be seeded with perennial vegetation as per vegetation management.	X		
51. Place infrastructure in already disturbed locations where the habitat has not been fully restored.		X	
52. Cluster disturbances, operations (fracturing stimulation, liquids gathering, etc.) and facilities as close as possible.		X	
53. Co-locate linear facilities within one mile of existing linear facilities.		X	
54. Micro-site linear facilities to reduce impacts to sage-grouse habitats.	X		
55. Locate staging areas outside the Core Management Zones to the extent possible.	X		
56. Consider colocating powerlines, flowlines and pipelines under or immediately adjacent to a road or adjacent to other pipelines first, before considering co-locating with other ROW.			X
57. Restrict the construction of tall facilities and fences to the minimum number and amount needed.	X		
58. Use free standing structures where possible, to limit the use of guy wires. Where guy wires are necessary and appropriate bird collision diverters would be used, if doing so would not cause a human safety risk.	X		
59. Place new utility developments (power lines, pipelines, etc.) and transportation routes in existing utility or transportation corridors.		X	
60. Construction and development activities should conform to seasonal restrictions.	X		
Fluid Mineral Leasing			
61. Use directional drilling and/or multi well-pads to reduce surface disturbance.	X		
62. Apply a phased development approach with concurrent reclamation.	X		
63. Place liquid gathering facilities outside of CMZs. Have no tanks at well locations within CMZs to minimize truck traffic and perching and nesting sites for ravens and raptors.	X		
64. Use remote monitoring techniques for production facilities and develop a plan to reduce the frequency of vehicle use (Lyon and Anderson 2003).			X
65. Site and/or minimize linear ROWs or SUAs to reduce disturbance to sagebrush habitats.	X		
66. Design or site permanent structures which create movement (e.g. pump jack) to minimize impacts to GRSG.	X		
67. Equip tanks and other above-ground facilities with		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
structures or devices that discourage nesting of raptors and corvids.			
68. Control the spread and effects of non-native plant species (Gelbard and Belnap 2003, Bergquist et al. 2007, Evangelista et al. 2011). (E.g. by washing vehicles and equipment.)		X	
69. Restrict pit and impoundment construction to reduce or eliminate threats from West Nile virus (Doherty 2007).		X	
<p>70. Remove or re-inject produced water to reduce habitat for mosquitoes that vector West Nile virus. If surface disposal of produced water continues, use the following steps for reservoir design to limit favorable mosquito habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overbuild size of ponds for muddy and non-vegetated shorelines. • Build steep shorelines to decrease vegetation and increase wave actions. • Avoid flooding terrestrial vegetation in flat terrain or low lying areas. • Construct dams or impoundments that restrict down slope seepage or overflow. • Line the channel where discharge water flows into the pond with crushed rock. • Construct spillway with steep sides and line it with crushed rock. • Treat waters with larvicides to reduce mosquito production where water occurs on the surface 		X	
71. In CMZ, limit noise from discretionary activities to not less than 10 decibels above ambient sound levels (typically 20-24 dBA) at occupied leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during breeding season.	X		
72. Require noise shields when drilling during the lek, nesting, brood-rearing, or wintering season.			X
73. The BLM/Forest Service would work with proponents to limit project related noise where it would be expected to reduce functionality of habitats in Core and Important Management Zones.	X		
74. The BLM/Forest Service would evaluate the potential for limitation of new noise sources on a case-by-case basis as appropriate.	X		
75. Limit noise sources that would be expected to negatively impact populations in Core and Important Management Zones and continue to support the establishment of ambient baseline noise levels for occupied leks in Core Management Zones.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
76. As additional research and information emerges, specific new limitations appropriate to the type of projects being considered would be evaluated and appropriate limitations would be implemented where necessary to minimize potential for noise impacts on sage-grouse core population behavioral cycles.	X		
77. As new research is completed, new specific limitations would be coordinated with the IDFG and MT FWP and partners.	X		
78. Fit transmission towers with anti-perch devices (Lammers and Collopy 2007).			X
79. Require sage-grouse-safe fences.			X
80. Locate new compressor stations outside Core Management Zones and design them to reduce noise that may be directed towards Core Management Zones.	X		
81. Clean up refuse (Bui et al. 2011).	X		
82. Locate man camps outside of priority sage-grouse habitats.	X		
83. Consider using oak (or other material) mats for drilling activities to reduce vegetation disturbance and for roads between closely spaced wells to reduce soil compaction and maintain soil structure to increase likelihood of vegetation reestablishment following drilling.			X
84. Use only closed-loop systems for drilling operations and no reserve pits.	X		
85. Cover (e.g., fine mesh netting or use other effective techniques) all drilling and production pits and tanks regardless of size to reduce sage-grouse mortality.	X		
Roads			
86. Utilize existing roads, or realignments of existing routes to the extent possible.	X		
87. Design roads to an appropriate standard no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended purpose.	X		
88. Do not issue ROWs or SUAs to counties on newly constructed energy or mineral development roads, unless for a temporary use consistent with all other terms and conditions included in this document.	X		
89. Establish speed limits on BLM and FS system roads to reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions or design roads to be driven at slower speeds.			X
90. Coordinate road construction and use among ROW or SUA holders.	X		
91. Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings.			X
92. Use dust abatement on roads and pads.	X		
93. Close and reclaim duplicate roads by restoring original landform and establishing desired vegetation.		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
Roads Specific to Core and Important Management Zones			
94. Locate roads to avoid priority areas and habitats as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X		
95. Establish trip restrictions (Lyon and Anderson 2003) or minimization through use of telemetry and remote well control (e.g., Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).	X		
96. Restrict vehicle traffic to only authorized users on newly constructed routes (using signage, gates, etc.)	X		
Reclamation Activities			
97. Include objectives for ensuring habitat restoration to meet sage-grouse habitat needs in reclamation practices/sites (Pyke 2011).	X		
98. Address post reclamation management in reclamation plan such that goals and objectives are to protect and improve sage-grouse habitat needs.		X	
99. Maximize the area of interim reclamation on long-term access roads and well pads, including reshaping, topsoiling and revegetating cut-and-fill slopes.	X		
100. Restore disturbed areas at final reclamation to the pre-disturbance landforms and desired plant community.	X		
101. Irrigate interim reclamation if necessary for establishing seedlings more quickly.		X	
102. Utilize mulching techniques to expedite reclamation and to protect soils.		X	
Grazing Required Design Features			
103. Avoid building new wire fences within 2 km of occupied leks (Stevens 2011). If this is not feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates.	X		
104. Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.	X		
105. Utilize temporary fencing (e.g., ESR, drop down fencing) where feasible and appropriate to meet management objectives.		X	
106. Fence wetlands (e.g., springs, seeps, wet meadows and/or riparian areas) where appropriate, to maintain or foster progress toward Proper Functioning Condition and to facilitate management of sage-grouse habitat objectives. Where constructing fences or exclosures to improve riparian and/or upland management, incorporate fence marking or other BMPs/RDFs as appropriate.		X	
107. During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately March 15-May 1 in lower elevations	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
and March 25-May 15 in higher elevations), livestock trailing will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of occupied leks between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse. Over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations on public lands must be at least 1 km from occupied leks during the lekking season to reduce disturbance from sheep, human activity and guard animals.			
108. Work with permittees in locating sheep over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations to minimize impacts to sage-grouse seasonal habitats.	X		
109. When trailing livestock during the lekking or nesting season, use roads or existing trails, to the extent possible to reduce disturbance to roosting, lekking or nesting sage-grouse.		X	
110. Design new spring developments in GRSG habitat to maintain or enhance the free flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Modify developed springs, seeps and associated pipelines to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority GRSG habitat where necessary.		X	
111. Install ramps in new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by GRSG and other wildlife.		X	
West Nile Virus Required Design Features			
112. Construct water return features and maintain functioning float valves to prohibit water from being spilled on the ground surrounding the trough and/or tank and return water to the original water source, to the extent practicable.	X		
113. Minimize the construction of new ponds or reservoirs except as needed to meet important resource management and/or restoration objectives.	X		
114. Develop and maintain non-pond/reservoir watering facilities, such as troughs and bottomless tanks, to provide livestock water.	X		
115. For most spring developments or wells, mosquito breeding habitat usually is not an issue. Flowing cold (less than 50° Fahrenheit) water and steep sides of the stock tanks are not conducive for egg laying or larvae production. If flows are low, the water is warm, or moss production is an issue in the tank, mosquito breeding habitat could exist in the tank.	X		
116. Maintenance of healthy wetlands at spring sources helps control mosquitoes and their larvae by providing habitat for natural predators such as birds, dragonflies and amphibians. Protecting the wetland at the spring source with a fence is an option to consider.			X

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
117. Clean and drain stock tanks before the season starts. If never cleaned or drained, many tanks will fill with silt or debris causing warmer water and heavy vegetation growth conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X	
118. Draining tanks after the period of use is completed, particularly in warmer weather, also reduces potential habitat by eliminating stagnant standing water.		X	
119. Maintain a properly functioning overflow to prevent water from flowing onto the pad and surrounding area, to eliminate or minimize pooling of water that is attractive to breeding mosquitoes.	X		
120. Clean or deepen overflow ponds to maintain colder temperatures to reduce mosquito habitat.		X	
121. Install and maintain float valves on stock tank fill pipes to minimize overflow	X		
122. Harden stock tank pads to reduce tracks that can potentially hold water where mosquitoes may breed.	X		
123. Build ponds with steep shorelines to reduce shallow water (>60 cm) and aquatic vegetation around the perimeter of impoundments to deter colonizing by mosquitos (Knight et al. 2003, cited in NTT report page 61).	X		
124. Consider removing and controlling trees and shrubs to reduce shade and wind barriers on pit and reservoir shorelines if not needed for wildlife, fish, or recreational values.			X
125. Impoundments that remain accessible to livestock and wildlife can cause tracking and nutrient enrichment from manure which can create favorable mosquito breeding habitat. Where this is a concern, it may be desirable to fence the reservoir and pipe the water to a tank.			X
126. Construct dams or impoundments that minimize down-slope seepage or overflow. Seepage and overflow results in down-grade accumulation of vegetated shallow water areas that support breeding mosquitoes.		X	
127. On ponds and reservoirs with enough depth and volume, introduce native fish species, which feed on mosquito larvae.			X
128. Line the overflow of a dam's spillway with crushed rock and constructing the spillway with steep sides to preclude the accumulation of shallow water and vegetation to reduce mosquito habitat.		X	
129. Where an existing reservoir has filled with silt, consider cleaning to reduce shallow water habitat conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X	
130. During confirmed West Nile virus outbreaks in sage-			X

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
grouse habitat, consider larvicide applications.			
Travel Management Required Design Features			
131. Designate or design routes to direct use away from priority areas identified in Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments and still provide for high-quality and sustainable travel routes and administrative access, legislatively mandated requirements, and commercial needs	X		
Recreation Required Design Features			
132. Direct use away from GRSG priority areas as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X		
133. Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids.		X	

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1 **Appendix B – Seasonal Timing Restriction**

2

3 During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately March 15-May 1 in lower elevations and March 25-
4 May 15 in higher elevations), project activities will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of
5 occupied leks between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse.

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Idaho and Southwest Montana GRSG Buffers and Seasonal Restrictions Summary

Impacts	Causes ¹	Minimization Measures Seasonal/Timing Restrictions & Buffers	Rationale
Incidental disturbance to individual GRSG within all habitat types during all seasons			
	Public or administrative activities that include incidental foot, aerial, horseback, or other similar travel.	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
	Livestock grazing activities (except where specifically noted below).	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
	Public vehicle travel not otherwise restricted in Travel Management Plans; or administrative vehicle travel on existing routes for maintenance of existing infrastructure, facilities, or vegetation projects; or non-organized/non-permitted activities.	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
Loss (i.e. death) of nests/eggs, chicks and/or adults that may occur within the nesting⁴ habitat			

during the nesting season			
	<p>Anthropogenic activities such as the use of heavy equipment² or targeted grazing in nesting habitat³ for: 1) implementation of fuels/vegetation/habitat restoration management projects, 2) infrastructure construction or maintenance, 3) geophysical exploration activities; 4) organized motorized recreational events</p>	<p>BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid these activities within nesting habitat during the nesting³ season.</p>	<p>Application of the seasonal nesting habitat restriction would avoid and minimize the loss of nests/chicks/hens. This is a BMP since the impact is loss of individual grouse and is small scale and not population-scale. Disallowing infrastructure maintenance or construction in nesting habitat outright may not be realistic as an RDF. Impacts may be able to be offset via appropriate mitigation.</p>
	<p>Bedding Sheep & Associated Camps</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General: During the nesting season, locate bedding areas and camps outside of sagebrush areas³.</p>	<p>Application of the seasonal nesting habitat restriction would avoid/minimize the loss of nests/chicks by focusing bedding and camps in areas not meeting nest habitat characteristics for sagebrush cover (i.e., use areas less than 15% canopy cover).</p>
	<p>Fences</p>	<p>Existing Fences: RDF: Core and Important; BMP for General- Where consistent with policy, laws and/or regulations relative to Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas and Visual Resource Management, move, modify (e.g. lay down fences) or mark existing fences to reduce collision risk within areas that have a high probability of fence strikes (per</p>	<p>Application of these measures would avoid/minimize the loss of birds to fence strikes.</p>

		Stevens et al. 2012 model or latest science).	
		New Fences: RDF: Core and Important; BMP for General- Do not construct new fences within areas of high collision risk unless marked or modified, consistent with policy, laws and/or regulations relative to Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas and Visual Resource Management .	
Permanent functional or physical loss of a lek or declining attendance at lek⁴			
	Unleased fluid minerals	Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Do not allow wells, pads, facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek. Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Limit average well pad density to no more than 1 per 640 acres within nesting ³ and winter ³ habitat.	This impact may have a population level effect and trip a population trigger therefore we recommended this be an RDF. Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km from grouse leks. The 1/640 density per based on consideration of 1) Harju et al. (2010) who found pad density of 1.54 pad/sq km (1 pad/247 ac) had 13-74% lower attendance at leks and 2) Doherty (2008 page iii and 79) who noted potential

			impacts from oil and gas development were indiscernible at ~1 well/640 acres. IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to minimize risk of tripping a population trigger, hence the 1/640.
	Commercial solar development	<p>RDF: Core-No commercial solar development.</p> <p>RDF: Important- Do not allow new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek⁴.</p> <p>BMP-General: Avoid new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek⁴.</p>	No specific literature available relative to solar development. Recommended buffer is based on recent literature (Harju et al 2010) that 0.6 or 0.25 mile buffers are not. The 2 mile buffer is consistent with Connelly et al. 2000 regarding energy facilities (page 978).
	Roads	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General: Do not construct new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks⁴.</p>	<p>Patricelli et al. 2012 (Recommendations for interim protections in WY) recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat. We apply it here as a lek-centric BMP because we may need to construct a road near a lek (perhaps for fire operations/access or to allow access to private lands or per ROW need). If we buffer roads in the Core or Important Zone via a</p>

			<p>large lek buffer, it may lead to disturbance of a much larger area of nesting habitat in the course of avoiding the lek and buffers. The BMP would at least allow for siting to avoid the lek, and reducing road noise near the lek, without compromising broader landscapes.</p>
	<p>Commercial/ industrial Pipelines (oil, gas, slurry, and similar)</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General. minimize removal of sagebrush within 0.6 miles of leks⁴.</p>	<p>Application of this measure is designed to minimize loss of sagebrush in the vicinity of the lek. The main concern was with loss of sagebrush in vicinity of lek, that is used by GRSG for cover. The 0.6 mile buffer is based on rationale in the Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan as below:</p> <p>BACKGROUND INFORMATION: From Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan Appendix B: [Lek Habitat (March through mid-May) - The basis and rationale for the first radius, 0.6 miles from a lek (Fig. B-1), is developed by summarizing data from 5 separate studies of daytime movements of adult male sage-grouse during the breeding season (Carr 1967, Wallestad and Schladweiler 1974, Rothenmaier 1979, Emmons 1980, Schoenberg 1982), because daytime movements of adult male</p>

			<p>GRSG during the breeding season do not vary greatly. Wallestad and Schladweiler (1974) found daily movements of adult males ranged between 0.2 and 0.8 miles from leks, with a maximum cruising radius of 0.9 - 1.2 miles. Ellis et al. (1987) reported that dispersal flights of male GRSG (to day-use areas) ranged from 0.3 – 0.5 miles, with the longest flights ranging from 1.2 – 1.3 miles. Carr (1967) recorded a cruising radius for male GRSG that ranged from 0.9-1.1 miles. Rothenmaier (1979) found that 60-80% of male GRSG locations were within 0.6 - 0.7 miles of a lek. Emmons (1980) reported that male dispersal distances to day-use areas of 0.1 miles were common and that 67% of all use areas were greater than 0.3 miles from the lek. In addition, Schoenberg (1982) found that male daily movements averaged 0.6 miles, but ranged from 0.02 - 1.5 miles.</p> <p>Male GRSG activity patterns during the breeding season include strutting during the early morning hours, feeding and loafing during the day, and roosting on the lek during the night. Grouse attending the lek do</p>
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			<p>not always roost on the exact location where the strutting occurs the next morning. Occasionally (this is lek-dependent), grouse roost in adjacent sagebrush cover. Ultimately, male GRSG require an open area for strutting, and sagebrush immediately adjacent for feeding and loafing. Sagebrush adjacent to the lek is also used as escape cover from predators or other types of disturbance. Female GRSG that attend the lek also use the area in this zone in the same fashion as do males (Patterson 1952, Barnett and Crawford 1994, Coggins 1998).]</p> <p>Study locations noted above: Carr-Colorado; Wallestad and Schladweiller- Montana; Emmons-Colorado; Schoenberg- Colorado; Rothenmaier –unable to locate Univ. WY Thesis but study area not defined.</p>
	<p>Miscellaneous anthropogenic structures/ activities (e.g., corrals, water windmills, apiaries, signs, informational kiosks, etc.)</p>	<p>BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid human activities or placement of new structures as noted within 2 miles (3.2 km) mi of a lek⁴ or ensure they are out of the viewshed of the lek.</p>	<p>This is a catch all to reduce impact of miscellaneous structures where possible (some are tall⁵, such as water windmill, some are small, but have human activity- such as kiosks) or activities not otherwise addressed in this table. Based on</p>

			<p>biology team discussion and input, and Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines that state, “avoid building powerlines and other tall structures that provide perch sites for raptors within 3 km of seasonal habitats” (page 977). Avoiding “seasonal habitats” entirely by 3 km would preclude any of these activities at all in Core, Important or General, but siting 2 miles + from leks as a BMP would nonetheless help protect leks from disturbance. Adding the “viewshed” caveat can help with siting in cases where topography or such screens view of the activity or structure.</p>
	<p>Campgrounds and other developed recreation facilities (trailheads etc.)</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General. Avoid development of new campgrounds or recreation facilities in nesting habitat.</p>	<p>Biology team discussion. No literature specific to this issue. Aldrich (2012) mentions GRSG avoidance threshold 2.5 km from any single development at patch scale.</p>
	<p>OHV Play or Open Areas</p>	<p>RDF-Core and Important; BMP for General. No new Open or Play areas.</p>	<p>Rationale is to reduce risk for further noise, habitat loss, fire risk in the Core, Important and General zones.</p>
	<p>Solid Minerals</p>		<p>These measures for solid minerals are intended to reduces noise and human disturbance to lekking</p>

			<p>birds. Siting/ avoidance buffers not realistic due to the nature of mineral deposits.</p>
		<p>Locatables-BMP Core, Important, General: Access roads and associated infrastructure not on the mining claim-Avoid disturbance to leks⁴ during the lekking season.</p>	<p>Regulations 43 CFR 3809.420 performance standards, speak to T/E, and habitat. As a BMP, it provides an opportunity to work with the developer where we can, such as routing access roads etc., siting of facilities/infrastructure etc., that are off the claim, that we have some discretion with.</p>
		<p>Salables- RDF: Core: Do not construct new salable development within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks⁴.</p>	<p><u>Salables</u>- No literature specific to salables but buffer distance is based on the noise literature for roads. See Patricelli et al. 2012 (WY recommendations for interim noise protections) that recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat. Chose RDF for Core and BMP in Important and General habitat since new Salable pits (e.g., gravel) may be necessary to support road maintenance or improvement for access by fire operations or for other locally important factors.</p>

		<p>Leasables-non-energy (e.g., phosphate)-</p> <p>RDF-Core and Important: New phosphate leasing is administratively unavailable.</p> <p>BMP-Core, Important, General- On existing leases avoid disturbance to leks⁴ during the lekking season</p>	<p><u>Leasables:</u></p> <p>None presently known in Core based on current mapping, but Core RDF included in case of a trigger trip and re-delineation of IDswMT subregional management zones.</p> <p>In “Important” there is only one such area with existing lease and Known Phosphate Lease Areas (KPLAs), just west of Bear. It is Federal mineral/private surface. No interest in surface mining but there is interest by a company in underground development. Company is proposing facilities on surface, but working with IDFG locally. Lek within .3 mile.</p> <p>BMP for lek disturbance for all Management Zones in case of trigger trip and IDswMT Management Zone re-delineation and since there are some KPLAs in the General Management Zone. Working with proponent to reduce lek disturbance is realistic and may take on different forms, such as road access, placement of facilities, etc.. However, “exclusion” buffers are not realistic given the nature of the</p>
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			location of solid mineral deposits (i.e., cannot site elsewhere). For these, incorporation of appropriate mitigation, in addition to the lek BMP may need to be a primary focus.
	Wind development (commercial)	<p>RDF: Core-No commercial wind development .</p> <p>BMP: Important and General: Avoid wind development in nesting and/or winter habitat.</p>	<p><u>Wind</u>: Labeau et al. (2014) stated that erecting wind turbines at least 5 km from nesting and brood rearing habitat should reduce negative impacts, at least in the short term. However putting a 5 km (3 mile) buffer around leks in Important habitat, would create a defacto closure for the most part, inconsistent with the intent of the Important designation. Hence BMP to avoid placement in nesting or winter habitat.</p>
	Communication Towers	<p>RDF: Core -Do not allow communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek⁴ unless needed to address public safety needs.</p> <p>BMP- Important and General-- Avoid communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek⁴ unless needed to address public safety needs.</p>	<p>Johnson et al. (2011 pg. 427) noted "Analogously, across all management zones there was a steady downward pattern of trends of lek counts as the number of towers increased, either within 5 km (Fig. 21) or within 18 km (Fig. 22)."</p>
	Transmission Lines	<p>RDF: Core, Important, General: Do not allow transmission line construction within 600 m of a</p>	<p>A 600 m GRSG avoidance zone reported per Gillan et al. (2013). No other spatial buffer supported</p>

		lek. BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid transmission line construction within 2 miles (3.2 km) of a lek.	by literature. While 600 m is a citable buffer, a 2 mile zone as BMP for Transmission is recommended as well. Based on Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines to avoid tall structures in important seasonal habitats.
	Distribution Lines	BMP: Core, Important and General-Avoid distribution line construction within 600 m of a lek or bury where possible	600 m, based on Gillan et al. BMP as this may not always be feasible.
Temporary functional loss of a lek⁴. SEASONAL RESTRICTION			
	Anthropogenic activities that result in noise or visual disturbance that may lead to sustained avoidance of the lek during a particular lekking season.	RDF: Core and Important- No repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season ³ . BMP-General: Avoid repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season ³ .	Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km (~ 1 mile) from grouse leks. . IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to managing disturbance to minimize risk of disturbance.
	Sheep Bedding & Sheep Camps	BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid bedding sheep and placing camps within 0.6 mi of a lek	No literature. BMP based on biology team consensus.

		during the lekking season.	
	Organized Recreational Events	RDF Core and Important-Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season. BMP General- Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season.	Biology team consensus. No specific literature relative to buffers for recreational events but can manage this through avoiding the appropriate season. This threat (organized recreational events) is a short term, typically one-day event, with temporary disruption from noise the main issue.
Permanent functional or physical loss of nesting or winter habitat.			
	Anthropogenic development or activities that result in loss of habitat or constant or repeated noise levels or objects on the landscape that result in permanent avoidance of the habitat.	Ensure > 80% of the landscape is functionally and physically meeting GRSg habitat objectives appropriate to the seasonal habitat ³ .	Impacts resulting from loss of habitat vary depending on the extent of the habitat lost. Minimal loss of habitat (e.g. removal of small amounts of sagebrush cover) would not likely result in any measurable impacts to GRSg individuals or the associated populations. More extensive loss of habitat may result in increased probability of population level impacts, and trigger trips, through the increased probability that leks will no longer persist.
	Roads	BMP: Core, Important, General: Avoid construction of new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.

		within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of nesting habitat.	
	Unleased Fluid Minerals	Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Limit average well pad density to no more than 1/640 acres within nesting ³ and winter ³ habitat.	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Commercial Solar	RDF: Core-No commercial solar development. RDF: Important: Do not allow facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek ⁴ . BMP-Important: Avoid placing new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek ⁴ .	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Campgrounds	BMP-Core, Important, General. Avoid development of new campgrounds or recreation facilities in nesting habitat.	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	OHV Play and Open areas	RDF-Core and Important. No new Open or Play areas. BMP-General: Avoid new Open or Play areas	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Wind Development (commercial)	RDF Core. No commercial wind development .	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.

		BMP: Important: Avoid wind development in nesting habitat	
Temporary functional loss of winter habitat			
	Anthropogenic activities that result in noise or visual disturbance that may lead to avoidance of a particular wintering area during a particular wintering season.	RDF: Core, Important- No repeated or sustained disturbance from construction activities in winter habitat during the wintering season. BMP General: Avoid repeated or sustained disturbance from construction activities in winter habitat during the wintering season.	No known buffer. Biology team recommendation.

1
2 ¹ Land use allocations or activities provided below are examples, but are not limited to those listed.

3
4 ² Heavy equipment includes but is not limited to: tractors, discs, drills, mowers, Lawson aerators, large sprayers, masticators, dozers, graders, large
5 trucks, excavators, backhoes cranes.

6
7 ³ As per Habitat Objectives table. Based on local GRSG seasonal use dates. Lekking ~ March 1-May 2⁵ depending on elevation; Nesting /early
8 brood ~April 1-June 30; Winter ~December 1-February 28. Source-Modified from ISAC 2006.

9
10 ⁴ Occupied lek as per IDFG definitions (active during at least one of past 5 years). Undetermined status leks will be evaluated on a case by case at
11 the site specific scale during project-level NEPA.

12
13 ⁵ Definition of “tall structure”: Any structure that has the potential to disrupt lekking or nesting GRSG and/or decrease the use of an area. This
14 includes but is not limited to communication towers, meteorological towers, electrical transmission or distribution towers, etc.

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Appendix D

Taken From Appendix K in Draft EIS - Update Pending

Draft Greater Sage-Grouse Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessment



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K. GRSG Wildland Fire & Invasive Species Assessment

The following process is a suggestion for a consistent approach in conducting an assessment of the GRSG habitat and wildfire threat at the local planning area level. Variations to this approach may be made based on ID team discussion or unique issues in a given planning area. This example format is intended to portray the degree of specificity required for offices which will complete these assessments. Note that this process has similarities to watershed analysis and ecoregional assessments, and as such these documents may prove useful where they exist.

K.1 Introduction

Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments (hereafter referred to as “stepdown assessments”) are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas/treatment opportunities for fuels management, fire management, and restoration. Priority areas are spatial delineations where treatments, management actions, or other emphasis should be placed due to factors such as habitat quality, threats, or opportunities to protect, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat. The stepdown assessments will serve as a bridge between RMPs and project level planning, and will position planning efforts to conduct project-scale NEPA following RMP Records of Decision.

The stepdown assessment process involves four steps, beginning with characterization of the planning area and concluding with spatial delineation of priority areas. The content and methods used by Forest Service (FS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in these documents should be consistent to ensure that priority areas are defined using similar criteria. These criteria and methods should be narratively described such that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and other audiences can understand the factors considered.

K.2 Step 1: Characterization of Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat

The purpose of this step is to broadly establish context of the planning area and sage-grouse habitat.

K.2.1 Location and Spatial Extent

Describe the location of the planning area, and the relationship of GRSG habitat within the planning area.

K.2.2 Relationship to the Larger Scale Setting

How does the planning area lie within the larger context of GRSG habitat?

K.2.3 Quantifying Habitat within Planning Area

Brief description of GRSG habitat described in terms of acreage, habitat classes (e.g., PPH, PGH, and/or PACs)

Note: A summary map showing the planning area with habitat features is appropriate in Step 1. A tabular summary may also be included.

K.3 Step 2: Issues and Key Management Questions

The purpose of this step is to devise management questions related to the issues of fuels management, fire management, and restoration. Note that this step should not answer each management question. Rather, management questions are answered in Step 4 through specific, quantified data.

K.3.1 Overview

In coordination with state wildlife agencies, the FWS, and your interdisciplinary team, develop an introductory section here which describes why fire or vegetation conditions pose a threat to GRSG in the local planning area. Describe where fire or vegetation conditions are a significant threat to GRSG habitat, and where fire, fuels, and restoration activities may help enhance habitat. In a brief paragraph or two, summarize the relationships between wildland fire, fuels management and invasives/restoration in the planning area. Examples would include annual grass/wildfire cycle, juniper encroachment into GRSG habitat, recently disturbed areas, etc.

K.3.2 Key Management Questions

Issue #1: Fuels Management

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Based on fire risk to important GRSG habitats, what types of fuels treatments should be implemented that will reduce the risk? Where should fuels treatments be prioritized, and what's the amount of treatment acres/miles needed for long-term enhancement and protection of GRSG habitat?
2. Based on opportunities for fire to improve/restore GRSG habitats, what types of fuels treatments should be implemented that will increase ability to allow fire? Where should fuels treatments be prioritized, and what amount of treatment is needed for long-term enhancement and protection of GRSG habitat?
3. What fuel reduction techniques will be most effective; including, but not limited to grazing, prescribed fire, chemical, biological and mechanical treatments?
4. What are the criteria for defining priority fuels management areas (example would be the intersection of high burn probability, PPH, lek locations, and established GRSG population)?
5. Are there opportunities to utilize a coordinated approach across jurisdictional boundaries?
6. Are there areas where fuel treatments help restore GRSG habitat as well as reduce risk?

Issue #2: Fire Management

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Where is the greatest wildfire risk, considering trends in fire occurrence, fuel conditions, and highly valued GRSG habitat?
2. Where will fire suppression resources be most successful to mitigate the risk and protect GRSG Habitats?
3. Where do opportunities exist that could enhance or improve suppression capability in important GRSG habitats?
 - a. For example, increased water availability through installation of heli wells or water storage tanks.
 - b. Decreased response time through pre-positioned resources or staffing remote stations.
4. Where should wildfire be managed to achieve Land Use Plan (LUP) objectives for improving or restoring GRSG habitat (limiting juniper expansion)?
5. What are the criteria for defining priority fire management areas? An example would be the intersection of PPH, lek locations, and high burn probability.
6. How can fire management be coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries to reduce risk or to improve GRSG habitat?

Issue #3: Restoration

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Are there opportunities for restoration treatments to protect, enhance or maintain GRSG habitat? Assume that funding is not a constraint, and describe which sites are biologically suitable for restoration to GRSG habitat in a reasonable period.
2. Considering the entire planning area, what are the site conditions, such as dominant vegetation, elevation, or precipitation zones, where restoration efforts have been proven to be most successful in the recent past? An example would be mountain sagebrush sites over 5000' in elevation, and in a 16" or greater precipitation zone.
3. What are the criteria for defining priority restoration areas? An example would be recent burns, moderately disturbed sites, or recovering allotment pastures which have not crossed ecological thresholds or become highly degraded. These may or may not be covered by existing ESR plans.
4. Are there opportunities to utilize a coordinated approach across jurisdictional boundaries?

K.4 Step 3: Current Conditions and Trends

The purpose of this step is to develop information relevant to the issues and key questions identified in Step 2. It provides a snapshot of the present condition, statement of causal factors, and a summary of the trends which are occurring.

K.4.1 Biological Summary of Vegetation, Invasive Species, and Fire Regimes

[In this introductory section, provide a general biological summary of the planning area. Provide a narrative description of ecological trends, including description of plant communities, fire regimes, and other dominant biological factors affecting GRSG habitat.]

- Describe how fire has influenced current vegetation patterns. Are there large areas of even-aged communities, fine-scale mosaics, annual grass monocultures?
- Describe if fire regimes are intact, or if they are altered. If they are altered, describe why. Use fire regime variables such as fire frequency, severity, or size to elucidate your points.
- Describe dominant cover types making up the planning area. These can be broad seral stage groupings, general lifeforms, or more fine-scale information such as plant associations, habitat types, or ecological systems. Note: this information should be available in the RMP or FMP.
- What has been the impact of fire exclusion (e.g., increased conifer encroachment, decadent shrub communities, etc)?
- What is the current extent of annual grasses and other invasive species?
- What are the effects of invasive species on land health? On trends in plant succession? On fire regimes?

K.4.2 Fuels Management

- Describe current fuels management practices within the planning area (what are the types of fuels treatments commonly applied to which management issues) ?
- How has past fuels management influenced today's planning area (e.g., creation of mosaics, protecting certain features, increasing invasives, etc)?
- What are causal factors which have created a need for fuels management practices?
- What are the trends in the fuels management program related to budget or capability?

K.4.3 Fire Management

- Describe the current fire suppression workload.

- Describe fire occurrence trends (include discussion of fire size, numbers of starts, ignition locations)
- Describe causal factors influencing suppression effectiveness.
- Describe suppression capabilities. Discuss types and numbers of resources within office, through interagency agreements, and through resource sharing

K.4.4 Restoration

- Describe invasive species which are present in the planning area
- Describe landscape conditions which may be suitable for restoration within the planning area, and the results of recent restoration efforts in the planning area
- Describe invasive species occurrence
- Describe causal factors influencing restoration needs.

K.4.5 Methodology

- What are the analysis methods to be utilized and analysis assumptions?

K.4.6 Use of Best Available Science

- Describe data sets used, such as the FSIM layer, local data, etc. [Many data sets being used in RMPs will also be applicable to stepdown assessments].
- What are the elements of science used?

K.5 Step 4: Identification of Treatment Opportunities, Priority Areas, and Actions

The purpose of this step is to utilize the information from steps 2 and 3 in order to quantify the overall need for treatment or other actions. Specifically, this step should spatially identify and quantify priority areas, using the criteria established in Step 2. Next, this step should identify treatment opportunities which fall within priority areas. Furthermore, treatments should be prioritized and an implementation schedule developed, reflecting the reality that not every acre in need of treatment can receive action within the planning horizon.

K.5.1 Fuels Management

- Spatially delineate priority areas for fuels management, based upon criteria established in Step 2. Fuels priority areas should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Linear fuel break along roads
 - Other linear fuel breaks to create anchor points
 - Prescribed burning
 - Mechanical (e.g., conifer removal)
 - Other mechanical, biological, or chemical treatment

- Quantify the number of acres of needed fuels treatments.
- If they exist, spatially delineate areas where fuel treatments would increase the ability to use fire to improve/enhance GRSG habitat?
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Identify coordination needed between renewable resource, fire management, and fuels management staff to facilitate planning and implementation of fuels treatments.
- Quantify a projected level of treatment within fuels management priority areas.
- Identify treatments to be planned within fuels management priority areas.
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for proposed treatments.

K.5.2 Fire Management

- Spatially delineate priority areas for fire suppression, based upon criteria established in Step 2. Priority areas for fire management should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Initial attack priority areas;
 - Resource pre-positioning and movement priority areas;
 - Remote station staffing priority areas, if appropriate
 - Include tables, maps or other supporting information
- Quantify the number of acres of GRSG habitats for aggressive initial attack that were identified at highest risk from losing key habitat components.
- Quantify the number and type of suppression resources that will be staged or otherwise pre-positioned, as well as the associated conditions, in order to enhance initial attack capabilities.
- Spatially delineate areas where opportunities exist to enhance or improve suppression capability.
 - Include tables, maps or other supporting information.
- Spatially delineate areas where wildfire can be managed to achieve RMP objectives.
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Quantify the number of acres within fire management priority areas
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for fire suppression proposed actions.

K.5.3 Restoration

- Spatially delineate priority areas for restoration, using criteria established in Step 2. Priority areas for restoration should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Seeding priority areas (aerial, drill, broadcast, or other);
 - Invasive species priority areas (herbicide, mechanical, biological, combination);
 - Priority areas requiring combinations of treatments (e.g., herbicide followed by seeding).
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Identify locations where post-fire restoration treatments should be focused.
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Spatially identify invasive species occurrence
- Identify coordination needed between renewable resource, fire management, and fuels management staff to facilitate planning and implementation of restoration treatments.
- Quantify the projected level of treatment within restoration priority areas.
- Identify treatments to be planned within restoration priority areas.
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for proposed restoration treatments.

K.5.4 Annual Treatment Needs

1. Based on the information above and within the planning area, what are the annual needs based on the key questions and summary statements?

K.5.5 Annual Treatment Abilities

1. Putting GRSG habitat protection and enhancement into perspective with other high valued resources and important land management goals, how does the annual need relate to capabilities?
2. What are the realistic annual expectations in fire management, fuels management, and restoration for the next 5 years?

Appendix B

Fuels Management Required Design Features for Sage-Grouse Conservation

1. Where applicable, design fuels treatment objectives to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems, modify fire behavior, restore native plants, and create landscape patterns which most benefit sage-grouse habitat.
2. Provide training to fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas utilized locally.
3. Use burning prescriptions which minimize undesirable effects on vegetation or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of annual grass invasion).
4. Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.
5. Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.
6. Where applicable, incorporate roads and natural fuel breaks into fuel break design.
7. Power-wash all vehicles and equipment involved in fuels management activities, prior to entering the area, to minimize the introduction of undesirable and/or invasive plant species.
8. Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency which facilitate firefighter safety, reduce the potential acres burned, and reduce the fire risk to sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, develop maps for sage-grouse habitat which spatially display existing fuels treatments that can be used to assist suppression activities.
9. Give priority for implementing specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands, first to sites which are adjacent to or surrounded by preliminary priority habitat (PPH) or that reestablish continuity between priority habitats. Annual grasslands are a second priority for restoration when the sites are not adjacent to PPH, but within two miles of PPH. The third priority for annual grassland habitat restoration projects are sites beyond two miles of PPH. The intent is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.
10. As funding and logistics permit, restore annual grasslands to a species composition characterized by perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs or one of that referenced in land use planning documentation.
11. Emphasize the use of native plant species, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions.

12. Remove standing and encroaching trees within at least 110 yards of occupied sage-grouse leks and other habitats (e.g., nesting, wintering and brood rearing) to reduce the availability of perch sites for avian predators, as resources permit.
13. Protect wildland areas from wildfire originating on private lands, infrastructure corridors, and recreational areas.
14. Reduce the risk of vehicle- or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive species by installing fuel breaks and/or planting perennial vegetation (e.g., green-strips) paralleling road rights-of-way.
15. Strategically place and maintain pre-treated strips/areas (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, etc.) to aid in controlling wildfire, should wildfire occur near PPH or important restoration areas (such as where investments in restoration have already been made).

Appendix C Fire Operations Required Design Features for Sage-Grouse Conservation

1. Compile District/Forest level information into state-wide sage-grouse tool boxes. Tool boxes will contain maps, listing of resource advisors, contact information, local guidance, and other relevant information for each District/Forest, which will be aggregated into a state-wide document.
2. Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics.
3. Assign a resource advisor with sage-grouse expertise, or who has access to sage-grouse expertise, to all extended attack fires in or near sage-grouse habitat. Prior to the fire season, provide training to sage-grouse resource advisors on wildfire suppression organization, objectives, tactics, and procedures to develop a cadre of qualified individuals. Involve state wildlife agency expertise in fire operations through:
 - instructing resource advisors during preseason trainings;
 - qualification as resource advisors;
 - coordination with resource advisors during fire incidents;
 - contributing to incident planning with information such as habitat features or other key data useful in fire decision making
4. On critical fire weather days, pre-position additional fire suppression resources to optimize a quick and efficient response in sage-grouse habitat areas.
5. As appropriate, utilize existing fuel breaks, such as roads or discrete changes in fuel type, as control lines in order to minimize fire spread.
6. During periods of multiple fires, ensure line officers are involved in setting priorities.
7. To the extent possible, locate wildfire suppression facilities (i.e., base camps, spike camps, drop points, staging areas, heli-bases, etc.) in areas where physical disturbance to sage-grouse habitat can be minimized. These include disturbed areas, grasslands, near roads/trails or in other areas where there is existing disturbance or minimal sagebrush cover.
8. Power-wash all firefighting vehicles, to the extent possible, including engines, water tenders, personnel vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) prior to deploying in or near sage-grouse habitat areas to minimize noxious weed spread.
9. Minimize unnecessary cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations in sage-grouse habitat.
10. Minimize burnout operations in key sage-grouse habitat areas by constructing direct fireline whenever safe and practical to do so.

11. Utilize retardant, mechanized equipment, and other available resources to minimize burned acreage during initial attack.
12. As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.
13. Adequately document fire operation activities in sage-grouse habitat for potential follow-up coordination activities.

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THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Forest Service

*Developed by
the Interagency
Greater
Sage-Grouse
Disturbance
and Monitoring
Subteam*

May 30, 2014

The Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework

Developed by the Interagency Greater Sage-Grouse Disturbance and Monitoring Subteam

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INTRODUCTION

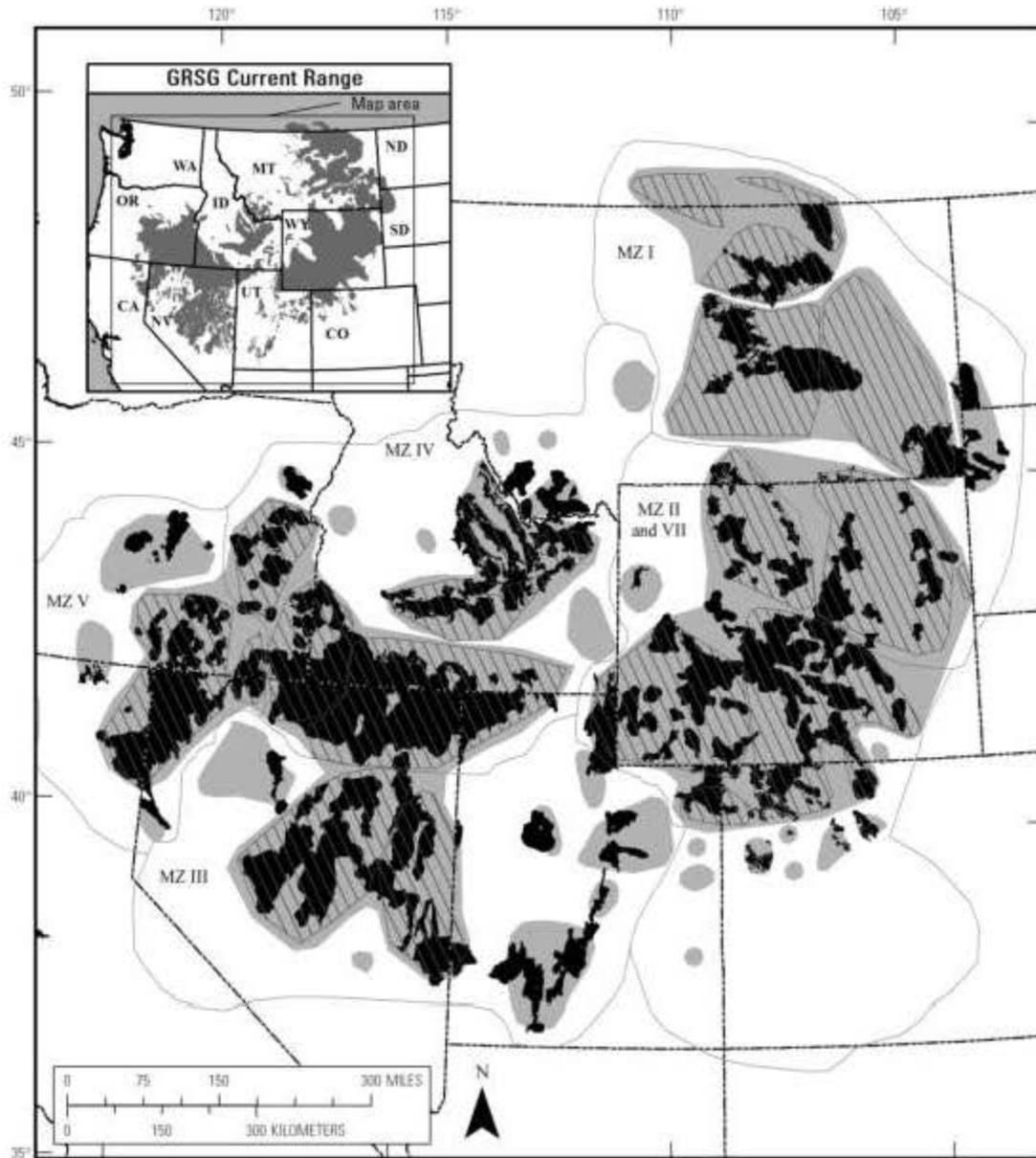
The purpose of this U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework (hereafter, monitoring framework) is to describe the methods to monitor habitats and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the BLM's national planning strategy (attachment to BLM Instruction Memorandum 2012-044), the BLM resource management plans (RMPs), and the USFS's land management plans (LMPs) to conserve the species and its habitat. The regulations for the BLM (43 CFR 1610.4-9) and the USFS (36 CFR part 209, published July 1, 2010) require that land use plans establish intervals and standards, as appropriate, for monitoring and evaluations based on the sensitivity of the resource to the decisions involved. Therefore, the BLM and the USFS will use the methods described herein to collect monitoring data and to evaluate implementation and effectiveness of the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) (hereafter, sage-grouse) planning strategy and the conservation measures contained in their respective land use plans (LUPs). A monitoring plan specific to the Environmental Impact Statement, land use plan, or field office will be developed after the Record of Decision is signed. For a summary of the frequency of reporting, see Attachment A, An Overview of Monitoring Commitments. Adaptive management will be informed by data collected at any and all scales.

To ensure that the BLM and the USFS are able to make consistent assessments about sage-grouse habitats across the range of the species, this framework lays out the methodology—at multiple scales—for monitoring of implementation and disturbance and for evaluating the effectiveness of BLM and USFS actions to conserve the species and its habitat. Monitoring efforts will include data for measurable quantitative indicators of sagebrush availability, anthropogenic disturbance levels, and sagebrush conditions. Implementation monitoring results will allow the BLM and the USFS to evaluate the extent that decisions from their LUPs to conserve sage-grouse and their habitat have been implemented. State fish and wildlife agencies will collect population monitoring information, which will be incorporated into effectiveness monitoring as it is made available.

This multiscale monitoring approach is necessary, as sage-grouse are a landscape species and conservation is scale-dependent to the extent that conservation actions are implemented within seasonal habitats to benefit populations. The four orders of habitat selection (Johnson 1980) used in this monitoring framework are described by Connelly et al. (2003) and were applied specifically to the scales of sage-grouse habitat selection by Stiver et al. (*in press*) as first order (broad scale), second order (mid scale), third order (fine scale), and fourth order (site scale). Habitat selection and habitat use by sage-grouse occur at multiple scales and are driven by multiple environmental and behavioral factors. Managing and monitoring sage-grouse habitats are complicated by the differences in habitat selection across the range and habitat use by individual birds within a given season. Therefore, the tendency to look at a single indicator of habitat suitability or only one scale limits managers' ability to identify the threats to sage-grouse

and to respond at the appropriate scale. For descriptions of these habitat suitability indicators for each scale, see “Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: Multiscale Habitat Assessment Tool” (HAF; Stiver et al. *in press*).

Monitoring methods and indicators in this monitoring framework are derived from the current peer-reviewed science. Rangewide, best available datasets for broad- and mid-scale monitoring will be acquired. If these existing datasets are not readily available or are inadequate, but they are necessary to inform the indicators of sagebrush availability, anthropogenic disturbance levels, and sagebrush conditions, the BLM and the USFS will strive to develop datasets or obtain information to fill these data gaps. Datasets that are not readily available to inform the fine- and site-scale indicators will be developed. These data will be used to generate monitoring reports at the appropriate and applicable geographic scales, boundaries, and analysis units: across the range of sage-grouse as defined by Schroeder et al. (2004), and clipped by Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Management Zone (MZ) (Stiver et al. 2006) boundaries and other areas as appropriate for size (e.g., populations based on Connelly et al. 2004). (See Figure 1, Map of Greater Sage-Grouse range, populations, subpopulations, and Priority Areas for Conservation as of 2013.) This broad- and mid-scale monitoring data and analysis will provide context for RMP/LMP areas; states; GRSG Priority Habitat, General Habitat, and other sage-grouse designated management areas; and Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs), as defined in “Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) Conservation Objectives: Final Report” (Conservation Objectives Team [COT] 2013). Hereafter, all of these areas will be referred to as “sage-grouse areas.”



**GRSG PACs, Subpopulations and Populations
LEGEND**

-  Subpopulations
-  COT PACs
-  Populations

Sources:
 Current Range: Schroeder et al., 2004
 Populations: Connelly et al., 2004
 Subpopulations: Connelly et al., 2004
 PACs: USFWS COT Report, 2013

Figure 1. Map of Greater Sage-Grouse range, populations, subpopulations, and Priority Areas for Conservation as of 2013.

This monitoring framework is divided into two sections. The broad- and mid-scale methods, described in Section I, provide a consistent approach across the range of the species to monitor implementation decisions and actions, mid-scale habitat attributes (e.g., sagebrush availability and habitat degradation), and population changes to determine the effectiveness of the planning strategy and management decisions. (See Table 1, Indicators for monitoring implementation of the national planning strategy, RMP/LMP decisions, sage-grouse habitat, and sage-grouse populations at the broad and mid scales.) For sage-grouse habitat at the fine and site scales, described in Section II, this monitoring framework describes a consistent approach (e.g., indicators and methods) for monitoring sage-grouse seasonal habitats. Funding, support, and dedicated personnel for broad- and mid-scale monitoring will be renewed annually through the normal budget process. For an overview of BLM and USFS multiscale monitoring commitments, see Attachment A.

Table 1. Indicators for monitoring implementation of the national planning strategy, RMP/LMP decisions, sage-grouse habitat, and sage-grouse populations at the broad and mid scales.

Implementation		Habitat		Population (State Wildlife Agencies)
<i>Geographic Scales</i>		Availability	Degradation	Demographics
Broad Scale: From the range of sage-grouse to WAFWA Management Zones	BLM/USFS National planning strategy goal and objectives	Distribution and amount of sagebrush within the range	Distribution and amount of energy, mining, and infrastructure facilities	WAFWA Management Zone population trend
Mid Scale: From WAFWA Management Zone to populations; PACs	RMP/LMP decisions	Mid-scale habitat indicators (HAF; Table 2 herein, e.g., percent of sagebrush per unit area)	Distribution and amount of energy, mining, and infrastructure facilities (Table 2 herein)	Individual population trend

I. BROAD AND MID SCALES

First-order habitat selection, the broad scale, describes the physical or geographical range of a species. The first-order habitat of the sage-grouse is defined by populations of sage-grouse associated with sagebrush landscapes, based on Schroeder et al. 2004, and Connelly et al. 2004, and on population or habitat surveys since 2004. An intermediate scale between the broad and mid scales was delineated by WAFWA from floristic provinces within which similar environmental factors influence vegetation communities. This scale is referred to as the WAFWA Sage-Grouse Management Zones (MZs). Although no indicators are specific to this scale, these MZs are biologically meaningful as reporting units.

Second-order habitat selection, the mid-scale, includes sage-grouse populations and PACs. The second order includes at least 40 discrete populations and subpopulations (Connelly et al. 2004). Populations range in area from 150 to 60,000 mi² and are nested within MZs. PACs range from 20 to 20,400 mi² and are nested within population areas.

Other mid-scale landscape indicators, such as patch size and number, patch connectivity, linkage areas, and landscape matrix and edge effects (Stiver et al. *in press*) will also be assessed. The methods used to calculate these metrics will be derived from existing literature (Knick et al. 2011, Leu and Hanser 2011, Knick and Hanser 2011).

A. Implementation (Decision) Monitoring

Implementation monitoring is the process of tracking and documenting the implementation (or the progress toward implementation) of RMP/LMP decisions. The BLM and the USFS will monitor implementation of project-level and/or site-specific actions and authorizations, with their associated conditions of approval/stipulations for sage-grouse, spatially (as appropriate) within Priority Habitat, General Habitat, and other sage-grouse designated management areas, at a minimum, for the planning area. These actions and authorizations, as well as progress toward completing and implementing activity-level plans, will be monitored consistently across all planning units and will be reported to BLM and USFS headquarters annually, with a summary report every 5 years, for the planning area. A national-level GRSG Land Use Plan Decision Monitoring and Reporting Tool is being developed to describe how the BLM and the USFS will consistently and systematically monitor and report implementation-level activity plans and implementation actions for all plans within the range of sage-grouse. A description of this tool for collection and reporting of tabular and spatially explicit data will be included in the Record of Decision or approved plan. The BLM and the USFS will provide data that can be integrated with other conservation efforts conducted by state and federal partners.

B. Habitat Monitoring

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), in its 2010 listing decision for the sage-grouse, identified 18 threats contributing to the destruction, modification, or curtailment of sage-grouse habitat or range (75 FR 13910 2010). The BLM and the USFS will, therefore, monitor the relative extent of these threats that remove sagebrush, both spatially and temporally, on all lands within an analysis area, and will report on amount, pattern, and condition at the appropriate and applicable geographic scales and boundaries. These 18 threats have been aggregated into three broad- and mid-scale measures to account for whether the threat predominantly removes sagebrush or degrades habitat. (See Table 2, Relationship between the 18 threats and the three habitat disturbance measures for monitoring.) The three measures are:

Measure 1: Sagebrush Availability (percent of sagebrush per unit area)

Measure 2: Habitat Degradation (percent of human activity per unit area)

Measure 3: Energy and Mining Density (facilities and locations per unit area)

These three habitat disturbance measures will evaluate disturbance on all lands, regardless of land ownership. The direct area of influence will be assessed with the goal of accounting for actual removal of sagebrush on which sage-grouse depend (Connelly et al. 2000) and for habitat degradation as a surrogate for human activity. Measure 1 (sagebrush availability) examines where disturbances have removed plant communities that support sagebrush (or have broadly removed sagebrush from the landscape). Measure 1, therefore, monitors the change in sagebrush availability—or, specifically, where and how much of the sagebrush community is available within the range of sage-grouse. The sagebrush community is defined as the ecological systems that have the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation and seasonal sage-grouse habitats within the range of sage-grouse (see Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability). Measure 2 (see Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring) and Measure 3 (see Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density) focus on where habitat degradation is occurring by using the footprint/area of direct disturbance and the number of facilities at the mid scale to identify the relative amount of degradation per geographic area of interest and in areas that have the capability of supporting sagebrush and seasonal sage-grouse use. Measure 2 (habitat degradation) not only quantifies footprint/area of direct disturbance but also establishes a surrogate for those threats most likely to have ongoing activity. Because energy development and mining activities are typically the most intensive activities in sagebrush habitat, Measure 3 (the density of active energy development, production, and mining sites) will help identify areas of particular concern for such factors as noise, dust, traffic, etc. that degrade sage-grouse habitat.

Table 2. Relationship between the 18 threats and the three habitat disturbance measures for monitoring.

Note: Data availability may preclude specific analysis of individual layers. See the detailed methodology for more information.

USFWS Listing Decision Threat	Sagebrush Availability	Habitat Degradation	Energy and Mining Density
Agriculture	X		
Urbanization	X		
Wildfire	X		
Conifer encroachment	X		
Treatments	X		
Invasive Species	X		
Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)		X	X
Energy (coal mines)		X	X
Energy (wind towers)		X	X
Energy (solar fields)		X	X
Energy (geothermal)		X	X
Mining (active locatable, leasable, and saleable developments)		X	X
Infrastructure (roads)		X	
Infrastructure (railroads)		X	
Infrastructure (power lines)		X	
Infrastructure (communication towers)		X	
Infrastructure (other vertical structures)		X	
Other developed rights-of-way		X	

The methods to monitor disturbance found herein differ slightly from methods used in Manier et al. 2013, which provided a baseline environmental report (BER) of datasets of disturbance across jurisdictions. One difference is that, for some threats, the BER data were for federal lands only. In addition, threats were assessed individually, using different assumptions from those in this monitoring framework about how to quantify the location and magnitude of threats. The methodology herein builds on the BER methodology and identifies datasets and procedures to use the best available data across the range of the sage-grouse and to formulate a consistent approach to quantify impact of the threats through time. This methodology also describes an approach to combine the threats and calculate each of the three habitat disturbance measures.

B.1. Sagebrush Availability (Measure 1)

Sage-grouse populations have been found to be more resilient where a percentage of the landscape is maintained in sagebrush (Knick and Connelly 2011), which will be determined by sagebrush availability. Measure 1 has been divided into two submeasures to describe sagebrush availability on the landscape:

Measure 1a: the current amount of sagebrush on the geographic area of interest, and

Measure 1b: the amount of sagebrush on the geographic area of interest compared with the amount of sagebrush the landscape of interest could ecologically support.

Measure 1a (the current amount of sagebrush on the landscape) will be calculated using this formula: [the existing updated sagebrush layer] divided by [the geographic area of interest]. The appropriate geographic areas of interest for sagebrush availability include the species' range, WAFWA MZs, populations, and PACs. In some cases these sage-grouse areas will need to be aggregated to provide an estimate of sagebrush availability with an acceptable level of accuracy.

Measure 1b (the amount of sagebrush for context within the geographic area of interest) will be calculated using this formula: [existing sagebrush divided by [pre-EuroAmerican settlement geographic extent of lands that could have supported sagebrush]. This measure will provide information to set the context for a given geographic area of interest during evaluations of monitoring data. The information could also be used to inform management options for restoration or mitigation and to inform effectiveness monitoring.

The sagebrush base layer for Measure 1 will be based on geospatial vegetation data adjusted for the threats listed in Table 2. The following subsections of this monitoring framework describe the methodology for determining both the current availability of sagebrush on the landscape and the context of the amount of sagebrush on the landscape at the broad and mid scales.

a. Establishing the Sagebrush Base Layer

The current geographic extent of sagebrush vegetation within the rangewide distribution of sagegrouse populations will be ascertained using the most recent version of the Existing Vegetation Type (EVT) layer in LANDFIRE (2013). LANDFIRE EVT was selected to serve as the sagebrush base layer for five reasons: 1) it is the only nationally consistent vegetation layer that has been updated multiple times since 2001; 2) the ecological systems classification within LANDFIRE EVT includes multiple sagebrush type classes that, when aggregated, provide a more accurate (compared with individual classes) and seamless sagebrush base layer across jurisdictional boundaries; 3) LANDFIRE performed a rigorous accuracy assessment from which to derive the rangewide uncertainty of the sagebrush base layer; 4) LANDFIRE is consistently used in several recent analyses of sagebrush habitats (Knick et al. 2011, Leu and Hanser 2011, Knick and Hanser 2011); and 5) LANDFIRE EVT can be compared against the geographic extent of lands that are believed to have had the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation pre-EuroAmerican settlement [LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting (BpS)]. This fifth reason provides a reference point for understanding how much sagebrush currently remains in a defined geographic area of interest compared with how much sagebrush existed historically (Measure 1b). Therefore, the BLM and the USFS have determined that LANDFIRE provides the best available data at broad and mid scales to serve as a sagebrush base layer for monitoring changes in the geographic extent of sagebrush. The BLM and the USFS, in addition to aggregating the sagebrush types into the sagebrush base layer, will aggregate the accuracy assessment reports from LANDFIRE to document the cumulative accuracy for the sagebrush base layer. The BLM—through its Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) program and, specifically, the BLM’s landscape monitoring framework (Taylor et al. 2014)—will provide field data to the LANDFIRE program to support continuous quality improvements of the LANDFIRE EVT layer. The sagebrush layer based on LANDFIRE EVT will allow for the mid-scale estimation of the existing percent of sagebrush across a variety of reporting units. This sagebrush base layer will be adjusted by changes in land cover and successful restoration for future calculations of sagebrush availability (Measures 1a and 1b).

This layer will also be used to determine the trend in other landscape indicators, such as patch size and number, patch connectivity, linkage areas, and landscape matrix and edge effects (Stiver et al. *in press*). In the future, changes in sagebrush availability, generated annually, will be included in the sagebrush base layer. The landscape metrics will be recalculated to examine changes in pattern and abundance of sagebrush at the various geographic boundaries. This information will be included in effectiveness monitoring (See Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring).

Within the USFS and the BLM, forest-wide and field office–wide existing vegetation classification mapping and inventories are available that provide a much finer level of data than what is provided through LANDFIRE. Where available, these finer-scale products will be useful for additional and complementary mid-scale indicators and local-scale analyses (see Section II,

Fine and Site Scales). The fact that these products are not available everywhere limits their utility for monitoring at the broad and mid scale, where consistency of data products is necessary across broader geographies.

Data Sources for Establishing and Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

There were three criteria for selecting the datasets for establishing and monitoring the change in sagebrush availability (Measure 1):

- Nationally consistent dataset available across the range
- Known level of confidence or accuracy in the dataset
- Continual maintenance of dataset and known update interval

Datasets meeting these criteria are listed in Table 3, Datasets for establishing and monitoring changes in sagebrush availability.

LANDFIRE Existing Vegetation Type (EVT) Version 1.2

LANDFIRE EVT represents existing vegetation types on the landscape derived from remote sensing data. Initial mapping was conducted using imagery collected in approximately 2001. Since the initial mapping there have been two update efforts: version 1.1 represents changes before 2008, and version 1.2 reflects changes on the landscape before 2010. Version 1.2 will be used as the starting point to develop the sagebrush base layer.

Sage-grouse subject matter experts determined which of the ecological systems from the LANDFIRE EVT to use in the sagebrush base layer by identifying the ecological systems that have the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation and that could provide suitable seasonal habitat for the sage-grouse. (See Table 4, Ecological systems in BpS and EVT capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and capable of providing suitable seasonal habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse.) Two additional vegetation types that are not ecological systems were added to the EVT: *Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana* Shrubland Alliance and *Quercus gambelii* Shrubland Alliance. These alliances have species composition directly related to the Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland ecological system and the Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland ecological system, both of which are ecological systems in LANDFIRE BpS. In LANDFIRE EVT, however, in some map zones, the Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland ecological system and the Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland ecological system were named *Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana* Shrubland Alliance and *Quercus gambelii* Shrubland Alliance, respectively.

Table 3. Datasets for establishing and monitoring changes in sagebrush availability.

Dataset	Source	Update Interval	Most Recent Version Year	Use
BioPhysical Setting v1.1	LANDFIRE	Static	2008	Denominator for sagebrush availability
Existing Vegetation Type v1.2	LANDFIRE	Static	2010	Numerator for sagebrush availability
Cropland Data Layer	National Agricultural Statistics Service	Annual	2012	Agricultural updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
National Land Cover Dataset Percent Imperviousness	Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC)	5-Year	2011 (next available in 2016)	Urban area updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
Fire Perimeters	GeoMac	Annual	2013	< 1,000-acre fire updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
Burn Severity	Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity	Annual	2012 (2-year delay in data availability)	> 1,000-acre fire updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability except for unburned sagebrush islands

Table 4. Ecological systems in BpS and EVT capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and capable of providing suitable seasonal habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse.

Ecological System	Sagebrush Vegetation that the Ecological System has the Capability of Producing
Colorado Plateau Mixed Low Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Columbia Plateau Low Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i>

Columbia Plateau Scabland Shrubland	<i>Artemisia rigida</i>
Columbia Plateau Steppe and Grassland	<i>Artemisia</i> spp.
Great Basin Xeric Mixed Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longicaulis</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>xericensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>xericensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tripartita</i> ssp. <i>tripartita</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Curl-Leaf Mountain Mahogany Woodland and Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Mixed Salt Desert Scrub	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia spinescens</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Montane Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>spiciformis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Semi-Desert Shrub-Steppe	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Northwestern Great Plains Mixed Grass Prairie	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Northwestern Great Plains Shrubland	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland	<i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Western Great Plains Floodplain Systems	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i>
Western Great Plains Sand Prairie	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i>
Wyoming Basins Dwarf Sagebrush Shrubland and Steppe	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tripartita</i> ssp. <i>rupicola</i>
<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> Shrubland Alliance (EVT only)	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
<i>Quercus gambelii</i> Shrubland Alliance (EVT only)	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>

Accuracy and Appropriate Use of LANDFIRE Datasets

Because of concerns over the thematic accuracy of individual classes mapped by LANDFIRE, all ecological systems listed in Table 4 will be merged into one value that represents the sagebrush base layer. With all ecological systems aggregated, the combined accuracy of the sagebrush base layer (EVT) will be much greater than if all categories were treated separately.

LANDFIRE performed the original accuracy assessment of its EVT product on a map zone basis. There are 20 LANDFIRE map zones that cover the historical range of sage-grouse as defined by Schroeder (2004). (See Attachment B, User and Producer Accuracies for Aggregated Ecological Systems within LANDFIRE Map Zones.) The aggregated sagebrush base layer for monitoring had user accuracies ranging from 57.1% to 85.7% and producer accuracies ranging from 56.7% to 100%.

LANDFIRE EVT data are not designed to be used at a local level. In reports of the percent sagebrush statistic for the various reporting units (Measure 1a), the uncertainty of the percent sagebrush will increase as the size of the reporting unit gets smaller. LANDFIRE data should never be used at the 30m pixel level (900m² resolution of raster data) for any reporting. The smallest geographic extent for using the data to determine percent sagebrush is at the PAC level; for the smallest PACs, the initial percent sagebrush estimate will have greater uncertainties compared with the much larger PACs.

Agricultural Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

The dataset for the geographic extent of agricultural lands will come from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Cropland Data Layer (CDL) (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/Release/index.htm>). CDL data are generated annually, with estimated producer accuracies for “large area row crops ranging from the mid 80% to mid-90%,” depending on the state (http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/sarsfaqs2.htm#Section3_18.0). Specific information on accuracy may be found on the NASS metadata website (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/metadata/meta.htm>). CDL provided the only dataset that matches the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated) for use in this monitoring framework and represents the best available agricultural lands mapping product.

The CDL data contain both agricultural classes and nonagricultural classes. For this effort, and in the baseline environmental report (Manier et al. 2013), nonagricultural classes were removed from the original dataset. The excluded classes are:

Barren (65 & 131), Deciduous Forest (141), Developed/High Intensity (124), Developed/Low Intensity (122), Developed/Med Intensity (123), Developed/Open Space (121), Evergreen Forest (142), Grassland Herbaceous (171), Herbaceous Wetlands (195), Mixed Forest (143), Open

Water (83 & 111), Other Hay/Non Alfalfa (37), Pasture/Hay (181), Pasture/Grass (62), Perennial Ice/Snow (112), Shrubland (64 & 152), Woody Wetlands (190).

The rule set for adjusting the sagebrush base layer for agricultural lands (and for updating the base layer for agricultural lands in the future) is that once an area is classified as agriculture in any year of the CDL, those pixels will remain out of the sagebrush base layer even if a new version of the CDL classifies that pixel as one of the nonagricultural classes listed above. The assumption is that even though individual pixels may be classified as a nonagricultural class in any given year, the pixel has not necessarily been restored to a natural sagebrush community that would be included in Table 4. A further assumption is that once an area has moved into agricultural use, it is unlikely that the area would be restored to sagebrush. Should that occur, however, the method and criteria for adding pixels back into the sagebrush base layer would follow those found in the sagebrush restoration monitoring section of this monitoring framework (see Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability).

Urban Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

The National Land Cover Database (NLCD) (Fry et al. 2011) includes a percent imperviousness dataset that was selected as the best available dataset to be used for urban adjustments and monitoring. These data are generated on a 5-year cycle and are specifically designed to support monitoring efforts. Other datasets were evaluated and lacked the spatial specificity that was captured in the NLCD product. Any new impervious pixel in NLCD will be removed from the sagebrush base layer through the monitoring process. Although the impervious surface layer includes a number of impervious pixels outside of urban areas, this is acceptable for the adjustment and monitoring for two reasons. First, an evaluation of national urban area datasets did not reveal a layer that could be confidently used in conjunction with the NLCD product to screen impervious pixels outside of urban zones. This is because unincorporated urban areas were not being included, thus leaving large chunks of urban pixels unaccounted for in this rule set. Second, experimentation with setting a threshold on the percent imperviousness layer that would isolate rural features proved to be unsuccessful. No combination of values could be identified that would result in the consistent ability to limit impervious pixels outside urban areas. Therefore, to ensure consistency in the monitoring estimates, all impervious pixels will be used.

Fire Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

Two datasets were selected for performing fire adjustments and updates: GeoMac fire perimeters and Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity (MTBS). An existing data standard in the BLM requires that all fires of more than 10 acres are to be reported to GeoMac; therefore, there will be many small fires of less than 10 acres that will not be accounted for in the adjustment and monitoring attributable to fire. Using fire perimeters from GeoMac, all sagebrush pixels falling

within the perimeter of fires less than 1,000 acres will be used to adjust and monitor the sagebrush base layer.

For fires greater than 1,000 acres, MTBS was selected as a means to account for unburned sagebrush islands during the update process of the sagebrush base layer. The MTBS program (<http://www.mtbs.gov>) is an ongoing, multiyear project to map fire severity and fire perimeters consistently across the United States. One of the burn severity classes within MTBS is an unburned to low-severity class. This burn severity class will be used to represent unburned islands of sagebrush within the fire perimeter for the sagebrush base layer. Areas within the other severity classes within the fire perimeter will be removed from the base sagebrush layer during the update process. Not all wildfires, however, have the same impacts on the recovery of sagebrush habitat, depending largely on soil moisture and temperature regimes. For example, cooler, moister sagebrush habitat has a higher potential for recovery or, if needed, restoration than does the warmer, dryer sagebrush habitat. These cooler, moister areas will likely be detected as sagebrush in future updates to LANDFIRE.

Conifer Encroachment Adjustment for the Sagebrush Base Layer

Conifer encroachment into sagebrush vegetation reduces the spatial extent of sage-grouse habitat (Davies et al. 2011, Baruch-Mordo et al. 2013). Conifer species that show propensity for encroaching into sagebrush vegetation resulting in sage-grouse habitat loss include various juniper species, such as Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*), western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), pinyon species, including singleleaf pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) and pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) (Gruell et al. 1986, Grove et al. 2005, Davies et al. 2011).

A rule set for conifer encroachment was developed to adjust the sagebrush base layer. To capture the geographic extent of sagebrush that is likely to experience conifer encroachment, ecological systems within LANDFIRE EVT version 1.2 (NatureServe 2011) were identified if they had the capability of supporting both the conifer species (listed above) and sagebrush vegetation. Those ecological systems were deemed to be the plant communities with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation. (See Table 5, Ecological systems with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation.) Sagebrush vegetation was defined as including sagebrush species or subspecies that provide habitat for the Greater Sage-Grouse and that are included in the HAF. (See Attachment C, Sagebrush Species and Subspecies Included in the Selection Criteria for Building the EVT and BpS Layers.) An adjacency analysis was conducted to identify all sagebrush pixels that were directly adjacent to these conifer ecological systems, and these pixels were removed from the sagebrush base layer.

Table 5. Ecological systems with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation.

EVT Ecological Systems	Coniferous Species and Sagebrush Vegetation that the Ecological System has the Capability of Producing
Colorado Plateau Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia pygmaea</i>
Columbia Plateau Western Juniper Woodland and Savanna	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> <i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia rigida</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
East Cascades Oak-Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodland	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i>
Great Basin Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus monophylla</i> <i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Northern Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland and Savanna	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Rocky Mountain Foothill Limber Pine-Juniper Woodland	<i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Juniperus scopulorum</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Rocky Mountain Poor-Site Lodgepole Pine Forest	<i>Pinus contorta</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> <i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Southern Rocky Mountain Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Juniperus monosperma</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Southern Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>

	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Pinus contorta</i> <i>Juniperus</i> spp. <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
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Invasive Annual Grasses Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

There are no invasive species datasets from 2010 to the present (beyond the LANDFIRE data) that meet the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated) for use in the determination of the sagebrush base layer. For a description of how invasive species land cover will be incorporated in the sagebrush base layer in the future, see Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability.

Sagebrush Restoration Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

There are no datasets from 2010 to the present that could provide additions to the sagebrush base layer from restoration treatments that meet the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated); therefore, no adjustments were made to the sagebrush base layer calculated from the LANDFIRE EVT (version 1.2) attributable to restoration activities since 2010. Successful restoration treatments before 2010 are assumed to have been captured in the LANDFIRE refresh.

b. Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

Sagebrush availability will be updated annually by incorporating changes to the sagebrush base layer attributable to agriculture, urbanization, and wildfire. The monitoring schedule for the existing sagebrush base layer updates is as follows:

2010 Existing Sagebrush Base Layer = [Sagebrush EVT] minus [2006 Imperviousness Layer] minus [2009 and 2010 CDL] minus [2009/10 GeoMac Fires that are less than 1,000 acres] minus [2009/10 MTBS Fires that are greater than 1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter] minus [Conifer Encroachment Layer]

2012 Existing Sagebrush Update = [2010 Existing Sagebrush Base Layer] minus [2011 Imperviousness Layer] minus [2011 and 2012 CDL] minus [2011/12 GeoMac Fires < 1,000 acres] minus [2011/12 MTBS Fires that are greater than 1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter]

Monitoring Existing Sagebrush post 2012 = [Previous Existing Sagebrush Update Layer] minus [Imperviousness Layer (if new data are available)] minus [Next 2 years of CDL] minus [Next 2 years of GeoMac Fires < 1,000 acres] minus [Next 2 years of MTBS Fires that are greater than

1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter] plus
[restoration/monitoring data provided by the field]

Monitoring Sagebrush Restoration

Restoration after fire, after agricultural conversion, after seedings of introduced grasses, or after treatments of pinyon pine and/or juniper are examples of updates to the sagebrush base layer that can add sagebrush vegetation back into sagebrush availability in the landscape. When restoration has been determined to be successful through rangewide, consistent, interagency fine- and site-scale monitoring, the polygonal data will be used to add sagebrush pixels back into the broad- and mid-scale sagebrush base layer.

Measure 1b: Context for Monitoring the Amount of Sagebrush in a Geographic Area of Interest

Measure 1b describes the amount of sagebrush on the landscape of interest compared with the amount of sagebrush the landscape of interest could ecologically support. Areas with the potential to support sagebrush were derived from the BpS data layer that describes sagebrush pre-EuroAmerican settlement (v1.2 of LANDFIRE).

The identification and spatial locations of natural plant communities (vegetation) that are believed to have existed on the landscape (BpS) were constructed based on an approximation of the historical (pre-EuroAmerican settlement) disturbance regime and how the historical disturbance regime operated on the current biophysical environment. BpS is composed of map units that are based on NatureServe (2011) terrestrial ecological systems classification.

The ecological systems within BpS used for this monitoring framework are those ecological systems that are capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and of providing seasonal habitat for sage-grouse (Table 4). Ecological systems selected included sagebrush species or subspecies that are included in the HAF and listed in Attachment C.

The BpS layer does not have an associated accuracy assessment, given the lack of any reference data. Visual inspection of the BpS data, however, reveals inconsistencies in the labeling of pixels among LANDFIRE map zones. The reason for these inconsistencies is that the rule sets used to map a given ecological system will vary among map zones based on different physical, biological, disturbance, and atmospheric regimes of the region. These variances can result in artificial edges in the map. Metrics will be calculated, however, at broad spatial scales using BpS potential vegetation type, not small groupings or individual pixels. Therefore, the magnitude of these observable errors in the BpS layer will be minor compared with the size of the reporting units. Since BpS will be used to identify broad landscape patterns of dominant vegetation, these inconsistencies will have only a minor impact on the percent sagebrush availability calculation. *As with the LANDFIRE EVT, LANDFIRE BpS data are not designed to be used at a local level. LANDFIRE data should never be used at the 30m pixel level for reporting.*

In conclusion, sagebrush availability data will be used to inform effectiveness monitoring and initiate adaptive management actions as necessary. The 2010 estimate of sagebrush availability will serve as the base year, and an updated estimate for 2012 will be reported in 2014 after all datasets become available. The 2012 estimate will capture changes attributable to wildfire, agriculture, and urban development. Subsequent updates will always include new fire and agricultural data and new urban data when available. Restoration data that meet the criteria for adding sagebrush areas back into the sagebrush base layer will be factored in as data allow. Given data availability, there will be a 2-year lag (approximately) between when the estimate is generated and when the data used for the estimate become available (e.g., the 2014 sagebrush availability will be included in the 2016 estimate).

Future Plans

Geospatial data used to generate the sagebrush base layer will be available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and geospatial gateway or through the authoritative data source. Legacy datasets will be preserved so that trends may be calculated. Additionally, accuracy assessment data for all source datasets will be provided on the portal either spatially, where applicable, or through the metadata. Accuracy assessment information was deemed vital to help users understand the limitation of the sagebrush estimates; it will be summarized spatially by map zone and will be included in the portal.

LANDFIRE plans to begin a remapping effort in 2015. This remapping has the potential to improve the overall quality of data products greatly, primarily through the use of higher-quality remote sensing datasets. Additionally, the BLM and the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC) are working to improve the accuracy of vegetation map products for broad- and mid-scale analyses through the Grass/Shrub mapping effort. The Grass/Shrub mapping effort applies the Wyoming multiscale sagebrush habitat methodology (Homer et al. 2009) to depict spatially the fractional percent cover estimates for five components rangewide and West-wide. These five components are percent cover of sagebrush vegetation, percent bare ground, percent herbaceous vegetation (grass and forbs combined), annual vegetation, and percent shrubs. A benefit of the design of these fractional cover maps is that they facilitate monitoring "within" class variation (e.g., examination of declining trend in sagebrush cover for individual pixels). This "within" class variation can serve as one indicator of sagebrush quality that cannot be derived from LANDFIRE's EVT information. The Grass/Shrub mapping effort is not a substitute for fine-scale monitoring but will leverage fine-scale data to support the validation of the mapping products. An evaluation will be conducted to determine if either dataset is of great enough quality to warrant replacing the existing sagebrush layers. At the earliest, this evaluation will occur in 2018 or 2019, depending on data availability.

B.2. Habitat Degradation Monitoring (Measure 2)

The measure of habitat degradation will be calculated by combining the footprints of threats identified in Table 2. The footprint is defined as the direct area of influence of “active” energy and infrastructure; it is used as a surrogate for human activity. Although these analyses will try to summarize results at the aforementioned meaningful geographic areas of interest, some may be too small to report the metrics appropriately and may be combined (smaller populations, PACs within a population, etc.). Data sources for each threat are found in Table 6, Geospatial data sources for habitat degradation. Specific assumptions (inclusion criteria for data, width/area assumptions for point and line features, etc.) and methodology for each threat, and the combined measure, are detailed below. All datasets will be updated annually to monitor broad- and mid-scale year-to-year changes and to calculate trends in habitat degradation to inform adaptive management. A 5-year summary report will be provided to the USFWS.

a. Habitat Degradation Datasets and Assumptions

Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)

This dataset will compile information from three oil and gas databases: the proprietary IHS Enerdeq database, the BLM Automated Fluid Minerals Support System (AFMSS) database, and the proprietary Platts (a McGraw-Hill Financial Company) GIS Custom Data (hereafter, Platts) database of power plants. Point data from wells active within the last 10 years from IHS and producing wells from AFMSS will be considered as a 5-acre (2.0ha) direct area of influence centered on the well point, as recommended by the BLM WO-300 (Minerals and Realty Management). Plugged and abandoned wells will be removed if the date of well abandonment was before the first day of the reporting year (i.e., for the 2015 reporting year, a well must have been plugged and abandoned by 12/31/2014 to be removed). Platts oil and gas power plants data (subset to operational power plants) will also be included as a 5-acre (2.0ha) direct area of influence.

Additional Measure: Reclaimed Energy-related Degradation. This dataset will include those wells that have been plugged and abandoned. This measure thereby attempts to measure energy-related degradation that has been reclaimed but not necessarily fully restored to sage-grouse habitat. This measure will establish a baseline by using wells that have been plugged and abandoned within the last 10 years from the IHS and AFMSS datasets. Time lags for lek attendance in response to infrastructure have been documented to be delayed 2–10 years from energy development activities (Harju et al. 2010). Reclamation actions may require 2 or more years from the Final Abandonment Notice. Sagebrush seedling establishment may take 6 or more years from the point of seeding, depending on such variables as annual precipitation, annual temperature, and soil type and depth (Pyke 2011). This 10-year period is conservative and assumes some level of habitat improvement 10 years after plugging. Research by Hemstrom et al. (2002), however,

proposes an even longer period—more than 100 years—for recovery of sagebrush habitats, even with active restoration approaches. Direct area of influence will be considered 3 acres (1.2ha) (J. Perry, personal communication, February 12, 2014). This additional layer/measure could be used at the broad and mid scale to identify areas where sagebrush habitat and/or potential sagebrush habitat is likely still degraded. This layer/measure could also be used where further investigation at the fine or site scale would be warranted to: 1) quantify the level of reclamation already conducted, and 2) evaluate the amount of restoration still required for sagebrush habitat recovery. At a particular level (e.g., population, PACs), these areas and the reclamation efforts/success could be used to inform reclamation standards associated with future developments. Once these areas have transitioned from reclamation standards to meeting *restoration* standards, they can be added back into the sagebrush availability layer using the same methodology as described for adding restoration treatment areas lost to wildfire and agriculture conversion (see Monitoring Sagebrush Restoration in Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability). This dataset will be updated annually from the IHS dataset.

Energy (coal mines)

Currently, there is no comprehensive dataset available that identifies the footprint of active coal mining across all jurisdictions. Therefore, point and polygon datasets will be used each year to identify coal mining locations. Data sources will be identified and evaluated annually and will include at a minimum: BLM coal lease polygons, U.S. Energy Information Administration mine occurrence points, U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement coal mining permit polygons (as available), and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Mineral Resources Data System mine occurrence points. These data will inform where active coal mining may be occurring. Additionally, coal power plant data from Platts power plants database (subset to operational power plants) will be included. Aerial imagery will then be used to digitize manually the active coal mining and coal power plants surface disturbance in or near these known occurrence areas. While the date of aerial imagery varies by scale, the most current data available from Esri and/or Google will be used to locate (generally at 1:50,000 and below) and digitize (generally at 1:10,000 and below) active coal mine and power plant direct area of influence. Coal mine location data source and imagery date will be documented for each digitized coal polygon at the time of creation. Subsurface facility locations (polygon or point location as available) will also be collected if available, included in density calculations, and added to the active surface activity layer as appropriate (if an actual direct area of influence can be located).

Energy (wind energy facilities)

This dataset will be a subset of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Digital Obstacles point file. Points where “Type_” = “WINDMILL” will be included. Direct area of influence of these point features will be measured by converting to a polygon dataset as a direct area of

influence of 3 acres (1.2ha) centered on each tower point. See the BLM’s “Wind Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement” (BLM 2005). Additionally, Platts power plants database will be used for transformer stations associated with wind energy sites (subset to operational power plants), also with a 3-acre (1.2ha) direct area of influence.

Energy (solar energy facilities)

This dataset will include solar plants as compiled with the Platts power plants database (subset to operational power plants). This database includes an attribute that indicates the operational capacity of each solar power plant. Total capacity at the power plant was based on ratings of the in-service unit(s), in megawatts. Direct area of influence polygons will be centered over each point feature representing 7.3ac (3.0ha) per megawatt of the stated operational capacity, per the report of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), “Land-Use Requirements for Solar Power Plants in the United States” (Ong et al. 2013).

Energy (geothermal energy facilities)

This dataset will include geothermal wells in existence or under construction as compiled with the IHS wells database and power plants as compiled with the Platts database (subset to operational power plants). Direct area of influence of these point features will be measured by converting to a polygon dataset of 3 acres (1.2ha) centered on each well or power plant point.

Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable)

This dataset will include active locatable mining locations as compiled with the proprietary InfoMine database. Aerial imagery will then be used to digitize manually the active mining surface disturbance in or near these known occurrence areas. While the date of aerial imagery varies by scale, the most current data available from Esri and/or Google will be used to locate (generally at 1:50,000 and below) and digitize (generally at 1:10,000 and below) active mine direct area of influence. Mine location data source and imagery date will be documented for each digitized polygon at the time of creation. Currently, there are no known compressive databases available for leasable or saleable mining sites beyond coal mines. Other data sources will be evaluated and used as they are identified or as they become available. Point data may be converted to polygons to represent direct area of influence unless actual surface disturbance is available.

Infrastructure (roads)

This dataset will be compiled from the proprietary Esri StreetMap Premium for ArcGIS. Dataset features that will be used are: Interstate Highways, Major Roads, and Surface Streets to capture most paved and “crowned and ditched” roads while not including “two-track” and 4-wheel-drive routes. These minor roads, while not included in the broad- and mid-scale monitoring, may support a volume of traffic that can have deleterious effects on sage-grouse leks. It may be

appropriate to consider the frequency and type of use of roads in a NEPA analysis for a proposed project. This fine- and site-scale analysis will require more site-specific data than is identified in this monitoring framework. The direct area of influence for roads will be represented by 240.2ft, 84.0ft, and 40.7ft (73.2m, 25.6m, and 12.4m) total widths centered on the line feature for Interstate Highways, Major Roads, and Surface Streets, respectively (Knick et al. 2011). The most current dataset will be used for each monitoring update. *Note: This is a related but different dataset than what was used in BER (Manier et al. 2013). Individual BLM/USFS planning units may use different road layers for fine- and site-scale monitoring.*

Infrastructure (railroads)

This dataset will be a compilation from the Federal Railroad Administration Rail Lines of the USA dataset. Non-abandoned rail lines will be used; abandoned rail lines will not be used. The direct are of influence for railroads will be represented by a 30.8ft (9.4m) total width (Knick et al. 2011) centered on the non-abandoned railroad line feature.

Infrastructure (power lines)

This line dataset will be derived from the proprietary Platts transmission lines database. Linear features in the dataset attributed as “buried” will be removed from the disturbance calculation. Only “In Service” lines will be used; “Proposed” lines will not be used. Direct area of influence will be determined by the kV designation: 1–199 kV (100ft/30.5m), 200–399 kV (150ft/45.7m), 400–699 kV (200ft/61.0m), and 700-or greater kV (250ft/76.2m) based on average right-of-way and structure widths, according to BLM WO-300 (Minerals and Realty Management).

Infrastructure (communication towers)

This point dataset will be compiled from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) communication towers point file; all duplicate points will be removed. It will be converted to a polygon dataset by using a direct area of influence of 2.5 acres (1.0ha) centered on each communication tower point (Knick et al. 2011).

Infrastructure (other vertical structures)

This point dataset will be compiled from the FAA’s Digital Obstacles point file. Points where “Type_” = “WINDMILL” will be removed. Duplicate points from the FCC communication towers point file will be removed. Remaining features will be converted to a polygon dataset using a direct area of influence of 2.5 acres (1.0ha) centered on each vertical structure point (Knick et al. 2011).

Other Developed Rights-of-Way

Currently, no additional data sources for other rights-of-way have been identified; roads, power lines, railroads, pipelines, and other known linear features are represented in the categories

described above. The newly purchased IHS data do contain pipeline information; however, this database does not currently distinguish between above-ground and underground pipelines. If additional features representing human activities are identified, they will be added to monitoring reports using similar assumptions to those used with the threats described above.

b. Habitat Degradation Threat Combination and Calculation

The threats targeted for measuring human activity (Table 2) will be converted to direct area of influence polygons as described for each threat above. These threat polygon layers will be combined and features dissolved to create one overall polygon layer representing footprints of active human activity in the range of sage-grouse. Individual datasets, however, will be preserved to indicate which types of threats may be contributing to overall habitat degradation.

This measure has been divided into three submeasures to describe habitat degradation on the landscape. Percentages will be calculated as follows:

Measure 2a. Footprint by geographic area of interest: Divide area of the active/direct footprint by the total area of the geographic area of interest (% disturbance in geographic area of interest).

Measure 2b. Active/direct footprint by historical sagebrush potential: Divide area of the active footprint that coincides with areas with historical sagebrush potential (BpS calculation from habitat availability) within a given geographic area of interest by the total area with sagebrush potential within the geographic area of interest (% disturbance on potential historical sagebrush in geographic area of interest).

Measure 2c. Active/direct footprint by current sagebrush: Divide area of the active footprint that coincides with areas of existing sagebrush (EVT calculation from habitat availability) within a given geographic area of interest by the total area that is current sagebrush within the geographic area of interest (% disturbance on current sagebrush in geographic area of interest).

B.3. Energy and Mining Density (Measure 3)

The measure of density of energy and mining will be calculated by combining the locations of energy and mining threats identified in Table 2. This measure will provide an estimate of the intensity of human activity or the intensity of habitat degradation. The number of energy facilities and mining locations will be summed and divided by the area of meaningful geographic areas of interest to calculate density of these activities. Data sources for each threat are found in Table 6. Specific assumptions (inclusion criteria for data, width/area assumptions for point and line features, etc.) and methodology for each threat, and the combined measure, are detailed

below. All datasets will be updated annually to monitor broad- and mid-scale year-to-year changes and 5-year (or longer) trends in habitat degradation.

Table 6. Geospatial data sources for habitat degradation (Measure 2).

Degradation Type	Subcategory	Data Source	Direct Area of Influence	Area Source
Energy (oil & gas)	Wells	IHS; BLM (AFMSS)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (coal)	Mines	BLM; USFS; Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; USGS Mineral Resources Data System	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri/Google Imagery
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Energy (wind)	Wind Turbines	Federal Aviation Administration	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (solar)	Fields/Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	7.3ac (3.0ha)/MW	NREL
Energy (geothermal)	Wells	IHS	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Mining	Locatable Developments	InfoMine	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Infrastructure (roads)	Surface Streets (Minor Roads)	Esri StreetMap Premium	40.7ft (12.4m)	USGS
	Major Roads	Esri StreetMap Premium	84.0ft (25.6m)	USGS
	Interstate Highways	Esri StreetMap Premium	240.2ft (73.2m)	USGS
Infrastructure (railroads)	Active Lines	Federal Railroad Administration	30.8ft (9.4m)	USGS
Infrastructure (power lines)	1-199kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	100ft (30.5m)	BLM WO-300
	200-399 kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	150ft (45.7m)	BLM WO-300
	400-699kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	200ft (61.0m)	BLM WO-300
	700+kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	250ft (76.2m)	BLM WO-300
Infrastructure (communication)	Towers	Federal Communications Commission	2.5ac (1.0ha)	BLM WO-300

a. Energy and Mining Density Datasets and Assumptions

Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (coal mines)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (wind energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (solar energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (geothermal energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

b. Energy and Mining Density Threat Combination and Calculation

Datasets for energy and mining will be collected in two primary forms: point locations (e.g., wells) and polygon areas (e.g., surface coal mining). The following rule set will be used to calculate density for meaningful geographic areas of interest including standard grids and per polygon:

- 1) Point locations will be preserved; no additional points will be removed beyond the methodology described above. Energy facilities in close proximity (an oil well close to a wind tower) will be retained.
- 2) Polygons will not be merged, or features further dissolved. Thus, overlapping facilities will be retained, such that each individual threat will be a separate polygon data input for the density calculation.
- 3) The analysis unit (polygon or 640-acre section in a grid) will be the basis for counting the number of mining or energy facilities per unit area. Within the analysis unit, all point features will be summed, and any individual polygons will be counted as one (e.g., a coal mine will be counted as one facility within population). Where polygon features overlap multiple units (polygons or pixels), the facility will be counted as one in each unit where the polygon occurs (e.g., a polygon crossing multiple 640-acre

sections would be counted as one in each 640-acre section for a density per 640-acre-section calculation).

- 4) In methodologies with different-sized units (e.g., MZs, populations, etc.) raw facility counts will be converted to densities by dividing the raw facility counts by the total area of the unit. Typically this will be measured as facilities per 640 acres.
- 5) For uniform grids, raw facility counts will be reported. Typically this number will also be converted to facilities per 640 acres.
- 6) Reporting may include summaries beyond the simple ones above. Zonal statistics may be used to smooth smaller grids to help display and convey information about areas within meaningful geographic areas of interest that have high levels of energy and/or mining activity.
- 7) Additional statistics for each defined unit may also include adjusting the area to include only the area with the historical potential for sagebrush (BpS) or areas currently sagebrush (EVT).

Individual datasets and threat combination datasets for habitat degradation will be available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and geospatial gateway. Legacy datasets will be preserved so that trends may be calculated.

C. Population (Demographics) Monitoring

State wildlife management agencies are responsible for monitoring sage-grouse populations within their respective states. WAFWA will coordinate this collection of annual population data by state agencies. These data will be made available to the BLM according to the terms of the forthcoming Greater Sage-Grouse Population Monitoring Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (2014) between WAFWA and the BLM. The MOU outlines a process, timeline, and responsibilities for regular data sharing of sage-grouse population and/or habitat information for the purposes of implementing sage-grouse LUPs/amendments and subsequent effectiveness monitoring. Population areas were refined from the "Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) Conservation Objectives: Final Report" (COT 2013) by individual state wildlife agencies to create a consistent naming nomenclature for future data analyses. These population data will be used for analysis at the applicable scale to supplement habitat effectiveness monitoring of management actions and to inform the adaptive management responses.

D. Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring will provide the data needed to evaluate BLM and USFS actions toward reaching the objective of the national planning strategy (BLM IM 2012-044)—to conserve sage-grouse populations and their habitat—and the objectives for the land use planning

area. Effectiveness monitoring methods described here will encompass multiple larger scales, from areas as large as the WAFWA MZ to the scale of this LUP. Effectiveness data used for these larger-scale evaluations will include all lands in the area of interest, regardless of surface ownership/management, and will help inform where finer-scale evaluations are needed, such as population areas smaller than an LUP or PACs within an LUP (described in Section II, Fine and Site Scales). Data will also include the trend of disturbance within these areas of interest to inform the need to initiate adaptive management responses as described in the land use plan.

Effectiveness monitoring reported for these larger areas provides the context to conduct effectiveness monitoring at finer scales. This approach also helps focus scarce resources to areas experiencing habitat loss, degradation, or population declines, without excluding the possibility of concurrent, finer-scale evaluations as needed where habitat or population anomalies have been identified through some other means.

To determine the effectiveness of the sage-grouse national planning strategy, the BLM and the USFS will evaluate the answers to the following questions and prepare a broad- and mid-scale effectiveness report:

- 1) Sagebrush Availability and Condition:
 - a. What is the amount of sagebrush availability and the change in the amount and condition of sagebrush?
 - b. What is the existing amount of sagebrush on the landscape and the change in the amount relative to the pre-EuroAmerican historical distribution of sagebrush (BpS)?
 - c. What is the trend and condition of the indicators describing sagebrush characteristics important to sage-grouse?
- 2) Habitat Degradation and Intensity of Activities:
 - a. What is the amount of habitat degradation and the change in that amount?
 - b. What is the intensity of activities and the change in the intensity?
 - c. What is the amount of reclaimed energy-related degradation and the change in the amount?
- 3) What is the population estimation of sage-grouse and the change in the population estimation?
- 4) How are the BLM and the USFS contributing to changes in the amount of sagebrush?
- 5) How are the BLM and the USFS contributing to disturbance?

The compilation of broad- and mid-scale data (and population trends as available) into an effectiveness monitoring report will occur on a 5-year reporting schedule (see Attachment A), which may be accelerated to respond to critical emerging issues (in consultation with the USFWS and state wildlife agencies). In addition, effectiveness monitoring results will be used to identify emerging issues and research needs and inform the BLM and the USFS adaptive

management strategy (see the adaptive management section of this Environmental Impact Statement).

To determine the effectiveness of the sage-grouse objectives of the land use plan, the BLM and the USFS will evaluate the answers to the following questions and prepare a plan effectiveness report:

- 1) Is this plan meeting the sage-grouse habitat objectives?
- 2) Are sage-grouse areas within the LUP meeting, or making progress toward meeting, land health standards, including the Special Status Species/wildlife habitat standard?
- 3) Is the plan meeting the disturbance objective(s) within sage-grouse areas?
- 4) Are the sage-grouse populations within this plan boundary and within the sage-grouse areas increasing, stable, or declining?

The effectiveness monitoring report for this LUP will occur on a 5-year reporting schedule (see Attachment A) or more often if habitat or population anomalies indicate the need for an evaluation to facilitate adaptive management or respond to critical emerging issues. Data will be made available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and the geospatial gateway.

Methods

At the broad and mid scales (PACs and above) the BLM and the USFS will summarize the vegetation, disturbance, and (when available) population data. Although the analysis will try to summarize results for PACs within each sage-grouse population, some populations may be too small to report the metrics appropriately and may need to be combined to provide an estimate with an acceptable level of accuracy. Otherwise, they will be flagged for more intensive monitoring by the appropriate landowner or agency. The BLM and the USFS will then analyze monitoring data to detect the trend in the amount of sagebrush; the condition of the vegetation in the sage-grouse areas (MacKinnon et al. 2011); the trend in the amount of disturbance; the change in disturbed areas owing to successful restoration; and the amount of new disturbance the BLM and/or the USFS has permitted. These data could be supplemented with population data (when available) to inform an understanding of the correlation between habitat and PACs within a population. This overall effectiveness evaluation must consider the lag effect response of populations to habitat changes (Garton et al. 2011).

Calculating Question 1, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The amount of sagebrush available in the large area of interest will use the information from Measure 1a (I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability) and calculate the change from the 2012 baseline to the end date of the reporting period. To calculate the change in the amount of sagebrush on the landscape to compare with the historical areas with potential to support sagebrush, the information from Measure 1b (I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability) will be used. To calculate the trend in the condition of sagebrush at the mid scale, three sources of data will be used: the BLM's Grass/Shrub mapping effort (Future Plans in Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability); the results from the calculation of the landscape

indicators, such as patch size (described below); and the BLM's Landscape Monitoring Framework (LMF) and sage-grouse intensification effort (also described below). The LMF and sage-grouse intensification effort data are collected in a statistical sampling framework that allows calculation of indicator values at multiple scales.

Beyond the importance of sagebrush availability to sage-grouse, the mix of sagebrush patches on the landscape at the broad and mid scale provides the life requisite of space for sage-grouse dispersal needs (see the HAF). The configuration of sagebrush habitat patches and the land cover or land use between the habitat patches at the broad and mid scales also defines suitability. There are three significant habitat indicators that influence habitat use, dispersal, and movement across populations: the size and number of habitat patches, the connectivity of habitat patches (linkage areas), and habitat fragmentation (scope of unsuitable and non-habitats between habitat patches). The most appropriate commercial software to measure patch dynamics, connectivity, and fragmentation at the broad and mid scales will be used, along with the same data layers derived for sagebrush availability.

The BLM initiated the LMF in 2011 in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The objective of the LMF effort is to provide unbiased estimates of vegetation and soil condition and trend using a statistically balanced sample design across BLM lands. Recognizing that sage-grouse populations are more resilient where the sagebrush plant community has certain characteristics unique to a particular life stage of sage-grouse (Knick and Connelly 2011, Stiver et al. *in press*), a group of sage-grouse habitat and sagebrush plant community subject matter experts identified those vegetation indicators collected at LMF sampling points that inform sage-grouse habitat needs. The experts represented the Agricultural Research Service, BLM, NRCS, USFWS, WAFWA, state wildlife agencies, and academia. The common indicators identified include: species composition, foliar cover, height of the tallest sagebrush and herbaceous plant, intercanopy gap, percent of invasive species, sagebrush shape, and bare ground. To increase the precision of estimates of sagebrush conditions within the range of sage-grouse, additional plot locations in occupied sage-grouse habitat (Sage-Grouse Intensification) were added in 2013. The common indicators are also collected on sampling locations in the NRCS National Resources Inventory Rangeland Resource Assessment (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/?&cid=stelprdb1041620>).

The sage-grouse intensification baseline data will be collected over a 5-year period, and an annual sage-grouse intensification report will be prepared describing the status of the indicators. Beginning in year 6, the annual status report will be accompanied with a trend report, which will be available on an annual basis thereafter, contingent on continuation of the current monitoring budget. This information, in combination with the Grass/Shrub mapping information, the mid-scale habitat suitability indicator measures, and the sagebrush availability information will be used to answer Question 1 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 2, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: Evaluations of the amount of habitat degradation and the intensity of the activities in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 2 (Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring) and Measure 3 (Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density). The field office will collect data on the amount of reclaimed energy-related degradation on plugged and abandoned and oil/gas well sites. The data are expected to demonstrate that the reclaimed sites have yet to meet the habitat restoration objectives for sage-grouse habitat. This information, in combination with the amount of habitat degradation, will be used to answer Question 2 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 3, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The change in sage-grouse estimated populations will be calculated from data provided by the state wildlife agencies, when available. This population data (Section I.C., Population [Demographics] Monitoring) will be used to answer Question 3 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 4, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The estimated contribution by the BLM or the USFS to the change in the amount of sagebrush in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 1a (Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability). This measure is derived from the national datasets that remove sagebrush (Table 3). To determine the relative contribution of BLM and USFS management, the current Surface Management Agency geospatial data layer will be used to differentiate the amount of change for each management agency for this measure in the geographic areas of interest. This information will be used to answer Question 4 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 5, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The estimated contribution by the BLM or the USFS to the change in the amount of disturbance in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 2a (Section I.B.2., Monitoring Habitat Degradation) and Measure 3 (Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density). These measures are all derived from the national disturbance datasets that degrade habitat (Table 6). To determine the relative contribution of BLM and USFS management, the current Surface Management Agency geospatial data layer will be used to differentiate the amount of change for each management agency for these two measures in the geographic areas of interest. This information will be used to answer Question 5 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Answers to the five questions for determining the effectiveness of the national planning strategy will identify areas that appear to be meeting the objectives of the strategy and will facilitate identification of population areas for more detailed analysis. Conceptually, if the broad-scale monitoring identifies increasing sagebrush availability and improving vegetation conditions, decreasing disturbance, and a stable or increasing population for the area of interest, there is evidence that the objectives of the national planning strategy to maintain populations and their habitats have been met. Conversely, where information indicates that sagebrush is decreasing and vegetation conditions are degrading, disturbance in sage-grouse areas is increasing, and/or

populations are declining relative to the baseline, there is evidence that the objectives of the national planning strategy are not being achieved. Such a determination would likely result in a more detailed analysis and could be the basis for implementing more restrictive adaptive management measures.

With respect to the land use plan area, the BLM and the USFS will summarize the vegetation, disturbance, and population data to determine if the LUP is meeting the plan objectives. Effectiveness information used for these evaluations includes BLM/USFS surface management areas and will help inform where finer-scale evaluations are needed, such as seasonal habitats, corridors, or linkage areas. Data will also include the trend of disturbance within the sage-grouse areas, which will inform the need to initiate adaptive management responses as described in the land use plan.

Calculating Question 1, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The condition of vegetation and the allotments meeting land health standards (as articulated in “BLM Handbook 4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards”) in sage-grouse areas will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in meeting the vegetation objectives for sage-grouse habitat set forth in the plan. The field office/ranger district will be responsible for collecting this data. In order for this data to be consistent and comparable, common indicators, consistent methods, and an unbiased sampling framework will be implemented following the principles in the BLM’s AIM strategy (Taylor et al. 2014; Toevs et al. 2011; MacKinnon et al. 2011), in the BLM’s Technical Reference “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005), and in the HAF (Stiver et al. *in press*) or other approved WAFWA MZ-consistent guidance to measure and monitor sage-grouse habitats. This information will be used to answer Question 1 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 2, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: Sage-grouse areas within the LUP that are achieving land health stands (or, if trend data are available, that are making progress toward achieving them)—particularly the Special Status Species/wildlife habitat land health standard—will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in achieving the habitat objectives set forth in the plan. Field offices will follow directions in “BLM Handbook 4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards,” to ascertain if sage-grouse areas are achieving or making progress toward achieving land health standards. One of the recommended criteria for evaluating this land health standard is the HAF indicators.

Calculating Question 3, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The amount of habitat disturbance in sage-grouse areas identified in this LUP will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in meeting the plan’s disturbance objectives. National datasets can be used to calculate the amount of disturbance, but field office data will likely increase the accuracy of this estimate. This information will be used to answer Question 3 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 4, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The change in estimated sage-grouse populations will be calculated from data provided by the state wildlife agencies, when available, and will be used to determine LUP effectiveness. This population data (Section I.C., Population [Demographics] Monitoring) will be used to answer Question 4 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Results of the effectiveness monitoring process for the LUP will be used to inform the need for finer-scale investigations, initiate adaptive management actions as described in the land use plan, initiate causation determination, and/or determine if changes to management decisions are warranted. The measures used at the broad and mid scales will provide a suite of characteristics for evaluating the effectiveness of the adaptive management strategy.

II. FINE AND SITE SCALES

Fine-scale (third-order) habitat selected by sage-grouse is described as the physical and geographic area within home ranges during breeding, summer, and winter periods. At this level, habitat suitability monitoring should address factors that affect sage-grouse use of, and movements between, seasonal use areas. The habitat monitoring at the fine and site scale (fourth order) should focus on indicators to describe seasonal home ranges for sage-grouse associated with a lek or lek group within a population or subpopulation area. Fine- and site-scale monitoring will inform LUP effectiveness monitoring (see Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring) and the hard and soft triggers identified in the LUP's adaptive management section.

Site-scale habitat selected by sage-grouse is described as the more detailed vegetation characteristics of seasonal habitats. Habitat suitability characteristics include canopy cover and height of sagebrush and the associated understory vegetation. They also include vegetation associated with riparian areas, wet meadows, and other mesic habitats adjacent to sagebrush that may support sage-grouse habitat needs during different stages in their annual cycle.

As described in the Conclusion (Section III), details and application of monitoring at the fine and site scales will be described in the implementation-level monitoring plan for the land use plan. The need for fine- and site-scale-specific habitat monitoring will vary by area, depending on proposed projects, existing conditions, habitat variability, threats, and land health. Examples of fine- and site-scale monitoring include: habitat vegetation monitoring to assess current habitat conditions; monitoring and evaluation of the success of projects targeting sage-grouse habitat enhancement and/or restoration; and habitat disturbance monitoring to provide localized disturbance measures to inform proposed project review and potential mitigation for project impacts. Monitoring plans should incorporate the principles outlined in the BLM's AIM strategy (Toevs et al. 2011) and in "AIM-Monitoring: A Component of the Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring Strategy" (Taylor et al. 2014). Approved monitoring methods are:

- “BLM Core Terrestrial Indicators and Methods” (MacKinnon et al. 2011);
- The BLM’s Technical Reference “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005); and,
- “Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: Multiscale Assessment Tool” (Stiver et al. *in press*).

Other state-specific disturbance tracking models include: the BLM’s Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool (<http://ddct.wygisc.org/>) and the BLM’s White River Data Management System in development with the USGS. Population monitoring data (in cooperation with state wildlife agencies) should be included during evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken at the fine and site scales.

Fine- and site-scale sage-grouse habitat suitability indicators for seasonal habitats are identified in the HAF. The HAF has incorporated the Connelly et al. (2000) sage-grouse guidelines as well as many of the core indicators in the AIM strategy (Toevs et al. 2011). There may be a need to develop adjustments to height and cover or other site suitability values described in the HAF; any such adjustments should be ecologically defensible. To foster consistency, however, adjustments to site suitability values at the local scale should be avoided unless there is strong, scientific justification for making those adjustments. That justification should be provided. WAFWA MZ adjustments must be supported by regional plant productivity and habitat data for the floristic province. If adjustments are made to the site-scale indicators, they must be made using data from the appropriate seasonal habitat designation (breeding/nesting, brood-rearing, winter) collected from sage-grouse studies found in the relevant area and peer-reviewed by the appropriate wildlife management agency(ies) and researchers.

When conducting land health assessments, the BLM should follow, at a minimum, “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005) and the “BLM Core Terrestrial Indicators and Methods” (MacKinnon et al. 2011). For assessments being conducted in sage-grouse designated management areas, the BLM should collect additional data to inform the HAF indicators that have not been collected using the above methods. Implementation of the principles outlined in the AIM strategy will allow the data to be used to generate unbiased estimates of condition across the area of interest; facilitate consistent data collection and rollup analysis among management units; help provide consistent data to inform the classification and interpretation of imagery; and provide condition and trend of the indicators describing sagebrush characteristics important to sage-grouse habitat (see Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring).

III. CONCLUSION

This Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework was developed for all of the Final Environmental Impact Statements involved in the sage-grouse planning effort. As such, it describes the monitoring activities at the broad and mid scales and provides a guide for the BLM and the USFS to collaborate with partners/other agencies to develop the land use plan- specific monitoring plan.

IV. THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE DISTURBANCE AND MONITORING SUBTEAM MEMBERSHIP

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Attachment A. An Overview of Monitoring Commitments

	Broad and Mid Scales					Fine and Site Scales
	Implementation	Sagebrush Availability	Habitat Degradation	Population	Effectiveness	
How will the data be used?	Track and document implementation of land use plan decisions and inform adaptive management	Track changes in land cover (sagebrush) and inform adaptive management	Track changes in disturbance (threats) to sage-grouse habitat and inform adaptive management	Track trends in sage-grouse populations (and/or leks; as determined by state wildlife agencies) and inform adaptive management	Characterize the relationship among disturbance, implementation actions, and sagebrush metrics and inform adaptive management	Measure seasonal habitat, connectivity at the fine scale, and habitat conditions at the site scale, calculate disturbance, and inform adaptive management
Who is collecting the data?	BLM FO and USFS Forest	NOC and NIFC	National datasets (NOC), BLM FOs, and USFS Forests as applicable	State wildlife agencies through WAFWA	Comes from other broad- and mid-scale monitoring types, analyzed by the NOC	BLM FO and SO, USFS Forests and RO (with partners)
How often are the data collected, reported, and made available to USFWS?	Collected and reported annually; summary report every 5 years	Updated and changes reported annually; summary report every 5 years	Collected and changes reported annually; summary report every 5 years	State data reported annually per WAFWA MOU; summary report every 5 years	Collected and reported every 5 years (coincident with LUP evaluations)	Collection and trend analysis ongoing, reported every 5 years or as needed to inform adaptive management
What is the spatial scale?	Summarized by LUP with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by MZ and LUP with flexibility for reporting by other units (e.g., PAC)	Variable (e.g., projects and seasonal habitats)
What are the potential personnel and budget impacts?	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment	At a minimum, current skills and capacity must be maintained; data management costs are TBD	At a minimum, current skills and capacity must be maintained; data layer purchase cost are TBD	No additional personnel or budget impacts for the BLM or the USFS	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment

Who has primary and secondary responsibilities for reporting?	1) BLM FO & SO; USFS Forest & RO 2) BLM & USFS Planning	1) NOC 2) WO	1) NOC 2) BLM SO, USFS RO, & appropriate programs	1) WAFWA & state wildlife agencies 2) BLM SO, USFS RO, NOC	1) Broad and mid scale at the NOC, LUP at BLM SO, USFS RO	1) BLM FO & USFS Forests 2) BLM SO & USFS RO
What new processes/tools are needed?	National implementation datasets and analysis tools	Updates to national land cover data	Data standards and rollup methods for these data	Standards in population monitoring (WAFWA)	Reporting methodologies	Data standards data storage; and reporting

FO (field office); NIFC (National Interagency Fire Center); NOC (National Operations Center); RO (regional office); SO (state office); TBD (to be determined); WO (Washington Office)

Attachment B. User and Producer Accuracies for Aggregated Ecological Systems within LANDFIRE Map Zones

LANDFIRE Map Zone Name	User Accuracy	Producer Accuracy	% of Map Zone within Historical Schroeder
Wyoming Basin	76.9%	90.9%	98.5%
Snake River Plain	68.8%	85.2%	98.4%
Missouri River Plateau	57.7%	100.0%	91.3%
Grand Coulee Basin of the Columbia Plateau	80.0%	80.0%	89.3%
Wyoming Highlands	75.3%	85.9%	88.1%
Western Great Basin	69.3%	75.4%	72.9%
Blue Mountain Region of the Columbia Plateau	85.7%	88.7%	72.7%
Eastern Great Basin	62.7%	80.0%	62.8%
Northwestern Great Plains	76.5%	92.9%	46.3%
Northern Rocky Mountains	72.5%	89.2%	42.5%
Utah High Plateaus	81.8%	78.3%	41.5%
Colorado Plateau	65.3%	76.2%	28.8%
Middle Rocky Mountains	78.6%	73.3%	26.4%
Cascade Mountain Range	57.1%	88.9%	17.3%
Sierra Nevada Mountain Range	0.0%	0.0%	12.3%
Northwestern Rocky Mountains	66.7%	60.0%	7.3%
Southern Rocky Mountains	58.6%	56.7%	7.0%
Northern Cascades	75.0%	75.0%	2.6%
Mogollon Rim	66.7%	100.0%	1.7%
Death Valley Basin	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%

There are two anomalous map zones with 0% user and producer accuracies, attributable to no available reference data for the ecological systems of interest.

User accuracy is a map-based accuracy that is computed by looking at the reference data for a class and determining the percentage of correct predictions for these samples. For example, if I select any sagebrush pixel on the classified map, what is the probability that I'll be standing in a sagebrush stand when I visit that pixel location in the field? **Commission Error** equates to including a pixel in a class when it should have been excluded (i.e., commission error = $1 - \text{user's accuracy}$).

Producer accuracy is a reference-based accuracy that is computed by looking at the predictions produced for a class and determining the percentage of correct predictions. In other words, if I know that a particular area is sagebrush (I've been out on the ground to check), what is the probability that the digital map will correctly identify that pixel as sagebrush? **Omission Error** equates to excluding a pixel that should have been included in the class (i.e., omission error = $1 - \text{producer's accuracy}$).

Attachment C. Sagebrush Species and Subspecies Included in the Selection Criteria for Building the EVT and BpS Layers

- *Artemisia arbuscula* subspecies *longicaulis*
- *Artemisia arbuscula* subspecies *longiloba*
- *Artemisia bigelovii*
- *Artemisia nova*
- *Artemisia papposa*
- *Artemisia pygmaea*
- *Artemisia rigida*
- *Artemisia spinescens*
- *Artemisia tripartita* subspecies *rupicola*
- *Artemisia tripartita* subspecies *tripartita*
- *Tanacetum nuttallii*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *bolanderi*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *cana*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *viscidula*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *wyomingensis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *tridentata*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *vaseyana*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *spiciformis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *xericensis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* variety *pauciflora*
- *Artemisia frigida*
- *Artemisia pedatifida*

1 **Appendix F – Idaho Key Habitat Map Update Process**
2

3 As directed in IM ID-2013-010, Idaho BLM annually updates the Key Habitat map. The purpose
4 of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to request updates to the Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat
5 Planning Map. The update is needed to reflect habitat changes resulting from wildfire,
6 succession, and vegetation treatments that occurred or were observed since the last update. This
7 update is also intended to capture additional edits recommended by the field offices, sage-grouse
8 Local Working Groups (LWG), or agency partners in sage-grouse conservation.
9

10 **Factors to Consider During Edits:** The following factors are applicable to land of any
11 ownership status for which the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) data are available, or for
12 which data or other information are provided by non-BLM partners. If such new data are
13 unavailable, or not provided by partners, retain the existing spatial data in the dataset:
14

- 15 1. Wildfires that have occurred in the most recent calendar year fire season on land
16 administered by the BLM and on land not administered by the BLM.
17
- 18 2. Vegetation management projects that have been completed within key habitat or
19 potential restoration areas of sage-grouse planning areas. This includes activities
20 such as burned area rehabilitation seeding projects, sagebrush thinning/reduction,
21 conifer thinning/reduction, restoration of annual grasslands, new fuel breaks, etc.
22 However, only consider those treatment areas completed and where a change in
23 habitat classification has occurred (e.g., from annual grassland to perennial
24 grassland; perennial grassland to key habitat, etc.). Areas planned for treatment
25 or in the process of treatment (e.g., cheatgrass chemical treatment is completed,
26 but seeding is pending) should not be included until an observed change in habitat
27 category is achieved.
28
- 29 3. Changes in habitat status resulting from vegetation succession, such as perennial
30 grasslands that have transitioned to key habitat due to increased sagebrush cover.
31
- 32 4. Habitat mapping errors or omissions that have been identified in the existing
33 Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat Planning Map and other edits recommended by sage-
34 grouse conservation partners, as appropriate. For this item, it is crucial that BLM
35 field office biologists or an alternate staff specialist coordinate closely with their
36 agency partners, especially the UFSFS and the Idaho Department of Fish and
37 Game (IDFG), to actively solicit and resolve additional suggested edits that we
38 may not be aware of. Those edits must also be incorporated into the respective
39 BLM office’s update submission. This is vital to ensure that the update is
40 completed efficiently and as collaboratively as possible.
41
- 42 5. Since the Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat Planning Map is intended for use by all
43 conservation partners in Idaho, it is important that we maintain a seamless
44 coverage across land ownerships. In that regard, when editing, do not clip out
45 BLM (or non-BLM land) on the basis of land ownership. Rather, make edits
46 based on vegetation boundaries only, using the best available information and

- 47 professional judgment. If you have uncertainties about accuracies for certain
48 areas, document that in the metadata as appropriate.
49
- 50 6. Based on discussions during map updates in recent years, we will again use a 10.0
51 acre minimum polygon size for wildfires since data are readily available to that
52 scale. For vegetation treatments, we will also use a minimum area of 10 acres.
53 For sagebrush or other vegetation patches (e.g., key habitat, perennial grassland,
54 annual grassland, conifer encroachment), delineate habitat to the extent you have
55 data, recognizing that some offices may have more recent, finer resolution data
56 than others.
57
- 58 7. Areas that have recently burned, for which the field has little or no information as
59 to habitat status, should be classified as “recent burn.” Efforts to document the
60 general habitat status in these areas should be made the following field season if
61 possible, in preparation for the next map update. The field may also attribute
62 2013 fires as perennial grassland or annual grassland, as appropriate.
63
- 64 8. Sage-grouse habitat polygon descriptions relevant to this IM include key habitat,
65 perennial grassland, annual grassland, and conifer encroachment potential
66 restoration areas.
67
- 68 o Key habitat includes areas of generally intact sagebrush that provide sage-
69 grouse habitat during some portion of the year.
 - 70 o Perennial grassland can be reclassified as key habitat once average
71 sagebrush canopy cover is at least 10 percent.
 - 72 o Annual grassland areas may be reclassified as perennial grassland once a
73 restoration, fuels treatment or related project, such as an Emergency
74 Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) seeding, is considered successful
75 (i.e., seeded perennial species have successfully established).
 - 76 o Conifer encroachment areas may be reclassified as key habitat following
77 treatment of conifers if sagebrush cover is at least 10 percent and there is a
78 perennial understory. They can also be reclassified as perennial
79 grasslands if native perennial herbaceous species are dominant or if an
80 associated restoration seeding is successful.
81
- 82 9. Field offices must ensure that original project-level data utilized in this update,
83 including Global Positioning System data files, spatial, tabular and metadata
84 associated with specific vegetation treatments, restoration projects, ES&R
85 projects, etc., are archived at the field level and readily accessible in the event of
86 future data calls.
87

Appendix G

Part I – Baseline Map and Description of Development

Part II - Adaptive Management - Soft Trigger Considerations and Implementation Actions

The Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force would utilize monitoring information to assess when triggers have been tripped. When information indicates that the soft habitat or population trigger may have been tripped, a Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force - aided by the technical expertise of IDF&G - will assess the factor(s) leading to the decline and identify potential management actions. The Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force may consider possible changes in management to the CMA. As to the IMA, the Sage-Grouse Implementation Team may review the causes for decline and potential management changes only to the extent those factors significantly impair the state's ability to meet the overall management objective. It is anticipated IDF&G will collect data annually and will make recommendations to the Implementation Team by August 31st for population triggers and January 15th for habitat triggers.

Only where the monitoring information indicates the cause(s) of the decline is not a primary threat will the Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force analyze the secondary threats to the species and determine whether further management actions are needed.

Potential Implementation Level Actions to Consider in the Event Soft Trigger Criteria are Met

- ✓ Increase monitoring and evaluation of sage-grouse populations in Core Management Area (area of concern).
- ✓ Implement Core Management Area management strategy in corresponding Important Management Area of the same Conservation Area.
- ✓ Implement Core Management Area RDFs in corresponding Important Management Area of the same Conservation Area.
- ✓ Not allow any new (large) infrastructure development within the Core Management Area (no exceptions allowed).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on primary threats in the Core Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on secondary threats in the Core Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Apply Core Management Area criteria for all primary threats, and/or all secondary threats to the Important Management Area.
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on primary threats in the Important Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on secondary threats in the Important Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).

Part III – Livestock Grazing Management Response

If Livestock Grazing is determined to be a Causal Factor Consider the Following Measures:

- 48
- 49 1. Employ grazing management systems that ensure adequate nesting and early brood rearing
- 50 habitat within the breeding landscape.
- 51 2. When use-pattern mapping or monitoring demonstrates an opportunity to adjust livestock
- 52 distribution to benefit occupied sage-grouse breeding habitat, include as appropriate herding,
- 53 salting, and water-source management (e.g., turning troughs/pipelines on/off, extending
- 54 pipelines/moving troughs) in grazing programs.
- 55 3. If available and feasible, utilize exotic perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands to
- 56 avoid breeding season of use of occupied sage-grouse habitat.
- 57 4. Modify authorized seasons of use within grazing permits to provide greater flexibility in
- 58 managing livestock for the benefit of sage-grouse.
- 59 5. Where appropriate, maintain residual herbaceous vegetation at the end of the
- 60 growing/grazing season to contribute to nesting and brood-rearing habitat during the
- 61 coming nesting season. Table 5.
- 62 6. Insure that permittees are informed of management and movement requirements related to
- 63 avoidance of recent burns, rehabilitation seedings or other restoration sites.
- 64 7. Manage grazing of riparian areas, meadows, springs, and seeps in a manner that promotes
- 65 vegetative structure and composition appropriate to the site. In some cases enclosure fencing
- 66 may be a viable option. However, recognize the availability and quality of desired herbaceous
- 67 species may be improved by periodic grazing use of the enclosure.
- 68 8. Implement management actions (grazing decisions, allotment management
- 69 plan/conservation plan development, or other agreements) to modify grazing management
- 70 to meet seasonal sage-grouse habitat requirements. Employ proper grazing management by
- 71 providing flexibility in scheduling the intensity, timing, duration and frequency of grazing use
- 72 over time that best promotes management objectives. During drought periods, prioritize
- 73 evaluating effects of drought in the CMA relative to grouse needs for food and cover.
- 74 Ensure that post-drought management allows for vegetation recovery that meets sage-grouse
- 75 needs in priority sage-grouse habitat areas.
- 76 9. When using salt or mineral supplements: a) place them in existing disturbed sites, areas with
- 77 reduced sagebrush cover—e.g., seedings or cheatgrass sites—to reduce impacts to sage-
- 78 grouse breeding habitat, b) where feasible use salts or mineral supplements to improve
- 79 management of livestock for the benefit of sage-grouse habitat.
- 80 10. In general, avoid constructing new fences within 2 km of occupied leks. Where feasible,
- 81 place new, taller structures, such as corrals, loading facilities, water-storage tanks, windmills,
- 82 etc., at least 2 km from occupied leks to reduce opportunities for perching raptors. Careful
- 83 consideration, based on local conditions, should also be given to the placement of new
- 84 fences or structures near other important seasonal habitats (winter-use areas, movement
- 85 corridors etc.) to reduce potential impacts.
- 86 11. New spring developments in sage-grouse habitat should be designed to maintain or enhance
- 87 the free-flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Analyze developed springs,
- 88 seeps and associated pipelines to determine if modifications are necessary to maintain the
- 89 continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority sage-grouse habitat. Make
- 90 modifications where necessary, considering impacts to other water users when such
- 91 considerations are neutral or beneficial to sage-grouse.
- 92 12. Ensure that new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks are fitted with
- 93 ramps to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by sage-grouse and other wildlife. Do
- 94 not use floating boards or similar objects, as these are too unstable and are ineffective. Use
- 95 BMPs to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus.

- 13. When placing new water developments in sage-grouse breeding habitat, choose sites and designs that will provide the greatest enhancement for sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat.
- 14. Avoid new water developments in higher quality native breeding/early brood habitats that have not had significant prior grazing use except in situations in which water developments may aid in better livestock distribution across the allotment and will not adversely impact the species.
- 15. Identify and when feasible, establish strategically located forage reserves focusing on areas unsuitable for sage-grouse habitat restoration or lower priority habitat restoration areas.
- 16. Monitor for, and treat invasive species associated with, existing range improvements.
- 17. Consider initiating vegetative manipulation projects where sagebrush canopy cover exceeds optimal characteristics to promote grass and forb understory growth. These projects should only be undertaken where it can be achieved without negatively impacting the species.

Adaptive Grazing Management Response

BLM will individually analyze those allotments and pastures within the relevant Conservation Area. Given limited agency resources, prioritization will be given to areas that have the potential to provide the greatest benefit to sage-grouse. Allocation of resources should be concentrated on allotments within the CMA that have declining sage-grouse populations. Following those permits within the CMA, resources will be further prioritized to allotments within the IMA with breeding habitats that have decreasing lek counts. Sage-grouse populations that are stable or trending upward will be a lower priority for permit renewal and the adaptive assessment process. The assessment/determination process for sage-grouse pursuant to Standard 8 will consider published characteristics of sage-grouse habitat and the Ecological Site Descriptions, existing vegetation, habitat inventories/assessments (Stiver et al. 2010), and where available, state and transition models that describe vegetation and other physical attributes for sage-grouse. The related characteristics within the categories shown below will also be included. These characteristics indicate the ability of a given area to provide sage-grouse habitat.

Category 1: The grazing allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the existing vegetation and existing ecological condition (seral state) to provide sage-grouse habitat

Category 2: The grazing allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the ecological potential to provide sage-grouse habitat.

Where an allotment or pasture meets one of these Categories above, the GRSG Habitat Management Objectives will be incorporated into relevant resource management plans as the desired conditions with the understanding that these desired conditions may not be achievable:

- (a) due to the existing ecological condition, ecological potential or the existing vegetation; or
- (b) due to causal events unrelated to existing livestock grazing.

Allotments will only be managed for the primary seasonal habitat that it has the potential to support. Typically, summer habitats will be managed to provide the conditions described in Table 3; winter Table 4; and breeding habitats in Table 5. Based on these habitat characteristics, BLM will conduct fine and site scale-habitat assessments to help inform grazing management. Where necessary, a determination of factors causing any failure to achieve the habitat characteristics GRSG HMOs will be conducted at a resolution sufficient to document the habitat condition. This determination will include consideration of local spatial and inter-annual variability. A determination of issues

144 attributable to livestock grazing management shall not result from one year of data at a specific
145 location within an allotment. If the process and conditions outlined above demonstrate that
146 livestock grazing is limiting achievement of the habitat characteristics GRSG HMOs, renewed
147 permits will include measures to achieve desired habitat conditions. These measures must be tailored
148 to address the specific management issues associated with seasonal habitat limitations identified in
149 the fine-scale assessments.

150

151

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1 **Appendix H – Anthropogenic Disturbance**

2
3 **Disturbance Density Calculation**

4
5 **GRSG Local/Site Disturbance Calculation**

- 6
7 • **All sub-regions:** Agreed to use the same types of disturbances for fine/site scale monitoring
8 as were used for broad and mid-scale analysis. Would use local data and/or more current
9 satellite imagery if available. Recognize that site specific data, where available, provide a
10 more accurate measure of land cover, disturbance and conifer encroachment than Landfire.
11 In the long-term, ensure fine/site scale monitoring provides results that can be used across
12 the GRSG range and “rolled up” for reporting purposes. In the short term (<5 years),
13 locally derived vegetation data may not be available or easily rolled up, so use of seamless
14 land cover data such as Sagestitch is recommended.

15
16 Great Basin sub-regions agreed to use the same type of data sets as used for broad and mid-scale to
17 monitor local/site level conditions. Supplement with local data where available and/or more
18 accurate. The following data layers or local surrogate would be used.

- 19
20 1. Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities) Based on local info, actual footprint;
21 see NOC language for certain exceptions.
22 2. Energy (coal mines) Actual footprint
23 3. Energy (wind towers) Based on local info, actual footprint
24 4. Energy (solar fields) Based on local info, actual footprint
25 5. Energy (geothermal) Based on local info, actual footprint
26 6. Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable) Based on local info, actual
27 footprint
28 7. Infrastructure (roads) actual footprint; see road attachment for specific guidance
29 8. Infrastructure (railroads) abandoned railroads are NOT a disturbance
30 9. Infrastructure (power lines) Using NOC guidance, apply these widths:
31 <100 kV: use ROW width
32 100-199kV: 100 ft
33 200-399kV:150 ft
34 400-699kV: 200 ft
35 700-799kV: 250 ft
36 10. Infrastructure (communication towers, fire lookouts, met towers) Based on local info, actual
37 footprint
38 11. Other developed rights-of-ways
39
40

41 The National Monitoring Framework lists the data sets by threat. These are:
 42

FWS Listing Decision Threat	Sagebrush Habitat Availability	Habitat Degradation (Human Activities)	Density of Energy and Mining Facilities
Agriculture	X		
Urbanization	X		
Wildfire	X		
Conifer encroachment	X		
Treatments	X*		
Invasive Species	X*		
Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)		X	X
Energy (coal mines)		X	X
Energy (wind towers)		X	X
Energy (solar fields)		X	X
Energy (geothermal)		X	X
Mining (active locatable, leasable, and salable developments)		X	X
Infrastructure (roads)		X	
Infrastructure (railroads)		X	
Infrastructure (power lines)		X	
Infrastructure (communication towers)		X	
Infrastructure (other vertical structures)		X	
Other developed rights of ways		X*	

43
 44 The following data sets would *not* be used to calculate anthropogenic disturbance, but would be
 45 used in the habitat baseline to estimate habitat availability or the amount of sagebrush on the
 46 landscape within biologically significant units. Use best available data, where Landfire or Sagestitch
 47 could be used for biophysical setting (bps), compared to existing vegetation type.

- 48
 49 1. Habitat treatments
 50 2. Wildfire
 51 3. Invasive plants
 52 4. Conifer encroachment
 53 5. Agriculture
 54 6. Urbanization, Ex-urban and rural development
 55

56 **Biologically Significant Unit:**

- 57
 58 - Idaho proposes use of Priority (Core) and Important management areas that generally match
 59 PACs, but also anticipates assessing disturbance at other scales including nesting and winter
 60 habitat, 5 km lek neighborhood, Conservation Areas and/or at the project-scale, depending on
 61 need.
 62
 63
 64 • For all subregions, data from these units would be rolled up to the PAC and WAFWA
 65 Management Zone, to meet FWS needs. In addition, units must be edge matched/aligned
 66 with neighboring states. All sub-regions acknowledge there may be locally important
 67 biologically significant units smaller than PACs which may or may not be rolled up to PAC
 68 level. The Subregions also acknowledge that assessing disturbance at larger scales such as
 69 certain PACs, or via rollup of data, provides a baseline metric for future comparison, but
 70 dilution may likely mask disturbance concerns occurring at more local scales.

71
 72
 73 ***Travel and Transportation Disturbance in Sage-Grouse Habitat***
 74
 75

76 The following would count as disturbance:

- 77 Linear transportation features identified as roads that have a maintenance intensity of 3 or 5
 78 Linear transportation features identified as primitive roads, temporary routes, or
 79 administrative routes that have a functional classification and a maintenance intensity of level
 80 3 or 5

81
 82 Non-Disturbance
 83

84 The following items would not count as disturbance:

- 85 Linear transportation features identified as trails.
 86 Linear transportation features identified as primitive roads, temporary routes, or
 87 administrative routes that have a maintenance intensity of either level 0 or 1.

88 Linear transportation features identified as primitive routes.
89 Linear disturbances.
90
91

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92 *Travel and Transportation Management Definitions*

93

94 **Roads** are linear routes managed for use by low clearance vehicles having four or more wheels, and
95 are maintained for regular and continuous use.

96

97 **Primitive Roads** are linear routes managed for use by four-wheel drive or high-clearance vehicles.
98 They do not normally meet any design standards.

99

100 **Trails** are linear routes managed for human-powered, stock, or OHV forms of transportation or for
101 historical or heritage values. Trails are not generally managed for use by four-wheel drive or high-
102 clearance vehicles.

103

104 **Linear Disturbances** are human-made linear features that are not part of the designated
105 transportation network are identified as “Transportation Linear Disturbances.” These may include
106 engineered (planned) as well as unplanned single and two-track linear features that are not part of
107 the BLM’s transportation system.

108 **Primitive Routes** are any transportation linear feature located within a WSA or lands with
109 wilderness characteristics designated for protection by a land use plan and not meeting the
110 wilderness inventory road definition.

111

112 **Temporary routes** are short-term overland roads, primitive roads or trails which are authorized or
113 acquired for the development, construction or staging of a project or event that has a finite lifespan.
114 Temporary routes are not intended to be part of the permanent or designated transportation
115 network and must be reclaimed when their intended purpose(s) has been fulfilled. Temporary routes
116 should be constructed to minimum standards necessary to accommodate the intended use; the intent
117 is that the project proponent (or their representative) will reclaim the route once the original project
118 purpose or need has been completed. Temporary routes are considered emergency, single use or
119 permitted activity access. Unless they are specifically intended to accommodate public use, they
120 should not be made available for that use. A temporary route will be authorized or acquired for the
121 specific time period and duration specified in the written authorization (permit, ROW, lease,
122 contract etc.) and will be scheduled and budgeted for reclamation to prevent further vehicle use and
123 soil erosion from occurring by providing adequate drainage and re-vegetation.

124

125 **Administrative routes** are those that are limited to authorized users (typically motorized access).
126 These are existing routes that lead to developments that have an administrative purpose, where the
127 agency or permitted user must have access for regular maintenance or operation. These authorized
128 developments could include such items as power lines, cabins, weather stations, communication
129 sites, spring

130

131 *Maintenance Intensities*

132

133 **Level 0**

134

135 Maintenance Description:

136 Existing routes that will no longer be maintained and no longer be declared a route. Routes
137 identified as Level 0 are identified for removal from the Transportation System entirely.

138

139 Maintenance Objectives:

- 140 • No planned annual maintenance.
- 141 • Meet identified environmental needs.
- 142 • No preventative maintenance or planned annual maintenance activities.

143
144 **Level 1**

145
146 Maintenance Description:
147 Routes where minimum (low intensity) maintenance is required to protect adjacent lands and
148 resource values. These roads may be impassable for extended periods of time.

- 149
150 Maintenance Objectives:
- 151 • Low (Minimal) maintenance intensity.
 - 152 • Emphasis is given to maintaining drainage and runoff patterns as needed to protect
153 adjacent lands. Grading, brushing, or slide removal is not performed unless route bed
154 drainage is being adversely affected, causing erosion.
 - 155 • Meet identified resource management objectives.
 - 156 • Perform maintenance as necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
 - 157 • No preventative maintenance.
 - 158 • Planned maintenance activities limited to environmental and resource protection.
 - 159 • Route surface and other physical features are not maintained for regular traffic.

160
161 **Level 3**

162
163 Maintenance Description:
164 Routes requiring moderate maintenance due to low volume use (for example, seasonally or
165 year-round for commercial, recreational, or administrative access). Maintenance Intensities
166 may not provide year-round access but are intended to generally provide resources
167 appropriate to keep the route in use for the majority of the year.

- 168
169 Maintenance Objectives:
- 170 • Medium (Moderate) maintenance intensity.
 - 171 • Drainage structures will be maintained as needed. Surface maintenance will be conducted
172 to provide a reasonable level of riding comfort at prudent speeds for the route conditions
173 and intended use. Brushing is conducted as needed to improve sight distance when
174 appropriate for management uses. Landslides adversely affecting drainage receive high
175 priority for removal; otherwise, they will be removed on a scheduled basis.
 - 176 • Meet identified environmental needs.
 - 177 • Generally maintained for year-round traffic.
 - 178 • Perform annual maintenance necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
 - 179 • Perform preventative maintenance as required to generally keep the route in acceptable
180 condition.
 - 181 • Planned maintenance activities should include environmental and resource protection
182 efforts, annual route surface.
 - 183 • Route surface and other physical features are maintained for regular traffic.

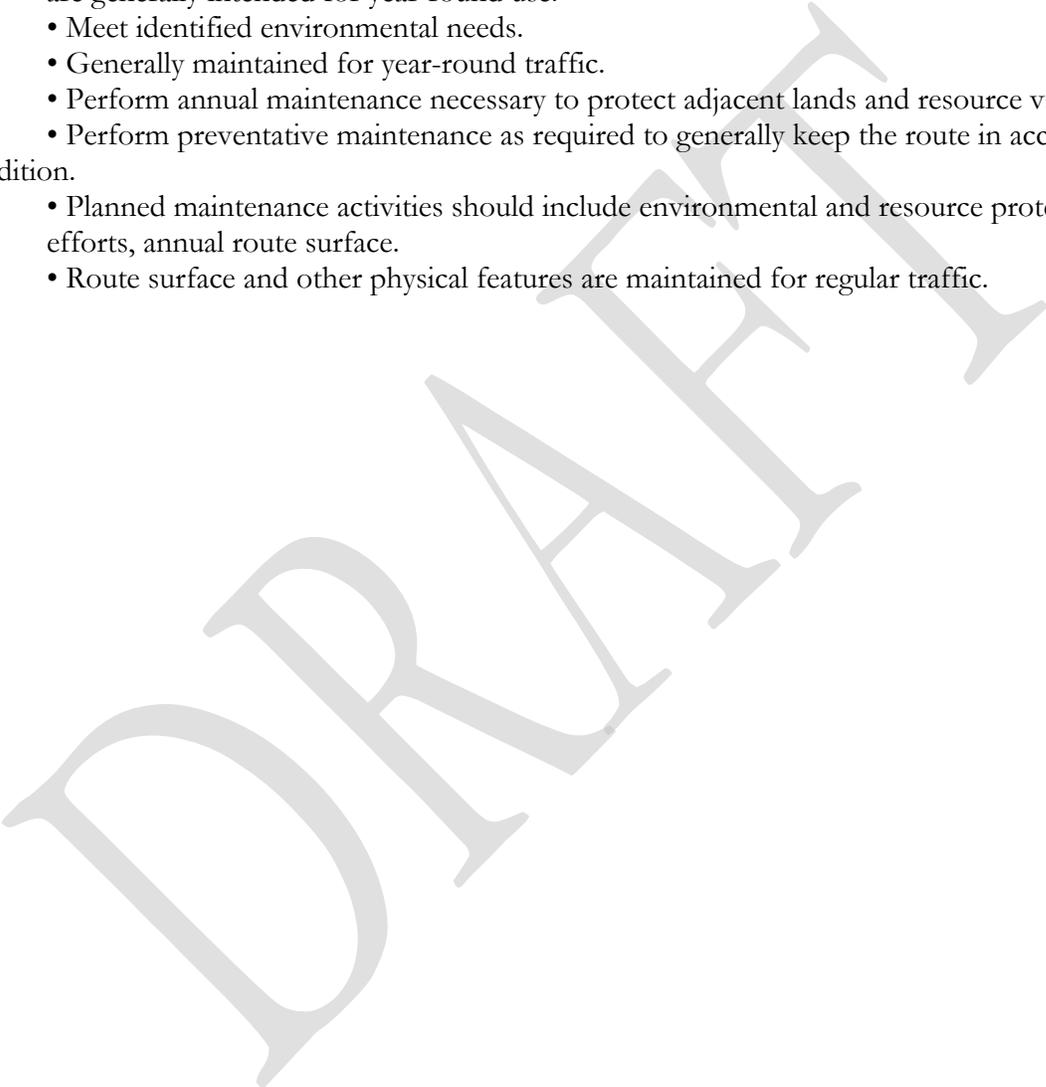
184
185 **Level 5**

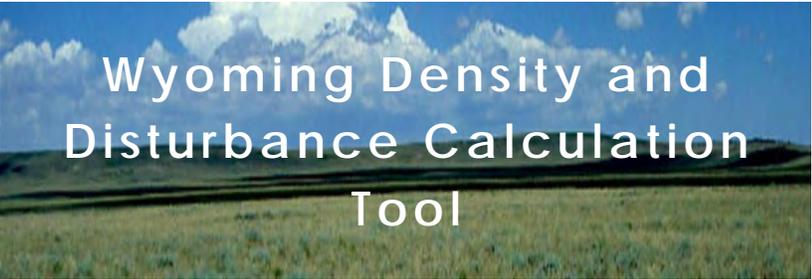
186
187 Maintenance Description:

188 Route for high (maximum) maintenance due to year-round needs, high volume of traffic, or
189 significant use. Also may include route identified through management objectives as
190 requiring high intensities of maintenance or to be maintained open on a year-round basis.
191

192 Maintenance Objectives:

- 193 • High (Maximum) maintenance intensity.
- 194 • The entire route will be maintained at least annually. Problems will be repaired as
195 discovered. These routes may be closed or have limited access due to weather conditions but
196 are generally intended for year-round use.
- 197 • Meet identified environmental needs.
- 198 • Generally maintained for year-round traffic.
- 199 • Perform annual maintenance necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
- 200 • Perform preventative maintenance as required to generally keep the route in acceptable
201 condition.
- 202 • Planned maintenance activities should include environmental and resource protection
203 efforts, annual route surface.
- 204 • Route surface and other physical features are maintained for regular traffic.
205





Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool



Wyoming Geographic Information
Science Center
&
Wyoming Game & Fish Department

Nicholas Graf

Wyoming Geographic Information
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University of Wyoming
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(307) 766-4928
ngraf1@uwyo.edu

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Procedures

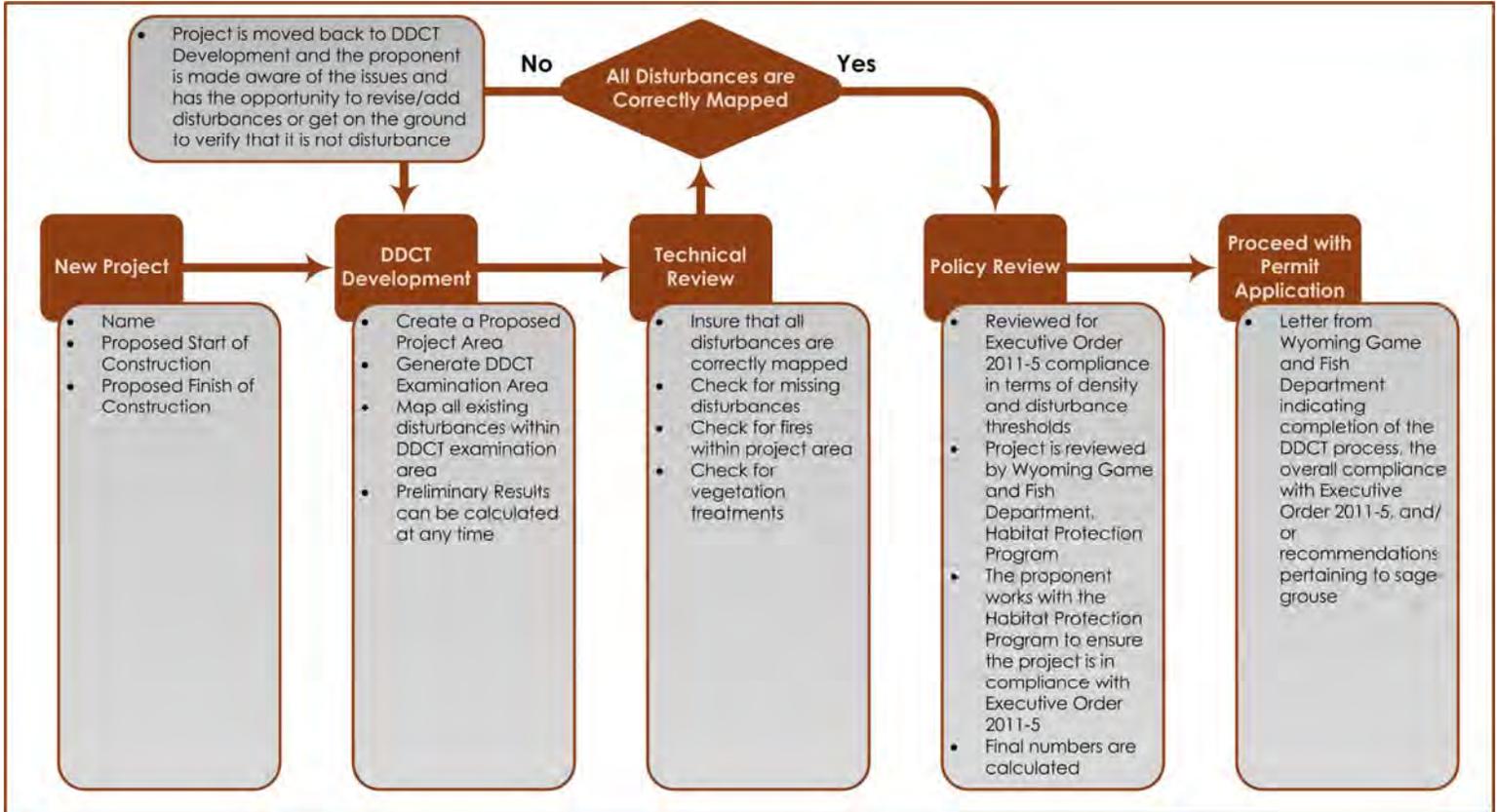
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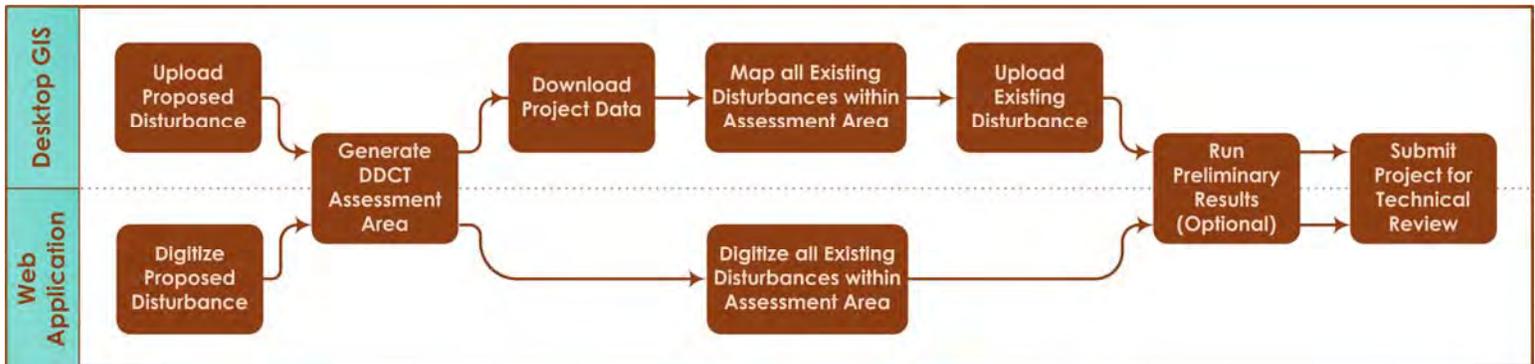
Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool Workflow

The online Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool (DDCT) is setup to be run as a process

● Permitting Workflow



● DDCT Development Workflow



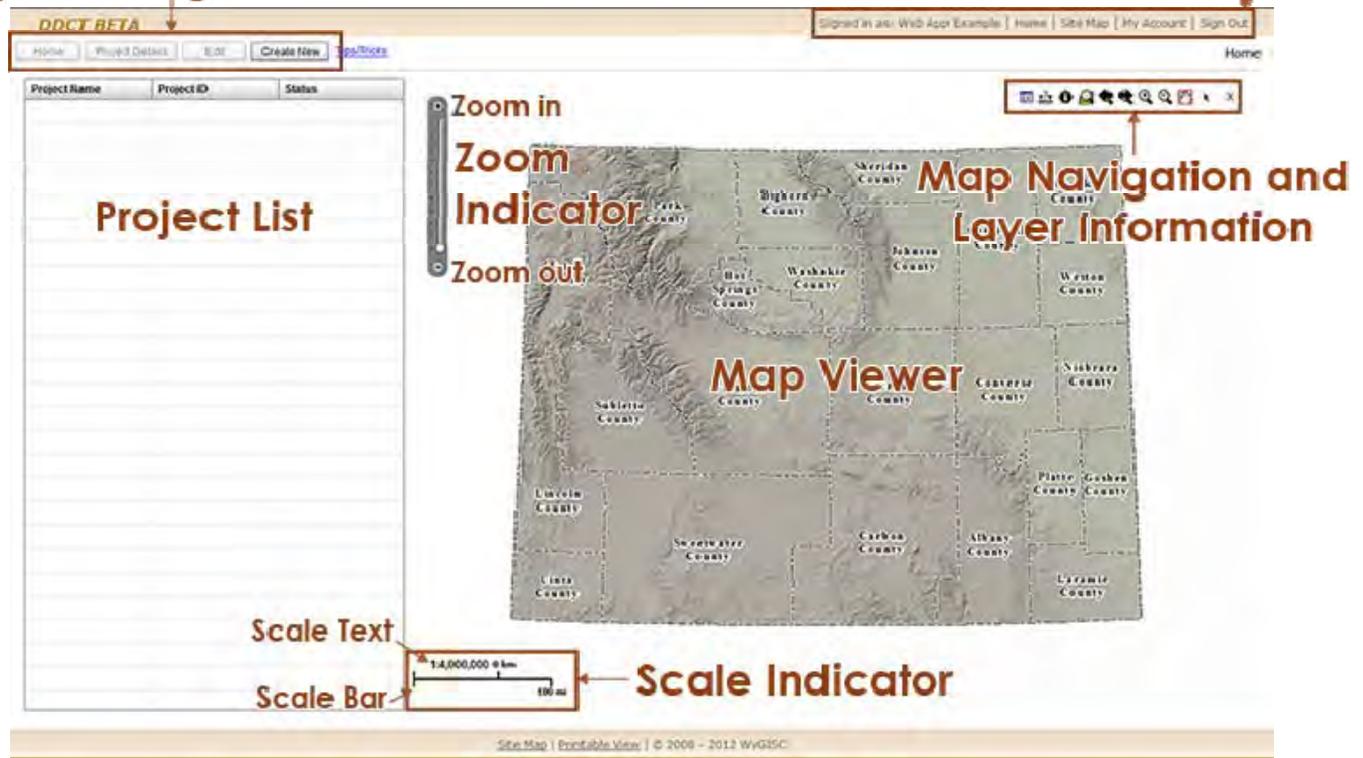
Wyoming DDCT Workflow

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool Navigation

Project List

Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links



Project Navigation Buttons

- Go to the Users List of Projects, See Details of Existing Projects, Edit Existing Projects, and Create New Projects
 - ➔ List – Opens a list of users existing projects
 - ➔ Details – Opens the selected project details screen
 - ➔ Edit – Opens the selected project edit screen
 - ➔ Create New – Opens the new project creation wizard



● Project List Area

- Shows Basic Project Details, and Allows interaction with Project
 - ➔ Displays Project Name, Project ID, and Status
 - ➔ Single click on a project zooms the Map Viewer to either the Project Boundary, or the Project Area if the boundary has not been generated
 - ➔ Double Click opens the **Project Edit Screen** with the **Edit** tab selected

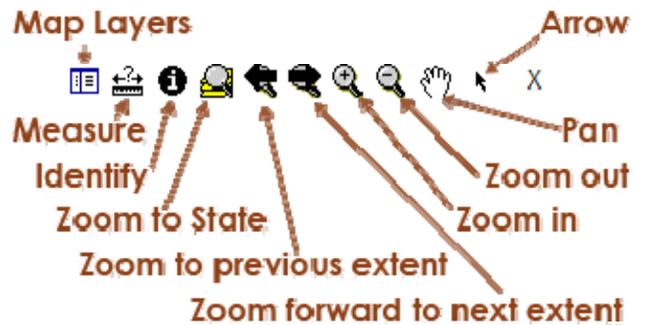
Project Name	Project ID	Status
Random Well Pad	20120606_1	DDCT Development
Project Name	Project ID	Project Status

● Project Status

- Project Status Information
 - ➔ DDCT Development
 - **Project editing** is enabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled
 - ➔ Technical Review
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled
 - ➔ Technical Review Complete
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - **Final results** are enabled
 - ➔ Policy Review
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled

● Map Navigation and Layer Information

- Layer, Information, and Navigation Tools
 - ➔ Map Layer – Opens new window with Map Layer Information
 - ➔ Measure – Opens the measure tool
 - ➔ Identify – Opens the identify tool
 - ➔ Zoom to State – Zooms to the full extent of Wyoming
 - ➔ Zoom to previous extent – Zoom to the last extent – can be used multiple times
 - ➔ Zoom forward to next extent – Only available after the use of the Zoom to previous extent tool – can be used multiple times
 - ➔ Zoom in – Zooms in to a window drawn on the screen
 - ➔ Zoom out – Zoom out using a window drawn on the screen
 - ➔ Pan – Opens the pan tool
 - ➔ Arrow – Opens the arrow tool



Project Details

Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links

Project Information

- Features of the Project Information area
 - ➔ Contains a summary of the project information
 - Project Name
 - Project Description
 - Start of Construction
 - End of Construction
 - Project Status
 - Project ID
 - Planner
 - ➔ The information can be edited by clicking the **Update Info** button

Project Information	
Project Name	Random Well Pad
Project Description	A well pad used for demonstration purposes
Proposed Start of Construction	7/9/2012
Proposed End of Construction	8/1/2012
Project Status	DDCT Development
Project ID	20120606_1
Planner	Web App Example
<input type="button" value="Update Info"/>	

● Project Features

➤ Features of the Project Features area

- Contains a summary of the project Features
- Number of Planned Disturbances
 - Proposed Project Area
 - Data last updated
- Project Boundary
 - Number of boundary features
 - Date last updated
- Number of Preliminary Disturbance Features
 - User entered existing disturbances
 - Date last updated

Features	
# of Planned Disturbance Features	1
Date Geometry Modified	06/07/2012
<hr/>	
Boundary Feature Created	1
Date Geometry Modified	06/13/2012
<hr/>	
# of Preliminary Disturbance Features	13
Date Geometry Modified	06/18/2012

● Additional Project Navigation Buttons

➤ Edit Existing Projects , Go to the Preliminary Results Screen, Go to the Final Results Screen, and Delete Existing Projects

- **Add/Edit/Upload Data** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Project Edit Screen**
 - Only available during the DDCT Development Phase
- **Preliminary Results** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Preliminary Results** Tab on the Project Edit Screen
 - Always available
- **Final Results** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Final Results** Screen
 - Only available during the Technical Review Complete Phase
- **Delete Project** button
 - Deletes the project
 - Always available

Next Steps
<input type="button" value="Add / Edit / Upload Data"/>
<input type="button" value="Preliminary Results"/>
<input type="button" value="Final Results"/>
<input type="button" value="Delete Project"/>

Project Edit

Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links

Edit Tabs

Digitize Tab

Upload Tab

Boundary Tab

Submit Tab

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePc

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePc

Map Tabs

Map Layers

Map Layers | Locate Tools | Overview Map

Basedata

- Basedata
- Land Management

Background

None Terrain Quads NAIP 06 NAIP 09

Additional Data

Disturbance Layers Transparency

DDCT Project Data

- Proposed Disturbance
- Statewide Disturbance And Disruption
- Statewide Disturbance Only
- Statewide Existing Disturbance (Exempt)
- Preliminary Disturbance And Disruption
- Preliminary Disturbance Only
- Preliminary Disturbance (Exempt)
- DDCTBoundary
- Map Grids

PLSS

- Townships
- Sections
- Quarter/Quarter

Sage Grouse

- Occupied Leks - Core or Connect Only
- Occupied Leks - 4mi Buffered Clipped to Core or Connect Only
- Sage-grouse Connectivity Areas
- Sage-grouse Core Areas v3

WOGCC IMS Data

- Wells
- Units

Map Layers Tab

Locate Tools

Township or Section

Township N

Range W

Section

Zoom to Township

Zoom to Section

UTM

Easting

Northing

Zone 12

Zoom to UTM

Overview Map

Albany County

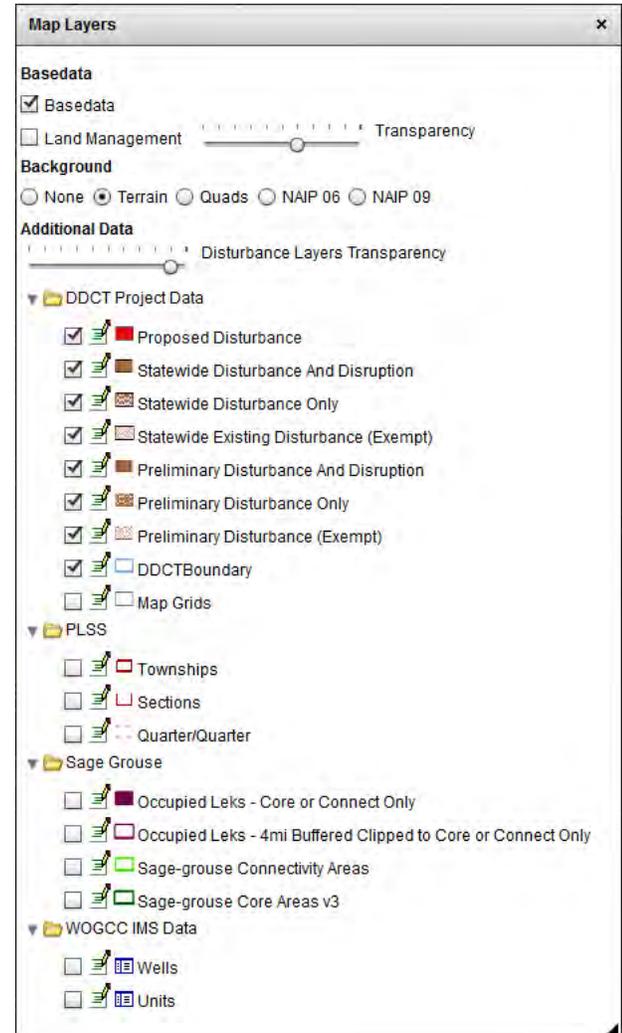
Albany

Overview Map Tab

Project Map Layers

DDCT Project Data

- Proposed Disturbance
 - Polygon (area) feature covering the total proposed project extent
 - Entered by the user, visible to only the user that entered the data
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Statewide Existing Disturbance
 - Polygon (area) feature covering existing surface disturbances throughout the state
 - Maintained by the DDCT Data and Application Steward
 - Visible to all users
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Preliminary Disturbances
 - Polygon (area) feature covering existing surface disturbances in the assessment area not already in the Statewide Disturbance Layer
 - Entered by the user, visible to only the user that entered the data
 - Moved to Statewide Disturbance Layer after the Technical Review is complete
 - Used only in preliminary calculations
- DDCT Boundary
 - Polygon (area) feature generated by the DDCT and used as the assessment area
 - Visible to only the user that generated the area
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Map Grids
 - Polygon (area) feature that grids off the DDCT assessment area
 - Used to create PDF maps for technical review
 - Visible to only the user that generated the area
 - Not used in calculations



Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Project Development

Create New Project

● Create the Project

- From the **Application Home** Screen
 1. Enter the Project Name
 2. Enter the Project Description
 3. Enter the Proposed Start of Construction
 4. Enter the Proposed End of Construction
 5. Click **Add Project** button

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Create New Project". It contains the following fields and controls:

- Project Name:** A text input field.
- Project Description:** A larger text area for detailed information.
- Proposed Start of Construction:** A date input field with a calendar icon.
- Proposed End of Construction:** A date input field with a calendar icon.
- Project ID:** A text input field containing the value "20120606_1".
- Project Status:** A dropdown menu with "DDCT Development" selected.
- Planner:** A text input field containing the value "Web App Example".
- Buttons:** "Add Project Data" and "Cancel" buttons are located at the bottom of the form.

● The Next Steps

- Move onto the Add/Edit/Upload Stage
 1. Select the **Add/Edit/Upload** radio button
 2. Press the **Go** button

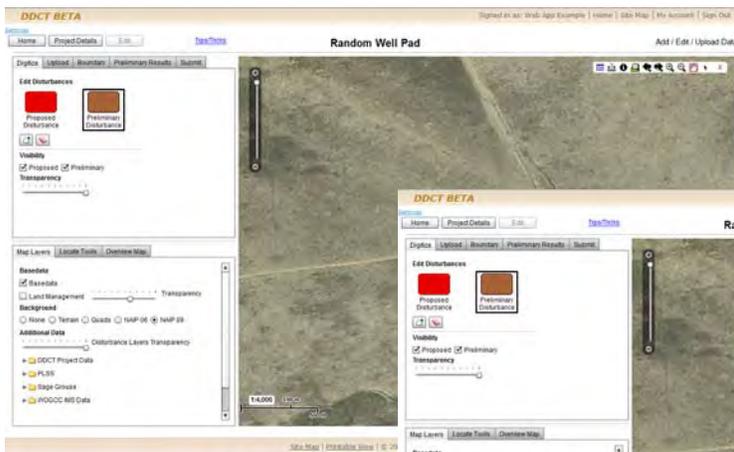
The screenshot shows a "Next Steps" form with the following elements:

- Next Steps:** A section header.
- Radio Buttons:** Two radio buttons are present: "Add/Edit/Upload Data" (which is selected) and "Some Other Time".
- GO..:** A button located below the radio buttons.

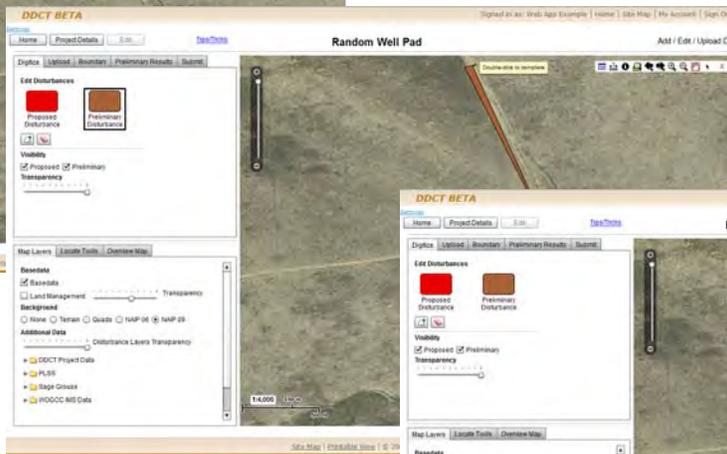
Create and Edit Features Using the Online Tool

Digitizing Features using the Online Tool

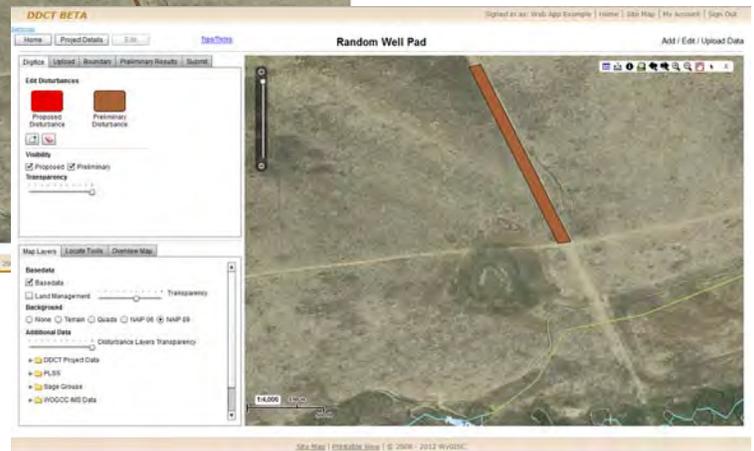
With the **Digitize** tab selected



1. Zoom into area of interest
2. Select either **Proposed Disturbance** or **Preliminary Disturbance**
3. In the map view window, click on one edge of the feature you want to digitized to start the process



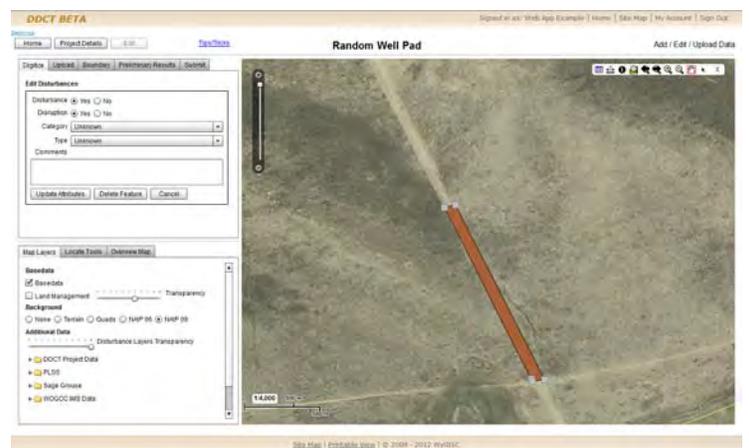
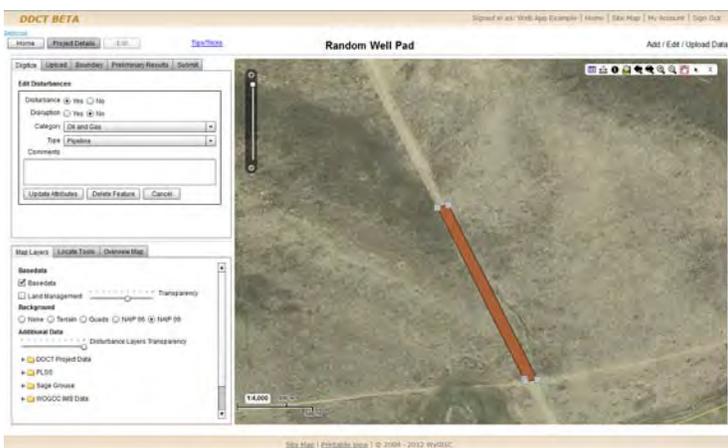
4. Keep clicking along the edge of the feature until the entire outline is created
5. Double click to finish the process



Editing Features using the Online Tool

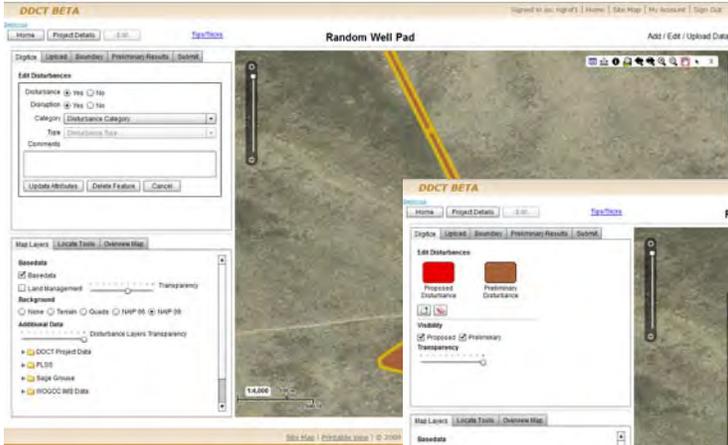
With the **Digitize** tab selected

1. Select either **Proposed Disturbance** or **Preliminary Disturbance**
2. In the map view window, click on the feature you want to edit to open the **Edit Disturbances** sub-tab
3. Select whether the feature is a Disturbance and/or Disruption
4. Select the Category and Type of disturbance
5. Enter any comments in the comments box (optional)
6. Click the **Update Feature** button to finish the process



● **Selecting Multiple Features using the Online Tool**

➤ With the **Digitize** tab selected



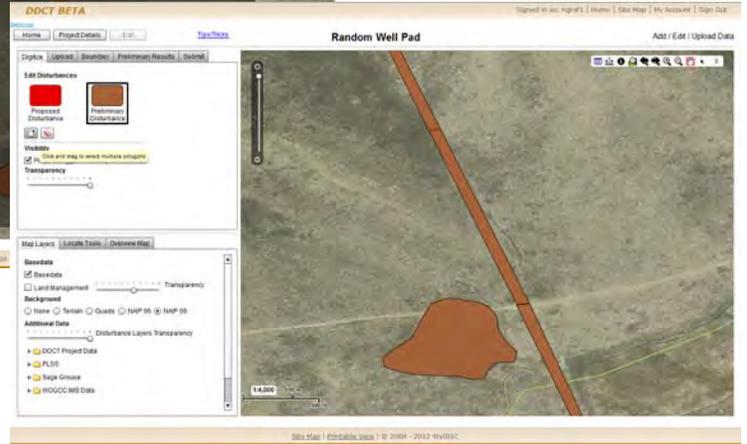
1. Click on the **Select Multiple Feature** tool
2. Use the mouse to draw a box around the features desired for selection



3. The selected features will have a yellow inner glow



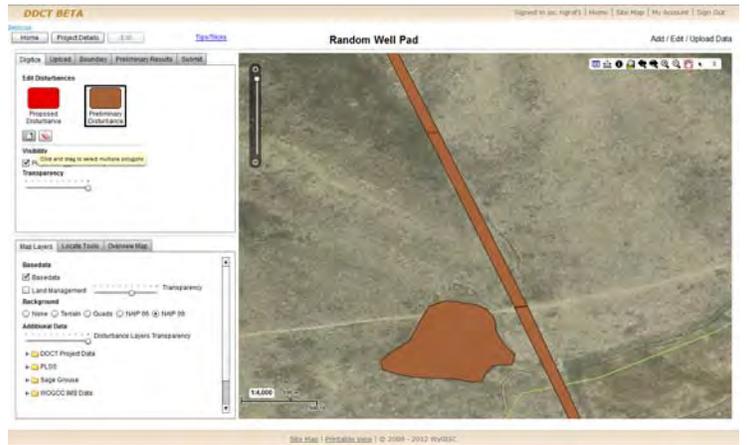
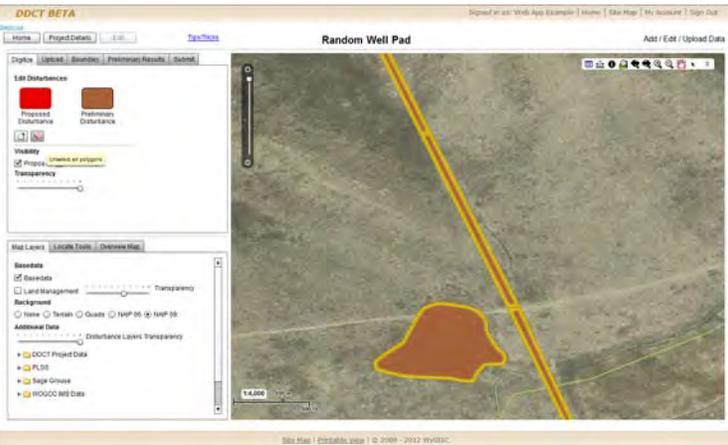
4. Any attribute changes or deleting of features will apply to all selected features



● **Clearing a Multiple Selection**

➤ With the **Digitize** tab selected

➔ Click on the **Clear Selected Features** button



Create Features Using the Upload Tool

Upload Proposed Project Area or Disturbance(s)

➤ With the **Upload** tab selected

1. Select the **Upload Shapefile** button
2. In the Upload Shapefile Dialog window Press the **Select Files** button
3. In the Select file(s) to upload by ddct.wygis.org dialog window

navigate to where the shapefile is stored and use the **shift** key to select all files associated with the shapefile. Press **Save** to close the window

4. Press the **Next** button
5. Select whether the shapefile is a **Proposed Disturbance** or **Existing Disturbance** and click the **Upload Shapefile** button
6. When red text that says "upload complete. Continue to Step 3" appears, the upload has been successful, press the **Next** button

7. Select the fields that contain the Disturbance/Disruption/Category/Type/Comments Information

- Attribute fields are listed in alphabetical order, **not** in the order they appear in the feature

- If no field contains the information, leave the dropdown blank
- If the shapefile contains no pertinent attribute information select the check box at the bottom

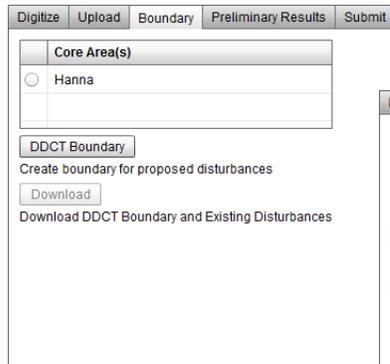
8. Press the **Next** button
9. Press the **Write to DB** button to finalize the upload
10. Press the **Done** button to finish the process

DDCT Assessment Area

Generate the boundary

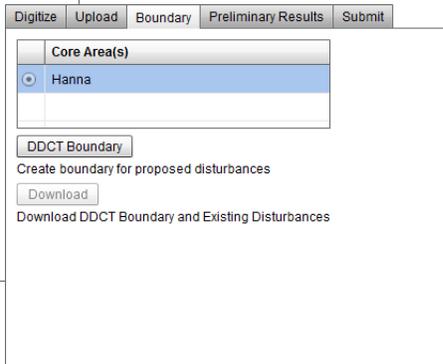
With the **Boundary** tab selected

1. Select the radio button next to the name of the **Core Area(s)** to be used in the DDCT process



2. Press the **DDCT Boundary** button

3. Wait until the boundary generation process has run, the screen will refresh when the process is complete



Download the boundary (If desired)

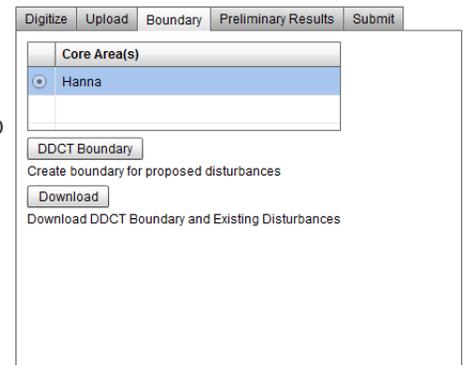
With the **Boundary** tab selected

1. Click the **Download** button

2. The download will be emailed to email address on file for the user and contain an attachment called WyGISC.zip

3. The WyGISC.zip contains an esri® File Geodatabase that contains the following features:

- ddctBoundary – The DDCT boundary
- ExistingDisturbance – Statewide Disturbance clipped to the DDCT boundary
- MapGrids – Grid covering the DDCT boundary used to create a Mapbook for the project
- PrelimDisturbance* – Preliminary Disturbance for the project area, entered by the user
- ProposedDisturbance – The proposed project boundary entered by the user



*if no Preliminary Disturbances have been created or uploaded, no PrelimDisturbance layer is included in the download

Preliminary Results

Calculate Results Using Both Preliminary and Statewide Disturbance Data

With the **Preliminary Results** tab selected

1. Select the Core Area for the calculation
2. Click the **Calculate Results** button

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **OVERLAP - Calculate Results**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

Save as PDF

3. Wait until the preliminary calculation process has run, the tables will populate with data when the process is complete

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **DDCT Preliminary Calculation**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

Save as PDF

4. These results are **not** stored in the database, and are **only for informative purposes**

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **Done**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent
Overall DDCT Boundary	27,270.47	100
Total Disturbed	254.12	0.93
Total Undisturbed	27,016.35	99.07
Disturbed - Project Only	1.98	0.01
Disturbed - Preliminary Only	191.84	0.70
Disturbed - Existing Only	60.30	0.22
Disruptions	0.07 Dis/640 Ac	

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct
Bureau of I	2,077.11	8.02	0.39	8.02	0.39
Private	23,174.59	171.47	0.74	173.45	0.75
State	1,958.75	11.22	0.57	11.22	0.57
Water	60.03	0.19	0.32	0.19	0.32

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct
22-207809	21,691.63	160.21	0.74	162.19	0.75
22-217731	15,882.30	80.70	0.51	82.68	0.52

Save as PDF

Saving a copy of the Preliminary Results

With the **Preliminary Results** tab selected

1. Click the **Save as PDF** button
2. Give the results a name and select the location to save the PDF

Submit for Technical Review

Submit a Project for Technical Review and to have Preliminary Data Included in the Statewide Disturbance Dataset

With the **Submit** tab selected

1. Press the **Submit** button
2. An email will be sent to the DDCT Data and Application Steward indicating that the project is ready for review
3. Proponents will be contacted with the results of the technical review

Digitize Upload Boundary Preliminary Results **Submit**

Submit Preliminary Disturbances to Steward for inclusion into Statewide database

Submit

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Technical Review

● Overview of the Technical Review Process

- After the project has been submitted for Technical Review
 1. Project is reviewed by the Data and Application Steward to ensure that all disturbances have been accounted for
 2. There are two possible results of the technical review
 - Disturbances need revision
 - All disturbances are accounted for and mapped correctly

● Revision Process

- Overview of Revision Process
 - ➔ Project is moved back to the **DDCT Development** stage
 - ➔ Proponent receives a series of PDF maps highlighting the areas of concern
 - ➔ Proponent can either manually correct the problems using the online tool, or upload corrected disturbance data
 - ➔ Once the concerns have been addressed the project is then re-submitted for **Technical Review**

● All Disturbances Mapped Correctly

- Overview of the Technical to Policy Review transition
 - ➔ Role of the Data and Application Steward:
 - Take the disturbances from the Preliminary layer and incorporate them into the Statewide Disturbance Data layer
 - Change the project status to Technical Review Complete
 - Notify the proponent that the Technical Review is complete
 - ➔ Role of the Proponent

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Policy Review

● Generate Final Results

➤ From the **Project Details** screen click the **Final Results** button

1. Select the **Core Area** for the calculation
2. Click the **Calculate Results** button

3. Wait until the final calculation process has run, the tables will populate with data when the process is complete

4. Click the **Write to DB** button to save the results

The screenshot displays the 'OVERLAP - Calculate Results' interface. It features a 'Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)' section with a dropdown menu showing 'Douglas'. Below this are two tables: one for 'OVERLAP - Calculate Results' and another for 'DDCT Calculation'. Both tables have columns for Category, Acres, and Percent. The 'OVERLAP' table is currently empty. The 'DDCT Calculation' table is also empty. At the bottom of the 'OVERLAP' section are buttons for 'Write to DB', 'Save as PDF', and 'Submit for P'. The 'DDCT Calculation' section has similar buttons. On the right, a 'Review Well' map shows a geographical area with a green and yellow overlay. The map includes a scale bar and a north arrow.

● Saving a Copy of the Final Results

➤ From the **Final Results** screen

1. Click the **Save as PDF** button
2. Give the results a name and select the location to save the PDF

1 **Appendix J – Mitigation**

2
3 **Part I – Regional Mitigation Strategy**

4
5 The BLM/USFS will achieve no net unmitigated loss for authorized land uses within greater
6 sage-grouse priority and general habitat. No net unmitigated loss means that impacts from
7 authorized land uses will be fully offset to benefit the species. Mitigation will follow the
8 regulations from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20;
9 e.g. avoid, minimize, and compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If
10 impacts to greater sage-grouse or its habitat from authorized land uses remain after applying
11 avoidance and minimization measures (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation
12 projects will be used to fully offset those residual impacts in order to achieve the no net
13 unmitigated loss standard. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition
14 to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see glossary).

15
16 The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team,
17 will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy that will inform the
18 NEPA decision making process including the application of the mitigation hierarchy to address
19 impacts within that Zone. A robust and transparent Regional Mitigation Strategy will contribute
20 to greater sage-grouse habitat conservation by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats and
21 compensating for residual impacts to greater sage-grouse and its habitat.

22
23 The BLM’s Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 serves as a framework for developing and
24 implementing a Regional Mitigation Strategy. The following sections provide additional
25 guidance specific to the development and implementation of a WAFWA Management Zone
26 Regional Mitigation Strategy.

27
28 Developing a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy

29
30 The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team,
31 will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy to guide the
32 application of the mitigation hierarchy to address impacts within that Zone. The Strategy should
33 consider any State-level greater sage-grouse mitigation guidance that is consistent with the
34 requirements identified in this Appendix. The Regional Mitigation Strategy should be developed
35 in a transparent manner, based on the best science available and standardized metrics.

36
37 As described in Chapter 2, the BLM/USFS will establish a WAFWA Management Zone Greater
38 Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide the conservation of greater
39 sage-grouse, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The Strategy will be
40 developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision.

41
42 The Regional Mitigation Strategy should include mitigation guidance on avoidance,
43 minimization, and compensation, as follows:

- 44
45 • Avoidance

- 46 ○ Include avoidance areas (e.g. right-of-way avoidance/exclusion areas, no surface
47 occupancy areas) already included in laws, regulations, policies, and/or land use plans
48 (e.g. Resource Management Plans, Forest Plans, State Plans); and,
- 49 ○ Include any potential, additional avoidance actions (e.g. additional avoidance best
50 management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- 51 ● Minimization
- 52 ○ Include minimization actions (e.g. required design features, best management
53 practices) already included in laws, regulations, policies, land use plans, and/or land-
54 use authorizations; and,
- 55 ○ Include any potential, additional minimization actions (e.g. additional minimization
56 best management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- 57 ● Compensation
- 58 ○ Include discussion of impact/project valuation, compensatory mitigation options,
59 siting, compensatory project types and costs, monitoring, reporting, and program
60 administration. Each of these topics is discussed in more detail below.
- 61 ■ Residual Impact and Compensatory Mitigation Project Valuation Guidance
- 62 ○ A common standardized method should be identified for estimating
63 the value of the residual impacts and value of the compensatory
64 mitigation projects.
- 65 ○ This method should consider the quality of habitat, scarcity of the
66 habitat, and the size of the impact/project.
- 67 ○ For compensatory mitigation projects, consideration of durability (see
68 glossary), timeliness (see glossary), and the potential for failure may
69 require an upward adjustment of the valuation.
- 70 ○ The resultant compensatory mitigation project will, after application of the
71 above guidance, result in proactive conservation measures for Greater Sage-
72 grouse (consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species
73 Management, section .02).
- 74 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Options
- 75 ○ Options for implementing compensatory mitigation should be
76 identified, such as:
- 77 ■ Utilizing certified mitigation/conservation bank or credit
78 exchanges.
- 79 ■ Contributing to an existing mitigation/conservation fund.
- 80 ■ Authorized-user conducted mitigation projects.
- 81 ○ For any compensatory mitigation project, the investment must be
82 additional (i.e. additionality: the conservation benefits of
83 compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and would not have
84 resulted without the compensatory mitigation project).
- 85 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Siting
- 86 ○ Sites should be in areas that have the potential to yield the greatest
87 conservation benefit to the greater sage-grouse, regardless of land
88 ownership.
- 89 ○ Sites should be durable (see glossary).
- 90 ○ Sites identified by existing plans and strategies (e.g. fire restoration
91 plans, invasive species strategies, healthy land focal areas) should be

92 considered, if those sites have the potential to yield the greatest benefit
93 to greater sage-grouse and are durable.

- 94 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Project Types and Costs
 - 95 ○ Project types should be identified that help reduce threats to greater
 - 96 sage-grouse (e.g. protection, conservation, and restoration projects).
 - 97 ○ Each project type should have a goal and measurable objectives.
 - 98 ○ Each project type should have associated monitoring and maintenance
 - 99 requirements, for the duration of the impact.
 - 100 ○ To inform contributions to a mitigation/conservation fund, expected
 - 101 costs for these project types (and their monitoring and maintenance),
 - 102 within the WAFWA Management Zone, should be identified.
- 103 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Compliance and Monitoring
 - 104 ○ Mitigation projects should be inspected to ensure they are
 - 105 implemented as designed, and if not, there should be methods to
 - 106 enforce compliance.
 - 107 ○ Mitigation projects should be monitored to ensure that the goals and
 - 108 objectives are met and that the benefits are effective for the duration of
 - 109 the impact.
- 110 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Reporting
 - 111 ○ Standardized, transparent, scalable, and scientifically-defensible
 - 112 reporting requirements should be identified for mitigation projects.
 - 113 ○ Reports should be compiled, summarized, and reviewed in the
 - 114 WAFWA Management Zone in order to determine if greater sage-
 - 115 grouse conservation has been achieved and/or to support adaptive
 - 116 management recommendations.
- 117 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Program Implementation Guidelines
 - 118 ○ Guidelines for implementing the State-level compensatory mitigation
 - 119 program should include holding and applying compensatory mitigation
 - 120 funds, operating a transparent and credible accounting system,
 - 121 certifying mitigation credits, and managing reporting requirements.
 - 122

123 Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into Land Use Authorization Analyses

124
125 The BLM/USFS will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations
126 from the Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for
127 authorized land uses that may impact greater sage-grouse or its habitat.

128 129 Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program

130
131 The BLM/USFS need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically implemented to
132 achieve the greatest conservation benefit, as identified in the Regional Mitigation Strategy. In
133 order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this compensatory mitigation
134 program will be managed at a State-level (as opposed to a WAFWA Management Zone, a Field
135 Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

136

137 To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the
138 BLM/USFS will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help manage the State-
139 level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision.
140 The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator will conform to all
141 relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM/USFS will remain responsible for making
142 decisions that affect Federal lands.

143

144 **Glossary Terms**

145

146 **Additionality:** The conservation benefits of compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and
147 would not have resulted without the compensatory mitigation project. (BLM Manual Section
148 1794).

149

150 **Avoidance mitigation:** Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of
151 an action. (40 CFR 1508.20(a)) (e.g. may also include avoiding the impact by moving the
152 proposed action to a different time or location.)

153

154 **Compensatory mitigation:** Compensating for the (residual) impact by replacing or providing
155 substitute resources or environments. (40 CFR 1508.20)

156

157 **Compensatory mitigation projects:** Specific, on-the-ground actions to improve and/or protect
158 habitats (e.g. chemical vegetation treatments, land acquisitions, conservation easements).

159

160 **Compensatory mitigation sites:** The durable areas where compensatory mitigation projects will
161 occur.

162

163 **Durability (protective and ecological):** The administrative, legal, and financial assurances that
164 secure and protect the conservation status of a compensatory mitigation site, and the ecological
165 benefits of a compensatory mitigation project, for at least as long as the associated impacts
166 persist. (BLM Manual Section 1794).

167

168 **Minimization mitigation:** Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action
169 and its implementation. (40 CFR 1508.20 (b))

170

171 **Residual impacts:** Impacts from an authorized land use that remain after applying avoidance
172 and minimization mitigation; also referred to as unavoidable impacts.

173

174 **Timeliness:** The conservation benefits from compensatory mitigation accruing as early as
175 possible or before impacts have begun. (BLM Manual Section 1794).

176

177

Part II – Idaho Mitigation Framework

FRAMEWORK FOR MITIGATION OF IMPACTS FROM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ON SAGE-GROUSE AND THEIR HABITATS

**Sage-Grouse Mitigation Subcommittee of the Idaho Sage-Grouse State Advisory Committee¹
December 6, 2010**

INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee 2006; as amended in 2009) calls for the development of a “proposal for a mitigation and crediting program for sagebrush steppe habitats in Idaho and recommendations for policy consideration” (Measure 6.2.4). In early 2010, the Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee (SAC) established the Mitigation Subcommittee to complete this task.¹ The Mitigation Subcommittee met several times from the late spring, through the fall of 2010 and found broad areas of agreement among its diverse participants.

This report presents the Mitigation Subcommittee’s consensus recommendations for the creation of an Idaho-based program to compensate for the impacts of infrastructure projects on sagegrouse and their habitats. This program – called the Mitigation Framework – would serve as a science-based “mitigation module” that project developers and government regulators could use to achieve compensatory mitigation objectives called for in project plans and permits. While compensatory mitigation may help offset certain impacts arising from infrastructure projects, mitigation should not be considered a substitute for first avoiding and then minimizing impacts.

In addition, it is important to recognize that federal and state regulatory or land-management agencies, and county or local governments may also require additional stipulations, conditions of approval or other requirements as well as on-site mitigation, in accordance with applicable law, regulation or policy.

This document proposes a general outline or “skeleton” of policies and procedures for such a program. The Mitigation Framework is designed to be transparent, inclusive, and accountable to defined objectives. The Subcommittee’s purpose is to describe the program in enough detail to foster a dialogue among SAC members, spot important issues and points of agreement, and assess the level of support for developing a functioning mitigation program for Idaho sagegrouse and their habitats.

¹ Subcommittee participants: John Robison and Lara Rozzelle, Idaho Conservation League; Brett Dumas, Idaho Power Company; Paul Makela and Tom Rinkes, BLM; Don Kemner, Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Will Whelan and Trish Klahr, The Nature Conservancy; Rich Rayhill, Ridgeline Energy, LLC; Lisa LaBolle and Kirsten Sikes, Idaho Office of Energy Resources; Nate Fisher, Idaho Office of Species Conservation; John Romero, Citizen at Large.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The state of Idaho is seeing an increasing number of infrastructure projects, such as transmission lines and wind energy facilities, proposed in the state’s sagebrush steppe ecosystems. Where federal permits are required, the environmental review process for these projects will analyze how these projects affect sage-grouse and will consider a range of potential mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or offset any impacts. It is likely that the environmental review process will lead at least some developers and agencies to implement compensatory mitigation.

Compensatory mitigation consists of compensating for residual project impacts that are not avoided or minimized by providing substitute resources or habitats, often at a different location than the project area. For sage-grouse, this would include, among other things, protecting and restoring sagebrush habitats to offset habitat losses and other effects of infrastructure projects.

This framework describes the general outline for a sage-grouse compensatory mitigation program in Idaho. This program would employ an “in-lieu fee” approach to compensatory mitigation through which a project developer would pay funds into an account managed by the mitigation program for performance of mitigation actions that provide measureable benefits for sage-grouse and their habitats within Idaho.

The Mitigation Framework does not alter the legal standards or procedures for review and approval of infrastructure projects. Rather, it offers an option that project developers and/or regulators may choose for implementing mitigation plans and agency permit conditions. It should be emphasized that this program would not relieve project developers and permitting agencies of their obligation to avoid and minimize environmental impacts through appropriate project siting, design and implementation.

Although the initial focus is on sage-grouse, the Mitigation Framework can be readily adapted to provide compensatory mitigation for other sagebrush obligate and associated species. The suitability of the Framework for other species and natural features has not been evaluated.

The objectives of the Mitigation Framework include:

- Provide a credible, efficient, transparent, and flexible mechanism to implement compensatory mitigation;
- Ensure that sage-grouse impacts are offset by actions that benefit the affected species and habitats;
- Provide increased certainty for developers and agencies;
- Involve private and public partners in crafting solutions;
- Provide developers the opportunity to offset the impacts of project development and operation on sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat, and provide a consistent mechanism to offset impacts to the species that can be evaluated in future reviews of the species’ status; and
- Evaluate issues based on best available scientific information, while acknowledging and responding to scientific uncertainty.

262 The Mitigation Framework would be established through a memorandum of agreement (MOA)
263 among entities that have the capacity and commitment to assist in its implementation. Such parties
264 may include land and wildlife management agencies, counties, tribes, participating private
265 infrastructure development companies, and non-governmental organizations. The MOA would
266 define the specific roles and responsibilities, procedures, and tasks needed to operate an Idaho-based
267 compensatory mitigation program.

268
269 The Mitigation Framework envisions a program with the following attributes: (1) a Mitigation Team
270 and program administrator to steer the mitigation program and ensure strong oversight; (2)
271 technically sound and transparent guidelines for estimating compensatory mitigation costs; (3) a
272 science-based statewide strategy to guide the selection of mitigation actions that will receive funding;
273 (4) provisions that the costs of operating the program will be borne by infrastructure developers that
274 use the Mitigation Framework to deliver compensatory mitigation; (5) monitoring the
275 implementation and effectiveness of mitigation actions funded by the Mitigation Framework
276 program; (6) a system to track benefits provided by the Mitigation Framework to sage-grouse habitat
277 in Idaho; and (7) periodic evaluation and adaptation of the Mitigation Framework program.

278
279 This framework provides only a general outline of a proposed Idaho-based compensatory mitigation
280 program. It is intended to assess the level of support for crafting the agreements and completing the
281 technical tasks needed to bring the Mitigation Framework into being.

282
283 **DISCUSSION**

284
285 I. The Role of Compensatory Mitigation in Infrastructure Development and Sage-grouse
286 Conservation

287
288 **A. Mitigation Basics**

289
290 Broadly defined, “mitigation” refers to a wide range of measures that are taken to avoid,
291 minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for the adverse impacts of actions affecting the
292 environment. See 40 C.F.R. § 1508.20 (definition of “mitigation” in National Environmental
293 Policy Act (NEPA) rules). In this general sense, mitigation should be an integral part of all
294 phases of project planning and implementation.

295
296 The focus of this report is on compensatory mitigation – also known as “biodiversity
297 offsets” or “offsite mitigation.” Compensatory mitigation consists of compensating for
298 residual project impacts that are not avoided or minimized by providing substitute resources
299 or habitats, often at a different location than the project area. For instance, a project
300 developer may fund the restoration of a particular type of habitat in order to replace or
301 “offset” similar habitat that is lost as a result of project construction.

302
303 This Framework adopts an “in-lieu fee” approach to compensatory mitigation. Under this
304 approach, a project developer provides funding to a compensatory mitigation program
305 administrator who then distributes the funds to the appropriate government agency,
306 foundation or other organization for performance of mitigation actions. In an in-lieu fee
307 program, the responsibility for actually delivering the compensatory mitigation is transferred
308 from the developer to the program administrator once the developer provides the necessary
309 funds to the in-lieu fee program. It is important to emphasize that compensatory mitigation

310 does not relieve project developers and permitting agencies of their obligation to avoid and
311 minimize environmental impacts. This Framework endorses the principle known as the
312 “mitigation hierarchy,” which holds that decision makers should consider the elements of
313 environmental mitigation in the following order of priority:

- 314 1. Avoid environmental impacts through project siting and design;
- 315 2. Minimize the impacts during construction, operation, maintenance, and
316 decommissioning by implementing appropriate conservation measures related to
317 timing and conduct of project activities;
- 318 3. Restore areas that have been disturbed or otherwise rectify on-site project-related
319 impacts to the greatest extent practicable; and
- 320 4. Compensate for residual impacts (direct and indirect effects that are not mitigated
321 on-site) by providing replacement habitats or other benefits.
322

323 This means that compensatory mitigation is addressed only after efforts to avoid, minimize,
324 and mitigate the impacts have been addressed. It also should be noted that significant
325 impacts to habitat areas that support special functions and values for sage-grouse may simply
326 not be replaceable through mitigation and therefore the best course may be to avoid those
327 areas altogether.
328

329 **B. Need for an Idaho Compensatory Mitigation Program**

330 In recent years, the state of Idaho has seen an increase in the number of major infrastructure
331 projects proposed in the state’s sagebrush steppe ecosystems. Several current proposals
332 involve high voltage transmission lines that would cross over hundreds of miles of sage-
333 grouse habitat. Large scale energy infrastructure projects such as wind farms may also affect
334 large areas of sagegrouse habitat. Where these projects are located at least partially on
335 federally managed public lands they will be required by federal law to go through an
336 extensive environmental review process under NEPA before relevant federal permits are
337 issued. The NEPA process requires the permitting agencies to consider the projects’
338 environmental effects (both positive and negative), alternatives, and potential mitigation
339 measures. Impacts on sage-grouse will be one of the topics analyzed in the NEPA process.
340

341 Even after efforts are taken to avoid and minimize impacts, it is possible that some of these
342 infrastructure projects will degrade some sage-grouse habitat, cause direct sage-grouse
343 mortality, or lead to indirect effects such as avoidance of previously occupied habitat. The
344 extent to which project developers and regulators adopt compensatory mitigation as a means
345 to offset these impacts is not fully known. However, it is likely that at least some developers
346 and regulators will seek to implement compensatory mitigation to benefit sage-grouse and
347 their habitats. Energy companies and other developers face daunting challenges in carrying
348 out compensatory mitigation for sage-grouse habitat. Just identifying specific mitigation
349 actions requires a major effort. Actually implementing sagebrush restoration and
350 enhancement projects is even more difficult and expensive – typically involving years of
351 effort and a significant risk of failure. Delivering this type of technically complex
352 environmental mitigation may be well outside the core business of many infrastructure
353 developers.
354

355 **C. Advantages of the Mitigation Framework**

358
359 The Mitigation Framework proposes to respond to these challenges by creating a statewide
360 program to deliver scientifically sound compensatory mitigation for multiple projects.
361 Project developers and regulators would no longer have to design, fund and implement their
362 own mitigation programs. Instead, they would have the option of contributing money to a
363 central fund overseen by agencies with expertise in habitat management and non-
364 governmental partners with similar experience. This approach to compensatory mitigation
365 offers three major advantages. The first advantage stems from the increased efficiency of an
366 Idaho-wide mitigation program compared with fragmented, project-by-project mitigation
367 programs. Mitigation efforts require a significant investment in planning, administration,
368 project oversight, and monitoring. The Mitigation Framework would consolidate these
369 functions, thus avoiding needless duplication. The second advantage is that a state mitigation
370 fund can be used for sage-grouse conservation more strategically and at a greater scale than
371 project-by-project mitigation. As described in more detail below, the Mitigation Framework
372 would fund sage-grouse habitat protection and restoration projects in accordance with a
373 statewide strategy that uses landscape-scale analyses to identify the specific measures and
374 habitats that will provide the greatest benefit for Idaho sagegrouse populations. This Idaho-
375 based mitigation strategy will be integrated with other conservation strategies throughout the
376 range of sage-grouse to ensure that actions taken in Idaho benefit the species as a whole.
377 Third, this method can engage the capacity and competence of natural resources agencies,
378 local governments, private companies, and non-governmental organizations. The Mitigation
379 Framework proposes to enlist these entities in shaping Idaho’s strategy, developing criteria
380 for use of the fund, and proposing and implementing habitat protection and restoration
381 projects. The benefits of the Mitigation Framework can be summarized as follows:

382
383 *Benefits for Project Developers:*

384
385 An efficient and reliable mechanism for meeting compensatory mitigation objectives and
386 permit conditions; and Increased certainty regarding project costs.

387
388 *Benefits for Regulatory Agencies:*

389
390 Increased certainty that in-lieu fees will result in strategic “on-the-ground” mitigation actions
391 that benefit sage-grouse.

392
393 *Benefits for Sage-Grouse:*

394
395 Increased certainty that scientifically sound mitigation actions that benefit sage-grouse and
396 offset impacts and habitat losses associated with infrastructure development will be
397 implemented.

398
399 **D. Ensuring Accountability**

400
401 In-lieu fee compensatory mitigation does pose one potentially significant drawback that must
402 be acknowledged and addressed: a poorly designed program may lack accountability for
403 delivering meaningful on-the-ground benefits for sage-grouse. Simply having a project
404 developer contribute to an in-lieu fee mitigation account does not by itself compensate for
405 the sage-grouse impacts caused by the project. Actual mitigation is possible only after well-

406 conceived habitat protection and restoration projects are planned, funded, implemented,
407 monitored, and successful in achieving stated objectives. The Mitigation Framework seeks to
408 ensure accountability by adopting a series of rigorous and transparent procedures. As
409 described below, the Framework would: (1) ensure that program administration and
410 monitoring functions are adequately funded; (2) provide technically sound guidelines for
411 estimating the costs of delivering compensatory mitigation; (3) establish a sciencebased
412 statewide strategy to guide the program; (4) develop project selection criteria and a request
413 for proposals based on the strategy; (5) require monitoring of the implementation and
414 effectiveness of mitigation actions funded by the program; (6) track benefits the Mitigation
415

416 Framework program provides to sage-grouse in Idaho; and (7) require periodic evaluation of
417 the program. Taken together, these procedures provide a high degree of certainty that the
418 Mitigation Framework will be able to turn in-lieu fee payments into tangible, lasting
419 compensatory mitigation for sage-grouse. As described in greater detail in Section E, below,
420 project developers that seek to use the Mitigation Framework will need to show two things.
421 First, they will need to show that their projects' impacts on sage-grouse and their habitats
422 have been evaluated using a scientifically sound process. Second, they will need to show that
423 their contributions to the mitigation fund reflect the Mitigation Framework's compensation
424 guidelines to ensure that funding will be adequate to offset project impacts. Having
425 demonstrated those things, the project developers should then be able to rely on their in-lieu
426 fee contribution to the mitigation account as satisfying their compensatory mitigation
427 objectives or obligations.
428

429 **II. Core Elements of Idaho Sage-Grouse Mitigation Program**

430 **A. Program Objectives**

- 431 • Provide a credible, efficient, transparent, and flexible mechanism to implement
432 compensatory mitigation;
- 433 • Ensure that sage-grouse impacts are offset by mitigation actions that benefit the sage-
434 grouse and their habitats;
- 435 • Provide increased certainty for developers and agencies;
- 436 • Involve private and public partners in crafting solutions;
- 437 • Provide developers the opportunity to offset project impacts on sage-grouse and sage-
438 grouse habitat, and provide a consistent mitigation mechanism that can be evaluated in
439 future reviews of the species' status; and
- 440 • Evaluate issues based on best available scientific information while acknowledging and
441 responding to scientific uncertainty.
442

443 **B. Scope**

444 The Mitigation Framework proposes to mitigate for impacts to Idaho sage-grouse and their
445 habitats in Idaho. The initial focus of the Mitigation Framework is on sage-grouse. However,
446 this program can be readily adapted to provide compensatory mitigation for other sagebrush
447 obligate and associate species, such as pygmy rabbits, if project developers and regulators call for
448 such mitigation.
449
450
451
452

453 Whether this Framework is suited for mitigation of impacts to a broader suite of species or
454 natural features has not been evaluated. It should be noted that some subcommittee members
455 expect to advocate in other forums that compensatory mitigation should extend beyond
456 sagegrouse. The Mitigation Framework focuses on infrastructure projects because this type of
457 development is the most likely to give rise to compensatory mitigation under existing
458 environmental policies. As used here, the term “infrastructure” refers to building structures that
459 significantly disturb sage-grouse habitat, including but not limited to projects for electricity
460 transmission, energy generation, pipeline conveyance, transportation, communications, and
461 similar purposes. The Mitigation Framework is not intended to apply to existing projects that are
462 not changing in scope or to the renewal of on-going activities, such as grazing permits. In
463 addition, the Framework is not suited to projects with minor impacts because their contributions
464 to the mitigation program would be too small to justify the effort needed to establish and
465 administer inlieu fee payments.

466 **C. Integration with Environmental Review Procedures**

467
468 The Mitigation Framework does not alter the legal standards or procedures for review and
469 approval of infrastructure projects. Rather, the Framework offers an option that project
470 developers and/or regulators may choose for implementing mitigation plans and agency permit
471 conditions. The Mitigation Framework is intended to complement the environmental review
472 process conducted pursuant to NEPA and other federal environmental laws as well as county
473 land use planning authorities. Many energy and other infrastructure projects undergo review and
474 approval at the county level. The issues examined and the level of environmental analysis varies
475 widely among individual counties and individual developers. If a county or developer decides to
476 address sage-grouse impacts, it will be able to use the Mitigation Framework as a mechanism for
477 meeting compensatory mitigation objectives that may arise from the county permitting process.
478
479

480 **D. Mitigation Strategy**

481
482 The next step focuses on the Mitigation Team’s task of developing a statewide, science-based
483 strategy that will guide the use of the mitigation fund. The mitigation program strategy would
484 establish priorities for the use of compensatory mitigation funding based on factors/risks
485 identified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List Greater
486 Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered (USFWS 2010) and in the
487 Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (2006). The strategy sets mitigation
488 priorities with a landscape view of sage-grouse needs and highlights mitigation opportunities in
489 Idaho based on best available science. In setting priorities, the strategy considers species and
490 community size, landscape condition, and regional context. The strategy is responsive to the
491 threats and risks described in the sage-grouse 12- month findings. The strategy will also generally
492 describe the types of mitigation actions, project specifications, and best practices that are likely
493 to produce measureable benefits for sage-grouse habitat. Finally, the strategy addresses both
494 implementation and effectiveness monitoring requirements for mitigation actions funded
495 through the program. The Mitigation Framework’s strategy will draw heavily from the State of
496 Idaho’s sage-grouse conservation plan but has a narrower focus. It is intended to provide the
497 specific guidance on program priorities, accepted mitigation measures, and geographic areas of
498 emphasis that potential mitigation project sponsors will need to know when they apply for
499 funds. The strategy plays a crucial role in steering mitigation funding to those activities and
500 places that can provide the most effective benefits for Idaho sage-grouse populations consistent

501 with strategies to increase the viability of the species throughout its range. To this end, the
502 strategy will address one of the major policy questions that arise in the design of compensatory
503 mitigation systems: how closely should the mitigation actions be linked to the type and location
504 of the habitat that was originally affected by the infrastructure project. Stated in the alternative,
505 does removal of the mitigation action from the area of impact improve the effectiveness of or
506 benefit from the action. Some compensatory mitigation systems place a heavy emphasis on this
507 link by favoring “in-kind” and “on-site” compensatory mitigation over “out-of-kind” and “off-
508 site” compensatory mitigation. The subcommittee members generally favor an approach that
509 allows funding to flow to the projects and locations within Idaho that will provide the greatest
510 overall positive impact on sage-grouse populations. The Mitigation Framework calls for a
511 monitoring program that would assess habitat gains provided by mitigation actions and compare
512 them with the mitigation objectives of the participating infrastructure projects. The nature and
513 purpose of this monitoring is described more fully in Mitigation Program Step 4, below.

514
515 Once the strategy is complete, the Mitigation Team will develop project ranking criteria and
516 procedures that will guide the selection of the mitigation actions that will receive funding. The
517 goal is to fund projects that provide high quality, lasting benefits based on landscape scale
518 analyses that actually compensate for project impacts.

519
520 **E. Compensation Guidelines**

521
522 The Mitigation Framework Program will develop guidelines that may be used by developers
523 and/or regulators to determine the cost of meeting their compensatory mitigation objectives.
524 These compensatory mitigation objectives determine the extent of compensatory mitigation for
525 each project and are generally incorporated into project plans or permits. The compensation
526 guidelines will provide transparent, technically sound principles for determining how much it
527 costs to deliver habitat mitigation for sage-grouse. In other words, the guidelines will represent
528 best estimates of the true cost of implementing the mitigation actions needed to meet each
529 project’s compensatory mitigation objectives. The guidelines may be used by the project
530 developer and the Mitigation Framework Program Administrator to establish the in-lieu fee that
531 the developer will contribute to the mitigation fund. Specific valuation methods will be
532 developed at a later time and will likely draw from compensatory mitigation systems used
533 elsewhere in the West. Although the details have yet to be worked out, the following outline
534 illustrates the core concepts and principles (shown in bold lettering) that are likely to be
535 employed by the MOA parties in setting the Mitigation Framework’s in-lieu fee structure.

- 536 • A common unit of measurement would be established for describing and tracking both the
537 project impacts and the benefits of any compensatory mitigation actions. This unit of
538 measurement can be a physical unit such as “acres impacted” or more specifically “acres of
539 summer brood rearing habitat impacted” or “habitat units” lost.
- 540 • While the “common unit of measurement” noted above addresses the area of habitat
541 impacted and mitigated, habitat compensation ratios are used to address the quality of the
542 habitat affected by the infrastructure project. These ratios could specify the number of acres
543 of mitigation required per acre of impacted habitat based on the size, habitat
544 quality/condition and function of the impacted habitat; for more critical or important
545 habitat, more mitigation acres might be required. Thus, habitats with higher quality and
546 importance could have higher compensation ratios.

- 547 • Several factors are taken into account in calculating how much it will cost to actually
548 compensate for the acres or habitat units. The recommended approach is to evaluate on the
549 costs of implementing a conceptual portfolio of potential mitigation actions or offset
550 activities that provide benefits for sage-grouse. This portfolio of model projects would
551 include a balanced mix of accepted habitat protection and restoration measures reflecting the
552 types of projects expected to be funded by the mitigation program (in accordance with the
553 strategy discussed above). Examples of projects in this portfolio may include such actions as
554 restoring sagebrush canopy and a native understory on recently burned land, improving
555 riparian areas and wet meadows in early brood-rearing habitat, conservation easements to
556 prevent habitat loss, and land management practices that improve sage-grouse habitat.
557 Project costs include the full range of expenses needed to complete all phases of the
558 mitigation action, including administration and monitoring. The average costs of these
559 model mitigation actions per acre or habitat unit is the foundation of the in-lieu fee
560 calculation.
- 561 • In addition, the in-lieu fee should also be adjusted to take into consideration the issue of lag
562 time –the time between when habitat is lost at the impacted site relative to when habitat
563 functions are gained at the compensation site.
- 564 • The fee also needs to account for contingencies associated with delivering compensatory
565 mitigation, including an estimate of the risk of failure (i.e., the probability that offsite
566 mitigation will not result in any measureable conservation outcomes) for each mitigation site
567 or project.
- 568 • In addition to the fee calculated above, costs for establishing and operating the program,
569 including travel, technical consultation and monitoring of program effectiveness must be
570 included. This overhead fee could range from 5-15% depending on the size and complexity
571 of the proposed mitigation program.

572
573 **F. Program Structure and Oversight**

574
575 The Mitigation Framework would be established through a memorandum of agreement (MOA)
576 among the entities that would participate in its implementation. The MOA would define the
577 specific roles and responsibilities, procedures, and tasks needed to operate an Idaho-based
578 compensatory mitigation program. The MOA would serve as a joint powers agreement for state
579 and local government parties. The MOA would establish the following administrative structure
580 for the Mitigation Framework:

- 581
582 1. Core Team: A core group would oversee the Mitigation Framework program and provide
583 policy-level guidance for the Science Team and Fund Administrator, described below. The
584 Core Team would be composed of three to seven representatives of diverse perspectives
585 among the MOA signatories.
- 586
587 2. Science Team: A team of experts drawn from MOA signatories and other targeted
588 organizations will administer the science-based and technical aspects of the program. The
589 Science Team would consist of several individuals with expertise in relevant areas such as
590 habitat protection and restoration, landscape ecology/spatial analysis, wildlife biology, sage-
591 grouse ecology, project development, and mitigation policy.

593 The Team would focus on developing the policies and statewide strategy that will guide the
594 program, making requests for mitigation project proposals (RFPs), ranking mitigation
595 proposals that will receive funding, tracking monitoring reports and project benefits, and
596 evaluating program success.

597
598 3. Program Administrator: A program administrator will be responsible for fund
599 management and administrative tasks. The program administrator will provide administrative
600 support for the Mitigation Team, manage the mitigation account, and administer grants,
601 contracts, and other agreements.

602 4. Advisory Committee: A broader advisory committee consisting of agencies, companies
603 and organizations with the skills and commitment that will provide useful advice to the Core
604 Team regarding the implementation of the Mitigation Framework. The specific make up of
605 each of these groups will be determined at a later time. Potential participants in the
606 Mitigation Framework include but are not limited to representatives of:

607
608 ***State of Idaho:***

United States:

609
610 Department of Fish and Game
611 Management
612 Office of Energy Resources
613 Office of Species Conservation
614 Idaho Department of Lands
615 Service

Bureau of Land
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Natural Resources Cons.

616
617 ***Energy Companies:***

Non-Governmental Organizations:

618
619 Idaho Power
620 Ridgeline Energy
621 Conservancy
622
623 Idaho Tribes
624 Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee
625 interests)
626 Sage-Grouse Local Working Groups

Idaho Conservation League
The Nature

Idaho Counties
Public Land Users (e.g., grazing

627
628 **G. Funding the Mitigation Program**

629
630 The costs of administering the program will be sustained by the project developers that seek
631 compensatory mitigation. Therefore, a portion of the in-lieu fee that project developers
632 contribute to the mitigation account will be applied for program administration. As noted
633 above, protecting and restoring sagebrush habitats are time consuming and expensive
634 undertakings. Ensuring that these activities are conducted with strong oversight should be
635 viewed as an exceptionally wise investment.

636
637 **III. Mitigation Program Steps**

638
639 The Mitigation Framework envisions a five-step process for developing, implementing, and
640 monitoring compensatory mitigation.

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A. Step 1 – Assessment of Project Impacts and Development of Mitigation Objectives

Assessment of project impacts should be undertaken by the project developers proposing new infrastructure projects and the government agencies that conduct environmental reviews of those projects. Although the Mitigation Framework process is not responsible for this step, it is nevertheless crucial to the integrity of the mitigation program. Specifically, the Framework’s success in achieving its goal of offsetting major infrastructure project impacts on sage-grouse depends on an accurate accounting of those impacts. For many projects, this analysis will be done as part of the environmental review procedures required by NEPA. As noted above, NEPA requires federal agencies to address the full range of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project, alternatives to the proposed action, and potential mitigation before they act on permit applications. Once impacts have been assessed and compensatory mitigation objectives set, the project developer is ready to engage the Mitigation Framework, starting with determining the developer’s in-lieu fee contribution.

B. Step 2 – Determine the In-lieu Fee Contribution

The goal of Step 2 is to use valuation techniques, such as the guidelines presented above, to convert the complex range of project impacts, including direct, indirect and cumulative impacts, into monetary terms that become the basis for the in-lieu fee payment. The accepted in-lieu fee compensatory mitigation plan could be a condition of the instrument approving the project (FONSI, ROD, right-of-way grant, conditional use permit, etc.) and thus legally requires the project developer comply with the approved mitigation plan.

C. Step 3 – Commitment of Mitigation Funds by Project Developer

Infrastructure project developers can employ the Mitigation Framework by entering into an agreement with the program administrator with regard to a specific infrastructure project. This project agreement sets forth the parties’ respective responsibilities, including the project developer’s commitment to pay the in-lieu fee. Importantly, the agreement provides that the project developer’s funds can only be used for the purposes set forth in the Mitigation Framework. The agreement may also include “conditions” as requested by regulatory agencies or project developers. For instance, the agreement might provide that the in lieu fee will be used to fund mitigation actions in specific geographic areas in order to meet permit requirements. The program administrator, based on consultation with the MOA parties, may decline to enter into an agreement that is inconsistent with the Mitigation Framework principles or includes conditions that are burdensome or unworkable. Once the agreement specifying the payment structure and schedule is signed, the project developer makes the required in-lieu fee deposits to an interest bearing account managed by the program administrator. After the completion of this step, the project developer is no longer engaged in the Mitigation Framework – unless it has decided to participate as a MOA party.

D. Step 4 – Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) and Select, Implement, and Monitor Mitigation Actions

688 At least at annual intervals, the Mitigation Team will issue an RFP that invite private
689 companies, non-governmental organizations, and agencies to submit proposals for sage-
690 grouse habitat protection, restoration, and/or enhancement actions. The RFP will provide
691 guidance to mitigation project sponsors on program priorities and criteria. These priorities
692 and criteria will be drawn from the mitigation program strategy including identification of
693 geographic areas where mitigation might provide the greatest benefits as well as
694 identification of the threats that present the highest risk to the species or its core habitat.
695 The Mitigation Team should also reach out to federal, state, and local agencies, non-
696 governmental organizations and the general public in order to facilitate discussion, engage
697 stakeholders, raise awareness of the program and generate responses to the RFP. The RFP
698 will solicit project proposals that contain an operation or implementation plan and address at
699 least the following elements:

- 700
- 701 • Geographic area;
 - 702 • Threats addressed and how the mitigation action project will offset impacts resulting
703 from those threats;
 - 704 • An analysis of current sage-grouse conditions in the area;
 - 705 • Resource goals and objectives the mitigation action project will seek to provide;
 - 706 • A description of any coordination with federal, state, tribal and local resource
707 management and regulatory authorities or other stakeholder involvement required to
708 complete the mitigation action (e.g., requirement for NEPA compliance or county
709 permit);
 - 710 • A description of recent or proposed projects and events in the vicinity of the
711 proposed project, if any, such as fire rehabilitation treatments, restoration or
712 enhancement treatments or other activities that complement the effectiveness or
713 intent of the proposed, mitigation action;
 - 714 • A description of the long term protection, management, stewardship for the project
715 being implemented, and the entity responsible for these activities; and
 - 716 • A commitment to periodic evaluation and reporting on the progress of the project in
717 meeting stated goals and objectives, including a process for adaptively redirecting the
718 project if necessary.
- 719

720 When selecting projects, the Mitigation Team will estimate the biological benefits of the
721 projects activities, the likely success of those activities, the duration of benefit expected and
722 measure those benefits in relation to the strategy and RFP objectives. Mitigation Team and
723 the program administrator will work together on continuing program administration and
724 oversight including annual reporting of program activities, expenditures, and benefits. An
725 annual program report will describe program activities, budget, and assessment of whether
726 the mitigation strategy and associated projects are benefitting sage-grouse and at what level
727 or scale. The Mitigation Team and/or Program Administrator should implement a
728 monitoring program to measure and validate whether project-specific objectives have been
729 met. Monitoring is required of all compensatory mitigation actions to determine if the
730 project is meeting its performance standards and objectives. As mentioned above, at regular
731 intervals, the total habitat and/or population gains provided by the programs will be
732 compared with the habitat/population losses associated with the participating infrastructure
733 projects. The purpose of this comparison is to evaluate the mitigation program and make

734 any necessary program adjustments – particularly if the monitoring shows that the mitigation
735 benefits are not compensating for habitat losses. This comparison will not be a basis for
736 imposing new, unexpected requirements on the infrastructure project developers.
737

738 **CONCLUSION**

739
740 The framework of policies, principles and procedures outlined above are meant to start a dialogue
741 among parties engaged in sage-grouse conservation and infrastructure development. If these parties
742 agree with the Mitigation Subcommittee that there is great value in establishing an Idaho-based
743 compensatory mitigation program, then this framework will mark the beginning of an inclusive
744 effort to fill in the details and complete the tasks needed to bring such a program into being. We
745 have confidence in our collective ability to create a compensatory mitigation program that will
746 benefit infrastructure developers, agencies, conservation interests, and – not least – Idaho’s sage-
747 grouse.
748

749
750

DRAFT

751 **Part III –**

752

753 **IDAHO AND SOUTHWESTERN MONTANA SUBREGION-NO NET**
754 **UNMITIGATED LOSS PROCESS**

755

756 **Introduction**

757

758 The No Net Unmitigated Loss strategy is a means of assuring that proposed anthropogenic
759 activities, when approved and implemented will not result in long-term degradation of Greater
760 Sage-Grouse habitat or population and will have a net conservation benefit to the species. The
761 attached ‘flow chart’ identifies a screening process for review of proposed anthropogenic
762 activities. The goal of the process is to provide a consistent approach regardless of the
763 administrative location of the project and to ensure that authorization of these projects will not
764 contribute to the decline of the species. Though the initial Steps (1-6) are done prior to initiating
765 the NEPA process, the authorized officer must ensure that appropriate documentation regarding
766 the rationale and conclusion for each is included in the administrative record.

767

768 The flow chart provides for a sequential screening of proposals. However, Steps 2-6 can be done
769 concurrently. Steps 7-12 are related to project implementation.

770

771 **Step 1**

772

773 This screening process is initiated upon formal submittal of a proposal for authorization for use
774 of federal lands (BLM or Forest Service). The actual documentation would include, at a
775 minimum, a description of the location, scale of the project, and timing of the disturbance and
776 would be consistent with existing protocol and procedures for the specific type of use. It is
777 anticipated that the proposals would be submitted by a third party.

778

779 **Step 2**

780

781 This initial review would evaluate whether the proposal would be allowed as prescribed in the
782 Greater-Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment. For example, certain activities are prohibited
783 in suitable habitat, such as wind or solar energy development. If the proposal is an activity that is
784 specific prohibited, the submitter would be informed that the proposal is being rejected since it
785 would not be consistent with the Land Use Plan, regardless of the design of the project.

786

787 In addition to consistency with program allocations, the Land Use Plan identifies a limit on the
788 amount of disturbance that is allowed within a ‘biological significant unit’ (BSU). If current
789 disturbance within the affected unit exceeds this threshold, the project should be deferred until
790 such time as the amount of disturbance within the area has been reduced, through restoration or
791 other management actions.

792

793 **Step 3**

794

795 In reviewing a proposal, determine if the project will have a direct or indirect impact on
796 population or habitat (PPH or PGH). This can be done by:

- 797 1. Reviewing Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat maps.
798 2. Reviewing the 'Base Line Environment Report' (USGS) which identifies the area of
799 direct and indirect effects for various anthropogenic activities.
800 3. Consultation with agency, Fish and Wildlife Service, or State Agency wildlife
801 biologist.
802 4. Reviewing the standard and guidelines in the plan amendments (such as buffer
803 distances for the proposed activity).
804 5. Other methods
805

806 If the proposal will not have a direct or indirect impact on either the habitat or population,
807 proceed with the appropriate process for review, decision, and implementation of the project.
808

809 **Step 4**

810
811 If the project could have a direct or indirect impact of sage-grouse habitat or population, evaluate
812 whether the proposal can be relocated so as to not have the indirect or direct impact and still
813 achieve the intent of the proposal. This Step does not consider redesign of the project as a means
814 of not having direct or indirect impacts but rather authorization of the project in a physical
815 location that will not impact Greater Sage-grouse. If the project can be relocated so as to not
816 have an impact on sage-grouse and still achieve objectives of the proposal, inform applicant and
817 proceed with the appropriate process for review, decision, and implementation of the relocated
818 project.
819

820 **Step 5**

821
822 If the preliminary review of the proposal concludes that there may be impacts to sage-grouse
823 habitat and/or population, and the project cannot be effectively relocated to eliminate these
824 impacts; evaluate whether the agency has the authority to modified or deny the project. If the
825 agency does NOT have the discretionary authority to modify or deny the proposal, proceed with
826 the authorization process (NEPA) and include appropriate mitigation requirements that minimize
827 impacts to sage-grouse habitat and populations. Mitigations could include a combination of
828 actions such as timing of disturbance, design modifications of the proposal, site disturbance
829 restoration, and compensatory mitigation actions.
830

831 **Step 6**

832
833 If the agency has the discretionary authority to deny the project and after careful screening of the
834 proposal (Steps 1-4) has determined that direct and indirect cannot be eliminated, evaluate the
835 proposal to determine if the adverse impacts can be mitigated. If the impacts cannot be
836 effectively mitigated within the BSU, reject or defer the proposal. The criteria for determining
837 this situation would include but not limited to:

- 838 • Natural disturbance within the BSU is significant and additional activities within the area
839 would adversely impact the species.
840
- 841 • The current trend within the BSU is down and additional impacts, whether mitigated or
842 not, could lead to further decline of the species or habitat.

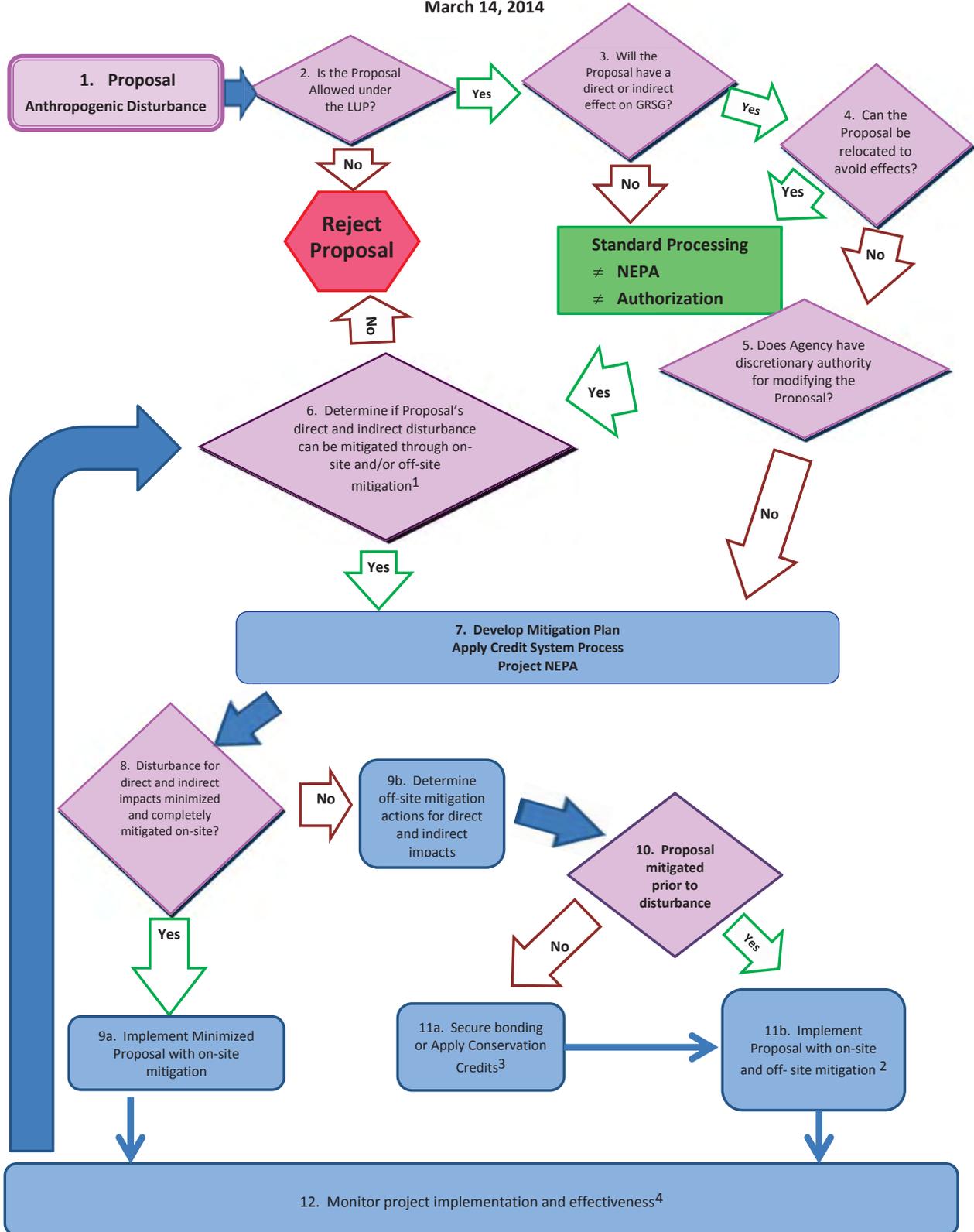
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- The proposed mitigation has proven to be ineffective or is unproven in terms of science based approach.
- The additional impacts, after applying effective mitigation, would exceed the disturbance threshold for the BSU.
- The project would impact habitat that has been determined, through monitoring, to be a limiting factor for species sustainability within the BSU.
- Other site specific criteria that determined the project would lead to a downward trend to the current species population or habitat with the BSU.

If the project can be mitigated to provide for a net conservation benefit to the species, proceed with the design of the mitigation plan and authorization (NEPA) of the Project. The authorization process could identify issues that may require additional mitigation or denial/deferring of the project based on site specific impacts to the Greater Sage-grouse.

DRAFT

**No Net Unmitigated Loss
Draft Decision Flow Chart
March 14, 2014**



¹ In determining if the Proposal disturbance can be mitigated, the result of the mitigation action has to produce a net beneficial conservation value for sage-grouse. Additional process details are being developed for this step in coordination with the FWS and SETT in Nevada.

² Off-site mitigation projects mitigate by:
 ≠ Protective actions for future natural disturbance (i.e. fuel breaks, green strips) and/or
 ≠ restoration of legacy natural or anthropogenic disturbances

³ Process to coordinate with the State on application of Conservation Credits is in process.

⁴ All Monitor is done in accordance with established protocols and incorporated into future Mitigation Plans. Results will feedback into the determination on whether future proposals can be mitigated in Step 6.

Appendix L – Travel Management Planning Guidelines:

- Among other designation criteria from 43 CFR 8342.1(b), “areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats.
- During subsequent travel management planning, all routes would undergo a route evaluation to determine its purpose and need and the potential resource and/or user conflicts from motorized travel. Where resource and/or user conflicts outweigh the purpose and need for the route, the route would be considered for closure or considered for relocation outside of sensitive GRSG habitat.
- During implementation-level travel planning, threats to GRSG and their habitat would be considered when evaluating route designations and/or closures.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes that do not have a purpose or need would be considered for closure.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes that are duplicative, parallel, or redundant would be considered for closure.
- During subsequent travel management planning, seasonal restrictions on OHV use would be considered in important seasonal habitats where OHV use is a threat.
- During subsequent travel management planning, OHV timing limitations would be considered in important seasonal habitats where OHV use is a threat.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider limiting over snow vehicle (OSV) travel to designated routes, consider seasonal closures in GRSG wintering areas from November 1 through March 31 or define Designation Criteria (i.e. minimization criteria) to regulate over snow vehicle traffic.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes not required for public access or recreation with a current administrative/agency purpose or need would be evaluated for administrative access only.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider prioritizing restoration of routes not designated in a Travel Management Plan.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider using seed mixes or transplant techniques that will maintain or enhance GRSG habitat when rehabilitating linear disturbances.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider scheduling road maintenance to avoid disturbance during sensitive periods and times to the extent practicable. Consider using time of day limits (After 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM) to reduce impacts on GRSG during breeding and nesting periods.

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Over-snow vehicle – a motor vehicle that is designed for use over snow and that runs on a track or tracks and/or a ski or skis, while in use over snow.

DRAFT

1 **Idaho and Southwestern Montana**
2 **Recommendation for Proposed Plan Amendment**

3
4 **1. Summary Description of Plan**

- 5 1.1. Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of GRSG by
6 conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain resilient populations
7 by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG habitats.
- 8 1.2. Comply with existing laws, regulations and policies.
- 9 1.3. Recognize valid existing rights.
- 10 1.4. BLM and FS would coordinate with the States of Idaho and Montana, as
11 appropriate, during implementation activities including the evaluation of
12 disturbance threshold, adaptive management triggers and mitigation.
- 13 1.5. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region would be divided into 5
14 Conservation Areas over which the disturbance threshold and adaptive management
15 triggers would apply. These areas are the West Owyhee, Desert, Mountain Valleys,
16 Southern and Southwestern Montana (Map 1).
- 17 1.6. The Conservation Areas would be categorized into management zones – Core,
18 Important and General, with the exception of the Southwestern Montana
19 Conservation Area which does not contain Important Management Zones (Map 2).
- 20 1.7. Adaptive Management: Idaho: actions would engage when population decline by 10
21 percent or a combined 10 percent loss nesting and/or wintering habitat within Core
22 or Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area is lost (Soft Trigger),
23 and when 20 percent of the population or nesting and wintering habitat within Core
24 or Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area is lost (Hard Trigger)
25 Montana: Adaptive management in Montana is linked with the state evaluation
26 framework.
- 27 1.8. Additional anthropogenic disturbance (AD-1) would be significantly limited in Core
28 Management Zones with specific exceptions (AD-3 & AD-4); it would be limited
29 unless consistent with specific criteria in Important Management Zones (AD-4) and
30 would be avoided in General Management Zones.
- 31 1.9. Anthropogenic disturbance (AD-1) would be contained within a 3 percent total
32 disturbance cap as applied to the biologically significant unit (the biologically
33 significant unit (BSU) is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core
34 and Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area), including existing
35 anthropogenic disturbance. In Montana surface disturbance will be calculated
36 through the state surface disturbance analysis process on a project by project basis.
- 37 1.10. Mitigation would be required for all anthropogenic disturbance activities within
38 GRSG habitat. Within Core Management Zones a standard of no net unmitigated
39 loss would be required.
- 40 1.11. BLM and Forest Service would set up a Mitigation Board at the State level with state
41 involvement to develop a Mitigation Strategy and oversee the application of
42 mitigation at the site-specific level.
- 43 1.12. BLM and Forest Service would complete Wildfire and Invasive Species
44 Assessments at the local level to identify priority areas of habitat, and wildfire and
45 invasive species concern. These assessments would support and include the
46 development of fuels, restoration and rehabilitation strategies to use during
47 implementation level activities.

48 **Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG EIS – Land Allocation Decisions Summary¹**

Solar/Wind/Nuclear/Hydropower		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-2)	Avoidance (LR-2)	Open (LR-2)
Commercial Service Airports		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-3)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Landfills		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-4)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Utility Corridors		
Core	Important	General
Existing designated corridors which are land use plan designations (and include Section 368 Corridors), will remain “open” (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement) and can provide an opportunity to be modified with mitigation. Any new disturbance within these corridors would count towards the disturbance cap. All new, modified, or deleted corridors will require a land use plan amendment. (LR-7)	Same as Core (LR-7)	Same as Core (LR-7)
High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs		
Core	Important	General
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits		

¹ The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion includes portions of Idaho, Montana and Utah. Where differences exist between direction for Idaho and Montana those are noted in the table and within the management action section. The lands within Utah are part of the Sawtooth National Forest and are managed as such; therefore direction for these lands in Utah is the same as that described for the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho.

Core	Important	General
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Land Tenure Adjustments		
Core	Important	General
Retention with exceptions for exchange; available for exchange with no net loss of GRSG within Core and Important. Not available for disposal. (LR-13)	Same as Core (LR-13)	Available for exchange subject to existing land use plan conformance (No Action)
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Includes Geothermal)		
Core	Important	General
Idaho: Low or no potential areas Closed Moderate to High potential areas Open subject to No Surface Occupancy Montana: Open subject to NSO. (FLM-1)	Idaho: Open subject to No Surface Occupancy Montana: Not Applicable (FLM-1)	Idaho and Montana: Open subject to CSU (FLM-1)
Non-Energy Leasables		
Core	Important	General
Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) are Open – Not Applicable, No KPLAs in Core Closed to leasing outside KPLAs (NEL-1)	KPLAs are Open Open with standard and additional stipulations for leasing outside KPLAs. (NEL-1)	KPLAs are Open to leasing with standard stipulations (NEL-1)
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)		
Core	Important	General
Closed to new site authorizations. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to criteria. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)
Travel Management		
Core	Important	General

Limited (TM-1)	Limited (TM-1)	Limited (TM-1)
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2. Goals and Objectives

- 2.1. GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of GRSG by conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain resilient populations by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG habitats.
- 2.2. GOAL-2: Provide for the needs of GRSG and their habitat while also providing for resource uses in accordance with the agencies' direction for multiple use and sustained yield as described in FLPMA and the NFMA.
- 2.3. GOAL-3: Manage anthropogenic development and human disturbance in to minimize the likelihood of adverse population level effects on GRSG.
- 2.4. GOAL-4: Reduce the risk of West Nile Virus or other disease outbreaks from BLM and USFS management actions.
- 2.5. Management Area (MA) - Objective (OBJ)-1: Maintain a resilient population of GRSG in Idaho and Southwestern Montana.
- 2.6. MA-OBJ-2: Designate GRSG management zones and associated management to maintain a resilient population and to designate strategically located adjacent zones to provide a buffer from unpredictable habitat loss such as wildfire to the resilient population areas.
- 2.7. MA-OBJ-3: Identify and strategically protect larger in-tact sagebrush areas and areas of lower fragmentation to maintain GRSG population persistence.
- 2.8. Vegetation (VEG)-OBJ-1: Reconnect and expand areas of higher native plant community integrity/rangeland health to increase the extent of high quality habitat and, where possible, to accommodate the future effects of climate change.
- 2.9. VEG-OBJ-2: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:
 - a. Increasing canopy cover and average patch size of sagebrush in perennial grasslands.
 - b. Increasing the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal habitats.
 - c. Protecting or improving GRSG migration/movement corridors.
 - d. Reducing conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats.
 - e. Improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.
 - f. Reducing the extent of annual grasslands adjacent to Core and Important Management Zones.
- Decadal treatment objectives by population area are identified in Table 1.
- 2.10. Habitat Management (HM)-OBJ-1: Maintain or make progress toward 70% of lands within CMZs and IMZs capable of producing sagebrush at 10-30% canopy cover and less than 10% conifer canopy cover.
- 2.11. HM-OBJ-2: Incorporate GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives (Table 2) into the design of projects or activities, as appropriate, based on site conditions and ecological potential, unless achievement of fuels management objectives require additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat and conserve habitat quality for the species.

93 Table 1. Acres of Treatment within a 10-Year Period to Achieve Vegetation Objectives²

Population Area	Mechanical Conifer Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Annual Grass Treatment
SW Idaho			
S Central Idaho			
Mountain Valleys			
N Snake River			
Bear Lake Plateau			
Montana			

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Table 2. Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for Greater Sage-Grouse

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATOR	DESIRED CONDITION
Lek Habitat	Proximity of trees ^{9,16}	<Trees (e.g. juniper) none to uncommon within 3 km of occupied leks
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks ¹⁶	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 100 m of an occupied lek ¹⁶
Nesting Habitat	Apply indicators to areas within 10 km of occupied leks, that have the ecological capability to provide sagebrush cover.	
	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>80% of the landscape in sagebrush cover
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,10,11,13}	15-25%
	Sagebrush height ¹⁰	
	Arid sites ³	12-31 inches (30-80cm)
	Mesic sites ⁴	16-31 inches (40-80cm)
	Predominant sagebrush shape ¹⁶	>50% in spreading shape ⁵
	Perennial grass cover ^{2,10}	
	Arid sites ³	≥10%
Mesic sites ⁴	≥15%	
Perennial grass height ^{10,11,13,16}	≥7 inches ¹⁰	
Perennial forb canopy cover ^{2,10}		
Arid sites ³	≥5%	
Mesic sites ⁴	≥10%	
BROOD-REARING/SUMMER¹ (July-October)¹ (Apply to all habitat outside of nesting/breeding and winter)		
Cover	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>40% of the landscape in sagebrush cover
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,10}	10-25%
	Sagebrush height ¹⁰	40-80cm
	Perennial grass canopy cover ^{2,10}	>15%
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ^{2,16}	Preferred forbs are common with several preferred species present ^{7,8}

² These acreage figures represent an objective for treatment over a ten-year (decadal) timeframe to support achievement or progress toward vegetation and habitat objectives. This accounts for variations in yearly funding availability and does not reflect a maximum acreage for treatment should funding and site specific conditions allow for more or less treatment than described in order to meet vegetation and habitat objectives.

	Riparian meadow habitat function	>80% relative composition ^a of riparian herbaceous species ⁹
WINTER¹ November-March¹ (Apply to areas of low snow accumulation)		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>80%
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow ^{2, 10}	>10%
	Sagebrush height above snow ¹⁰	>25cm

¹ Seasonal dates can be adjusted by local unit according to geographic region.
² Absolute cover is the actual recorded cover and can exceed 100% when recorded across all species and all layers. It is not relative cover, which is the proportions of each species, and equals 100%. Note that cover is reported for only those species (e.g., sagebrush, preferred forbs) that are sampled to determine suitability of habitat for sage-grouse. Overall cover at the site will be greater than that sampled for sage-grouse habitat, due to other species present.
³ 10 – 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).
⁴ ≥12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata vaseyana* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).
⁵ Sagebrush plants that are more tree or columnar-shaped do not provide the protective cover of sagebrush with a spreading shape (HAF 2014).
⁷ Preferred forbs are listed in HAF Table III-2 (HAF 2014). Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred in Table III-2.
⁸ Cover may be higher according to local riparian classifications.

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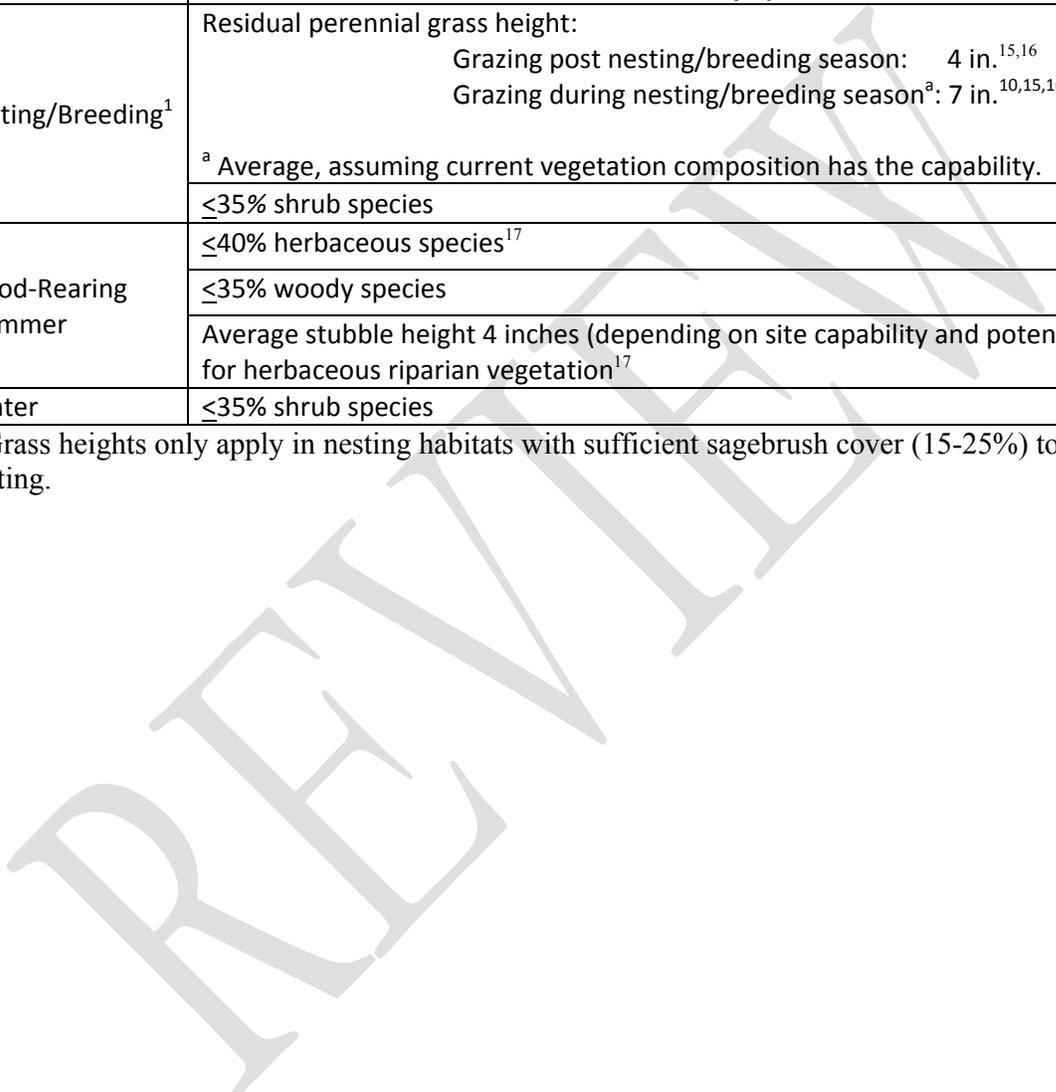
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Forest Service Maximum Allowable Use Levels for GRSG Habitat

Seasonal Habitat	Allowable Use of Key Species
Nesting/Breeding ¹	Residual perennial grass height: Grazing post nesting/breeding season: 4 in. ^{15,16} Grazing during nesting/breeding season ^a : 7 in. ^{10,15,16}
	^a Average, assuming current vegetation composition has the capability. ≤35% shrub species
Brood-Rearing /Summer	≤40% herbaceous species ¹⁷
	≤35% woody species
	Average stubble height 4 inches (depending on site capability and potential) for herbaceous riparian vegetation ¹⁷
Winter	≤35% shrub species

102 1-Grass heights only apply in nesting habitats with sufficient sagebrush cover (15-25%) to support
103 nesting.



- 104 **3. General Direction (GD)**
- 105 **3.1.** GD-1: Comply with state and federal laws, regulations, policies, and standards, including
- 106 FLPMA multiple use mandates and NFMA regulations.
- 107 **3.2.** GD-2: Implement actions (day-to-day management, monitoring, and administrative
- 108 functions) that stem directly from regulations, policy, and law, which are considered in
- 109 conformance with the LUPA that are not specifically addressed in the plan amendment.
- 110 **3.3.** GD-3: Preserve and recognize valid existing rights, which include any leases, claims, or
- 111 other use authorizations established before a new or modified authorization, change in land
- 112 designation, or new or modified regulation is approved. Activities on existing mineral leases
- 113 are managed through terms, conditions and stipulations on the leases, and through specific
- 114 operating conditions included in operating plan approvals for the duration of the lease.
- 115 **3.4.** GD-4: Allowable uses and management actions from the existing LUPs that remain valid
- 116 and do not require amending are carried forward.
- 117 **3.5.** GD-5: Sustain habitat in sufficient quantities and quality for resilient plant and wildlife
- 118 populations.
- 119 **3.6.** GD-6: Provide for human safety and property protection from wildfire.
- 120 **3.7.** GD-7: Ensure that existing utility corridors would remain unchanged.
- 121 **3.8.** GD-8: Limit all Forest Service-administered lands to designated routes.
- 122 **3.9.** GD-9: Existing requirements regarding site-specific environmental analysis, public
- 123 involvement, consultation with tribes and other agencies, or compliance with applicable
- 124 laws without waiver are maintained.
- 125 **3.10.** GD-10: Appropriate, site-specific analysis as described in NEPA and any requisite
- 126 site specific decision making (i.e., 43 CFR Subpart 4160, or 36 CFR Part 251) would be
- 127 conducted prior to approving proposed management actions.
- 128 **3.11.** GD-11: Impacts analysis on other sagebrush steppe species and impacts on state
- 129 endowment trust lands managed by the Idaho Department of Lands would be analyzed
- 130 during site-specific project NEPA review.
- 131 **3.12.** GD-12: Activities not specifically addressed by the plan amendment would still be
- 132 subject to the allowances and restrictions of the applicable land use plans.
- 133 **3.13.** GD-13: Information in the Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage-
- 134 Grouse in Montana would be considered when designing projects that may affect sensitive
- 135 species or federally listed species in Montana.
- 136 **3.14.** GD-14: Any oil and gas leasing decisions would be consistent with the BLM and
- 137 Forest Service requirements for leasing decisions as found in 43 CFR Part 3101 and 36 CFR
- 138 228.102, respectively.
- 139 **3.15.** GD-15: In conjunction with plan evaluation, re-evaluate management zones,
- 140 required design features and other protective stipulations as new science, information and
- 141 data regarding the habitats and behavior of the species is obtained. Incorporate these
- 142 findings as part of plan maintenance.
- 143 **3.16.** GD-16: Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in
- 144 the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new
- 145 authorizations and suppression activities.
- 146 **3.17.** GD-17: Incorporate best management practices as described in Appendix A, as
- 147 applicable and appropriate in the design and development of implementation activities and
- 148 projects.
- 149 **3.18.** GD-18: Conduct implementation and project activities consistent with seasonal
- 150 habitat restrictions described in Appendix B.

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- 3.19.** GD-19: Incorporate appropriate buffers into implementation and project design to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG described in Appendix C.
- 3.20.** GD-20: Consistent with regulations, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site when surface disturbing activities are proposed. Ensure reclamation bonds are sufficient to cover costs that would result in full rehabilitation to restore lost GRSG habitat. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work.

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159 **4. Coordination**

- 160 4.1. CC-1: Collaborate, coordinate and utilize cooperative planning efforts to implement and
161 monitor activities to achieve desired conditions and to maximize the utilization of available
162 funding opportunities. Coordination efforts could include: adjacent landowners, federal
163 and state agencies, local governments, tribes, communities, other agencies, resource
164 advisory groups and non-governmental organizations.
- 165 4.2. CC-2: Develop a cooperative MOU between the BLM, Forest Service and State of Idaho to
166 establish the State of Idaho as a cooperating agency during implementation of the final
167 decision. The MOU would identify responsibilities, role and interaction of the BLM, FS and
168 Task Team. Montana BLM will participate as appropriate on Montana's Sage-grouse
169 Oversight Team to facilitate coordinated and implementation of BLM's final decision and
170 Montana's forthcoming sage-grouse conservation strategy.
- 171 4.3. CC-3: The BLM and Forest Service would consider any recommendations from the
172 Governor of Idaho as a result of evaluation completed by the Sage-Grouse Implementation
173 Task Force.
- 174 4.4. CC-4: The BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with the State of Idaho and Montana
175 and the Idaho Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force and Montana Sage-grouse
176 Oversight Team regarding proposed management changes, the implementation of
177 conservation measures, mitigation, and site-specific monitoring, related to adaptive
178 management and livestock grazing (Appendix O).
- 179 4.5. CC-5: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would consider recommendations from
180 the Governor in the decision process recognizing that the BLM and Forest Service have the
181 final decision making authority and responsibility on federal lands under their appropriate
182 jurisdiction.
- 183 4.6. CC-6: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with IDFG, MFWP,
184 USFWS, and other conservation partners in collaborative efforts with adjacent states
185 (Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Wyoming) in GRSG MZs IV and II to evaluate GRSG
186 habitat and population status and trends within the broader USFWS PACs and make
187 appropriate recommendations for GRSG conservation at broader scales.
- 188 4.7. CC-7: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with appropriate
189 WAFWA Sage-grouse Technical Committee to develop consistent population and habitat
190 monitoring approaches that facilitate GRSG conservation at the MZ scale.
- 191 4.8. CC-8: All prescribed burning would be coordinated with state and local air quality agencies
192 to ensure that local air quality is not significantly impacted by BLM and Forest Service
193 activities.
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5. Greater Sage-Grouse Management Areas

5.1. Management Area (MA)-1: Designate five GRSG Conservation Areas within the sub-region to form the geographic basis for achieving population objectives; evaluating the disturbance density and adaptive regulatory triggers; and tailor adaptive management responses. These conservation areas are depicted in Map 1. These areas are referred to as Mountain Valleys, Desert, West Owyhee, Southern and Southwestern Montana Conservation Areas.

Conservation Area Description:

Mountain Valleys Conservation Area – generally located north of the Snake River Plain, and includes habitat in west-central population area. It extends west from Rexburg, north and west of Highway 33 to Howe, north and west of Highway 33/22 to Arco, north and west of Highway 26/20/93 to Carey, north and west of Highway 20 west to Hill City, north and west of Highway 20 to the Dylan Karas Road, west to Canyon Creek. Canyon Creek to the confluence with the Snake River form the western boundary.

Desert Conservation Area – located north of the Snake River and south of the Mountain Valleys Conservation Area. It extends from the confluence of Canyon Creek and the Snake River, eastward to Idaho Falls. The Snake River and Henry's Fork form the eastern boundary.

West Owyhee Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and west of the Bruneau River.

Southern Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and east of the Bruneau River, including East Idaho uplands and Bear Lake Plateau, and the Utah portion of the Sawtooth National Forest in Box Elder County.

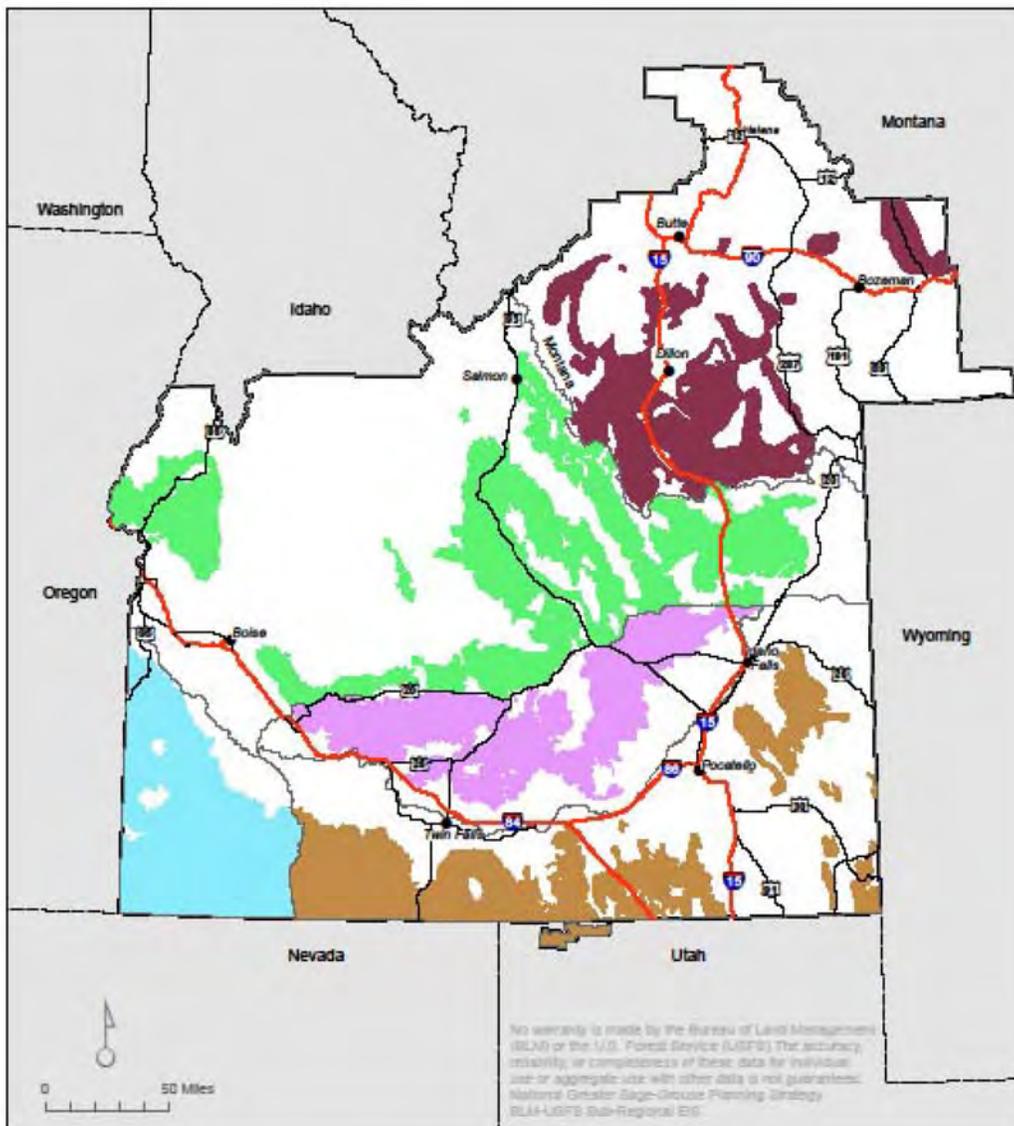
Southwestern Montana – located in southwestern Montana - encompassing the Dillon and Butte BLM Field Office boundaries.

Additionally, sage-grouse habitats in the Desert and West Owyhee CAs are relatively contiguous, while those in the Mountain Valleys and Southern CAs tend to be more fragmented due to topography, elevational and land use differences.

5.2. MA-2: Within each Conservation Area (CA) designate GRSG Management Zones: Core, Important and General Management Zones (Map 2). **Core Management Zones (CMZs)** focus on conserving the two key meta-populations in the sub-region. These meta-populations consist of a large aggregation of interconnected breeding subpopulations of GRSG that have the highest likelihood of long-term persistence. The CMZ encompasses areas with the highest conservation value to GRSG, based on the presence of larger leks, habitat extent, important movement and connectivity corridors and winter habitat. Core Management Zones include adequate area to accommodate continuation of existing land uses and landowner activities. **Important Management Zones (IMZs)** contain additional high value habitat and populations that provide a management buffer for the CMZ, connect patches of CMZ. The IMZ encompasses areas of generally moderate to high conservation value habitat and/or populations and in some CAs includes areas beyond those identified by USFWS as necessary to maintain redundant, representative and resilient populations

- 243 (Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs)). The IMZs are typically adjacent to CMZs but
244 generally reflect somewhat lower GRSG population status and/or reduced habitat value due
245 to disturbance, habitat fragmentation or other factors. There are no IMZs designated within
246 the Southwestern Montana CA. **General Management Zones (GMZs)** encompass habitat
247 that is outside of CMZs or IMZs. It is generally characterized by more marginal habitat and
248 few, if any, occupied leks or other important seasonal use areas.
- 249 **5.3.** MA-3: Annually prioritize Conservation Areas at the state scale considering results of the
250 annual adaptive regulatory trigger evaluations relative to implementation of restoration and
251 mitigation activities.
- 252 **5.4.** MA-4: Prioritize activities to protect, enhance and restore GRSG habitats (i.e. suppression
253 activities, fuels management activities, vegetation treatments, invasive species treatments,
254 etc.) first by Conservation Area, if appropriate (CA under adaptive management or at risk of
255 engaging adaptive management), followed by Core Management Zones, then Important
256 Management Zones then General Management Zones within the Conservation Areas. Local
257 priority areas within these zones will be further refined as a result of completing the GRSG
258 Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments as described in Appendix D. This could
259 include projects outside GRSG habitat when those projects would provide a benefit to
260 GRSG habitat.
- 261 **5.5.** MA-5: The management zone map and biologically significant unit baseline map would be
262 re-evaluated in conjunction with plan evaluation processes (i.e. approximately every 5 years).
263 This re-evaluation could indicate the need to adjust Core, Important or General
264 Management Zones or the habitat baseline. These adjustments could occur upon
265 completion of the appropriate analysis (plan amendment) to review the allocation decisions
266 based on the map.
- 267 **5.6.** MA-6: The appropriateness of specific project proposals or management activities within
268 the management zone designations (Core, Important, General) would be assessed
269 individually during project-level NEPA analysis. This evaluation is necessary since
270 designations of Core, Important and General Management Zones were derived at a broad
271 scale with additional refinements relative to boundaries and management consideration;
272 locally GRSG habitat suitability and vegetation characteristics vary.
- 273

Map 1. Conservation Areas within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

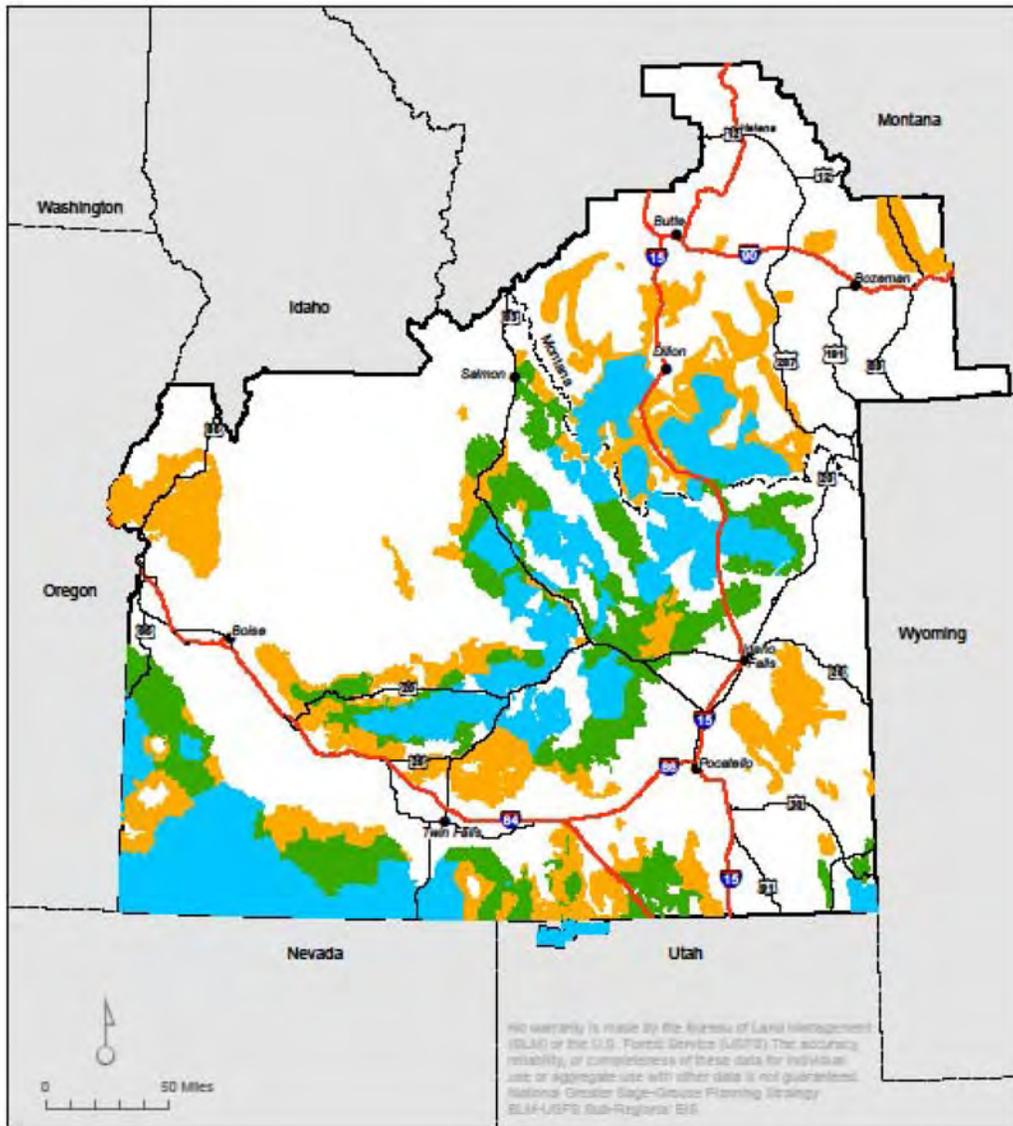


Conservation Area with Management Zone

- Idaho Desert Conservation Area
- Idaho Mountain Valleys Conservation Area
- Idaho Southern Conservation Area
- Idaho West Owyhee Conservation Area
- SW Montana Conservation Area

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Analysis Boundary

Map 2. Management Zones within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion



- Management Zone**
- Core
 - Important
 - General
 - Analysis Boundary

274 6. Adaptive Management

- 275 6.1. Adaptive Management (AM)-1: Idaho: Use hard and soft population and habitat triggers,
276 evaluated within a Conservation Area, to determine an appropriate management response.
- 277 6.2. AM-2: Utilize monitoring information collected through the Monitoring Framework Plan
278 (Appendix E) to determine when adaptive regulatory triggers have been met.
- 279 6.3. AM-3: Idaho: BLM and Forest Service would maintain GRSG habitat information, through
280 use of the Key Habitat map or latest sagebrush/vegetation map, which would be used to
281 track and identify habitat changes to assess the habitat trigger in the adaptive management
282 approach. Key habitat map updates are made each winter by BLM in coordination with the
283 FS and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), using the process described in
284 Appendix F.
- 285 6.4. AM-4: BLM and Forest Service would utilize population information collected and
286 maintained by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to track and identify population
287 changes to assess the population trigger in the adaptive management approach...
- 288 6.5. AM-5: Twice each year the applicable monitoring information would be reviewed to
289 determine if any adaptive management criteria have been met.
- 290 6.6. AM-6: Adaptive regulatory triggers would be individually calculated across all ownerships
291 within the biologically significant units (BSU). The BSU is defined as the nesting and
292 wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a Conservation
293 Area.
- 294 6.7. AM-7: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Habitat Triggers are defined as:
295 A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within
296 a CA compared to the 2011 biologically significant unit (BSU) baseline (Map 3) (The
297 BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important
298 Management Zones within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships and is
299 used in the evaluation of the adaptive regulatory triggers and the anthropogenic
300 disturbance threshold); or
301 A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a
302 CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline.
- 303 6.8. AM-8: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Habitat Triggers are defined as:
304 A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within
305 a CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline; or
306 A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a
307 CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline.
- 308 6.9. AM-9: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Population Triggers are defined as:
309 A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change
310 significantly below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years
311 compared to the 2009-2011 baseline; or
312 A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change
313 significantly below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years
314 compared to the 2009-2011 baseline.
- 315 6.10. AM-10: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Population Triggers are defined as:
316 A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of
317 change below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared
318 to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011; or

- 319 A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of
320 change below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared
321 to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011.
- 322 **6.11.** AM-11: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been
323 met then the Implementation Team would engage to identify implementation level
324 actions that may be appropriate to consider.
- 325 **6.12.** AM-12: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been
326 met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend
327 additional potential implementation level activities Appendix G.
- 328 **6.13.** AM-13: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been
329 met due to loss of habitat then CMZ management actions would be applied to the
330 IMZ within that CA.
- 331 **6.14.** AM-14: If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified
332 as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive Grazing
333 Management Response described in Appendix G.
- 334 **6.15.** AM-15: Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population
335 information shows a return to or an exceedance of baseline values within the
336 associated CA.
- 337 **6.16.** Montana Adaptive Management:
338

339 **7. Anthropogenic Disturbance**

340 **7.1.** Anthropogenic Disturbance (AD)-1: Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent as
341 calculated within the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Map 3). The BSU is defined as the
342 nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a
343 Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat
344 disturbance from wildfire and includes activities described in Appendix H. For Idaho this
345 disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features. For
346 Montana this disturbance is measured utilizing the Disturbance Density Calculation Tool
347 process described in Appendix I.

348 **7.2.** AD-2: New anthropogenic disturbances within winter and nesting habitat within Core or
349 Important management zones within a CA where the disturbance threshold is already
350 exceeded from any source or where the proposed development would result in the
351 threshold being exceeded would not be allowed until enough habitat has been restored to
352 maintain the area under this threshold (subject to valid existing rights).

353 **7.3.** AD-3: Core Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria – in
354 addition to the Core and Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance
355 Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the screening and
356 assessment process:

- 357 a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is
358 stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not
359 currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new
360 authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be
361 subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those
362 renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing
363 development);
- 364 b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG
365 habitat and would provide a net conservation benefit of the respective Core
366 Management Zone;
- 367 c. The project would not likely result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat
368 fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species
369 within the relevant CA;
- 370 d. The project is developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization;
- 371 e. The project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development;
- 372 f. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Core Management Zone;
- 373 g. Can be co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (proposed actions
374 would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and associated impacts more than
375 fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.
- 376 h. Development would follow the required design features (RDF) and best
377 management practices (BMPs) as described in Appendix A;
- 378 i. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
- 379 j. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and
380 recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.

381 **7.4.** AD-4: Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development
382 Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- 383 a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of
384 this management zone; and

- 385 b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the
- 386 extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best
- 387 reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or
- 388 societal resources; and
- 389 c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation
- 390 or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the
- 391 relevant CA; and
- 392 d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate
- 393 compensatory mitigation; and
- 394 e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in
- 395 Appendix A.
- 396 f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
- 397 **7.5. AD-5: Co-locating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading**
- 398 **ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs or the construction of new facilities in**
- 399 **all management zones.**
- 400 **7.6. AD-6: Construction activities and other short-term anthropogenic disturbances would be**
- 401 **carried out subject to seasonal and timing restrictions Appendix B.**
- 402

REVIEW

403 **8. Mitigation**

- 404 **8.1.** Mitigation (MIT)-1: BLM and USFS would establish an inter-agency GRSG Conservation
405 Board at the state level (both Idaho and Montana) to oversee GRSG Conservation.
- 406 **8.2.** MIT-2: The BLM and USFS, in coordination with the GRSG Conservation Board would
407 develop a State Mitigation Strategy. In Idaho this strategy would be consistent with the
408 Idaho Mitigation Framework (Appendix J).
- 409 **8.3.** MIT-3: Mitigate impacts from anthropogenic developments (Appendix H) to GRSG
410 habitats by first avoidance of impacts, minimizing impacts and then compensating for
411 impacts.
- 412 **8.4.** MIT-4: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix H) impacts to CMZs to a no net
413 loss standard (Appendix K) through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance
414 with the Mitigation Framework (Appendix L), referred to as no unmitigated loss.
- 415 **8.5.** MIT-5: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix H) impacts to GRSG habitat
416 through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework
417 (Appendix L).
- 418

REVIEW

419 **9. Wildfire Preparedness/Prevention**

- 420 **9.1.** Wildfire Preparedness (WFP)-1: Support development and implementation of Rangeland
421 Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) in coordination with the State of Idaho.
- 422 **9.2.** WFP-2: Develop a consistent approach to fire restrictions within GRSG habitat through the
423 existing coordinated inter-agency approach to fire restrictions based upon National Fire
424 Danger Rating System thresholds (fuel conditions, drought conditions, and predicted
425 weather patterns).
- 426 **9.3.** WFP-3: Annually incorporate into existing fire management plans results and updates from
427 the Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments described in Appendix D, to
428 communicate/explain the resource value of GRSG habitat, including fire prevention
429 messages and actions to reduce human-caused ignitions.
- 430 **9.4.** WFP-4: Continue to participate with the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, a cooperative,
431 interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals,
432 actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management
433 Policy.
- 434 **9.5.** WFP-5: Continue annual coordination meetings held between cooperating agencies that
435 have fire suppression responsibilities. Incorporate Rangeland Fire Protection Associations
436 and other stakeholders into this coordination. Discuss priority suppression areas and
437 distribute maps showing priority suppression areas at both the Conservation Area and the
438 local office levels as based on the adaptive management strategy and Wildfire and Invasive
439 Species Assessments.
- 440 **9.6.** WFP-6: Ensure firefighter personnel receive annual orientation regarding GRSG habitat
441 and sagebrush management issues as related to wildfire suppression.
- 442 **9.7.** WFP-7: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments, identify roads, trails, and
443 recreational use areas with high frequency of human caused fires within or adjacent to the
444 Core or Important Management Zones. Consider these areas during annual fire restriction
445 evaluations, and as appropriate, through site specific management.
- 446 **9.8.** WFP-8: Coordinate with Federal, State and local jurisdictions on fire and litter prevention
447 programs to reduce human caused ignitions.
- 448 **9.9.** WFP-9: Implement activities identified within the Wildfire and Invasive Species
449 Assessments.
- 450

451 **10. Wildfire Suppression**

452 **10.1.**WFS-1: Complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessments as described within
453 Appendix D within 1 year of the Record of Decision and incorporate results into
454 appropriate Fire Management Plans as they are completed. Wildfire and Invasive Species
455 Habitat Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and
456 invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas/treatment opportunities for fuels
457 management, fire management, and restoration. These assessments identify priority areas
458 and describe strategies for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities.

459 **10.2.** WFS-2: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments incorporate a
460 wildfire response time analysis focusing on response time to identified priority areas within
461 Core and Important Management Zones or on those fires that have the potential to impact
462 Core and Important Management Zones. Incorporate findings into Unit Initial Attack
463 program

464 **10.3.** WFS-3: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment incorporate a water
465 capacity analysis for suppression purposes, including potential private water sources.
466 Provide water availability to respond to fire in or threatening CMZ and IMZ during initial
467 attack.

468 **10.4.** WFS-4: During high fire danger conditions, stage initial attack and secure additional
469 resources closer to priority areas identified in the Wildfire and Invasive Species
470 Assessments, based on anticipated fires and weather conditions, with particular
471 consideration of the West Owyhee, Southern and Desert Conservation Areas to ensure
472 quicker response times in or near GRSG habitat.

473 **10.5.** WFS-5: Utilize a full range of fire management strategies and tactics through
474 strategic wildfire suppression planning consistent with appropriate management response
475 and within acceptable risk levels, to achieve resource objectives for GRSG habitat
476 consistent with land use plan direction. Utilizing both direct and indirect attack as
477 appropriate to limit the overall amount of GRSG habitat burned. This could include
478 suppressing fires in intact sagebrush habitats; limiting fire growth in General Management
479 Zones when suppression resources are available or managing wildfire for resource benefit in
480 areas of conifer (juniper) encroachment.

481 **10.6.** WFS-6: Suppression priorities: Firefighter and public safety followed by property are
482 the highest priority for protection during suppression activities. Maintaining GRSG habitat
483 will be prioritized immediately after human life and property, commensurate with
484 threatened and endangered species habitat or other critical habitats to be protected.

485 **10.7.** WFS-7: Ensure close coordination with federal and state firefighters including the
486 Rangeland Fire Protection Associations during suppression activities.

487

488 **11. Fuels Management**

- 489 **11.1.** FM-1: Design and implement fuels treatments that would reduce the potential start and
490 spread of unwanted wildfires and provide anchor points or control lines for the
491 containment of wildfires during suppression activities with an emphasis on maintaining,
492 protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems and successfully rehabilitated areas and
493 strategically and effectively reduce wildfire threats in the greatest area.
- 494 **11.2.** FM-2: Enhance (or maintain/retain) sagebrush canopy cover and community structure to
495 match expected potential for the ecological site and consistent with GRSG habitat
496 objectives unless fuels management objectives requires additional reduction in sagebrush
497 cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel
498 management treatments against the additional loss of sagebrush cover on the local
499 landscape in the NEPA process.
- 500 **11.3.** FM-3: Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing fuels management
501 treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present. Allow no treatments in
502 known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk
503 around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter
504 range habitat quality. Ensure chemical applications are utilized where they would assist in
505 success of fuels treatments. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to prevent
506 fire from spreading into Core Management Zones or WUI.
- 507 **11.4.** FM-4: Develop a fuels continuity and management strategy to expand, enhance, maintain
508 and protect GRSG habitat informed by the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments
509 completed as described in Appendix D.
- 510 **11.5.** FM-5: When developing the fuels management strategy as part of the Wildfire and Invasive
511 Species Assessment described in Appendix D consider up-to-date fuels profiles; land use
512 plan direction; current and potential habitat fragmentation; sagebrush and GRSG ecological
513 factors; active vegetation management steps to provide critical breaks in fuel continuity
514 where appropriate; incorporate a comparative risk analysis with regard to the risk of
515 increased habitat fragmentation from a proposed action versus the risk of large scale
516 fragmentation posed by wildfires if the action is not taken.
- 517 **11.6.** FM-6: Fuel treatments will be designed though an interdisciplinary process to expand,
518 enhance, maintain, and protect GRSG habitat which considers a full range of fuel reduction
519 techniques, including: grazing, targeted grazing, prescribed fire, chemical, biological and
520 mechanical treatments.
- 521 **11.7.** FM-7: Existing and proposed linear ROWs could be considered for use and maintenance as
522 vegetated fuel breaks in appropriate areas.
- 523 **11.8.** FM-8: Fuel breaks would incorporate existing vegetation treatments (seedings) or be located
524 adjacent to existing linear disturbance areas where appropriate. Fuel breaks should be
525 placed in areas with the greatest likelihood of compartmentalizing a fire and/or to foster
526 suppression options to protect existing intact habitat.
- 527 **11.9.** FM-9: Strategically pre-treat areas to reduce fine fuels.
- 528 **11.10.** FM-10: Protect seeding efforts from subsequent fire events.
- 529 **11.11.** FM-11: Targeted grazing as a fuels treatment to adjust the vegetation conditions to
530 reduce the potential start and spread of unwanted wildfires may be implemented
531 within existing grazing authorizations if feasible such as through temporary non-
532 renewable authorizations, or through contracts, agreements or other appropriate
533 means separate from existing grazing authorizations and permits.

- 534 **11.12.** FM-12: Targeted grazing to achieve fuels management objectives should conform to
535 the following criteria:
- 536 • Targeted grazing should be implemented strategically on the landscape, and
537 directly involve the minimum footprint and grazing intensity required to meet fuels
538 management objectives.
 - 539 • Allow conformance to the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health and
540 Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Idaho or Montana) at the
541 assessment scale.
 - 542 • Where feasible and applicable coordinate with the grazing permittee to
543 strategically reduce fuels through livestock management within the Mandatory Terms
544 and Conditions of the applicable grazing authorizations
- 545 **11.13.** FM-13: Prioritize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on
546 availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability
547 of success or native seed availability is low or non-economical, nonnative seeds may
548 be used to meet GRSG habitat objectives to trend toward restoring the fire regime.
549 When reseeding, use fire resistant native and nonnative species, as appropriate, to
550 provide for fuel breaks.
- 551 **11.14.** FM-14: Maintain effectiveness of fuels projects to ensure long-term success,
552 including persistence of seeded species and/or other treatment components while
553 maintaining the integrity of adjacent vegetation.
554

- 555 **12. Wildfire Restoration/Rehabilitation – Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation**
556 **12.1.** ESR-1: Utilize the findings and Restoration/Rehabilitation Strategy developed as part of
557 the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment process described in Appendix D to
558 determine if rehabilitation actions are needed, based on ecological potential, and direct
559 emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ESR) (BLM) or Burned Area Emergency
560 Restoration (BAER) (FS) actions after fire.
- 561 **12.2.** ESR-2: Incorporate GRSG Habitat Management Objectives into ESR/BAER plans
562 based on site potential and in accordance with the Restoration/Rehabilitation
563 Strategy developed as a result of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.
- 564 **12.3.** ESR-3: Adjust management activities, as appropriate to ensure successful
565 establishment of vegetation from ESR and rehabilitation informed through the
566 evaluation of measurable groundcover and vegetation objectives such as plant vigor,
567 seed production and growing season conditions.
- 568 **12.4.** ESR-4: Adjust, as appropriate, livestock management on adjacent unburned areas
569 to mitigate the effect of the burn on local GRSG populations.
570

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571 **13. Habitat Restoration and Vegetation Management**

572 **13.1.** VEG-1: Implement habitat rehabilitation or restoration projects in areas that have potential
573 to improve GRSG habitat using a full array of treatment activities as appropriate, including
574 chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments.

575 **13.2.** VEG-2: Implement vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects to enhance
576 sagebrush cover or to promote diverse and healthy grass and forb understory to
577 achieve the greatest improvement in GRSG habitat based on Wildfire and Invasive
578 Species Assessments, HAF assessments, other vegetative assessment data and local,
579 site specific factors that indicate sagebrush canopy cover or herbaceous conditions
580 do not meet habitat management objectives (i.e. is minimal or exceeds optimal
581 characteristics). This may necessitate the use of prescribed fire as a site preparation
582 technique to remove annual grass residual growth prior to the use of herbicides in
583 the restoration of certain lower elevation sites (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush) but
584 such efforts will be carefully planned and coordinated to minimize impacts to sage-
585 grouse seasonal habitats.

586 **13.3.** VEG-3: Require use of native seeds for restoration based on availability, adaptation
587 (ecological site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Non-
588 native seeds may be used as long as they support GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke
589 2011) to increase probability of success, when adapted seed availability is low or to
590 compete with invasive species especially on harsher sites.

591 **13.4.** VEG-4: Implement management changes in restoration and rehabilitation areas, as
592 necessary, to maintain suitable GRSG habitat, improve unsuitable GRSG habitat and
593 to ensure long-term persistence of improved GRSG habitat (Eiswerth and
594 Shonkwiler 2006). Management changes could be considered during livestock
595 grazing permit renewals, travel management planning, and renewal or reauthorization
596 of rights-of-way.

597 **13.5.** VEG-5: Consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed
598 production (Armstrong 2007) to provide a reliable source of locally adapted seed to
599 use during rehabilitation and restoration activities.

600 **13.6.** VEG-6: Allocate use of native seed to GRSG or ESA listed species habitat in years
601 when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation of native
602 seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects outside of Core or
603 Important Management Zones to those inside it. Where probability of success or
604 native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet
605 GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment of appropriate
606 sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory plants, relative to site
607 potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation efforts.

608 **13.7.** VEG-7: During land health assessments evaluate the compatibility of existing
609 nonnative seedings for GRSG habitat to keep as a component of a grazing system,
610 development of a forage reserve, or to be used as a fuelbreak (Davies et al. 2011) or
611 during restoration development. If nonnative seedings do not contribute to a
612 grazing system, are not suitable for a forage reserve, and are not suitable fuelbreaks,
613 evaluate the nonnative seedings in and adjacent to CMZ to determine if they should
614 be diversified with or converted to native grasses, forbs, and shrubs, including
615 sagebrush.

616 **13.8.** VEG-8: Utilize conifer (juniper) removal treatments to reduce the extent of conifer
617 encroachment areas. Refrain from using prescribed fire and conducting removal

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projects in old-growth juniper stands. Old-growth juniper trees are characterized by rounded tops and spreading canopies, often containing dead limbs and/or spike tops, large branches near the base of the tree, as well as furrowed, fibrous bark, and are typically host to arboreal lichens. Leader growth in the upper quarter of the tree is usually less than one inch. These trees are generally distributed on rock outcrop or rubble land soils, or other soils with coarse fragments in the soil-surface and/or slopes over 12-25%, where juniper vegetation type is the climax plant community (IDFG 2000; Miller et al 2005; USDI and USGS 2007).

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627 **14. Invasive Species**

628 **14.1.** Invasive Species (INV)-1: Incorporate results of the Wildfire and Invasive Species
629 Assessments into projects and activities addressing invasive species.

630 **14.2.** INV-2: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed
631 management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans for
632 Cooperative Weed Management Areas in cooperation with State and Federal
633 agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.

634 **14.3.** INV-3: Conduct integrated weed management actions for noxious and invasive weed
635 populations that are impacting or threatening GRSG habitat quality using a variety of
636 eradication and control techniques including chemical, mechanical and other
637 appropriate means.

638 **14.4.** INV-4: Require project proponent to ensure that treatments of noxious weeds and
639 invasive species on disturbed project construction areas are completed for at least 3
640 years.

641

REVIEW

642 **15. Lands and Realty / Infrastructure**

643 **15.1.** Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Core: Designate and manage Core Management Zones as ROW
644 avoidance areas subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix
645 A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Management Zones as ROW
646 avoidance areas subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General:
647 Designate and manage General Management Zones as open with proposals subject to
648 RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.

649 **15.2.** LR-2: Core: Designate and manage Core Management Zones as exclusion areas for
650 utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and
651 hydropower energy development. Important: Designate and manage Important
652 Management Zones as avoidance areas for Wind and Solar testing and development,
653 nuclear and hydropower development. General: Designate and manage General
654 Management Zones as open for Wind and Solar testing and development and
655 nuclear and hydropower development subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal
656 timing restrictions.

657 **15.3.** LR-3: Core: Development of commercial service airports and facilities (as defined by
658 FAA 2014 – publically owned airports that have at least 2,500 passenger boardings
659 each calendar year and receive scheduled passenger service) would not be allowed
660 within Core Management Zones. Important and General Management Zones are
661 Avoidance and Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described
662 in LR-1.

663 **15.4.** LR-4: Core: Development of new landfills would not be allowed within Core
664 Management Zones. Important and General Management Zones are Avoidance and
665 Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described in LR-1.

666 **15.5.** LR-5: Core Management Zones: Rights-of-way for development of new or amended
667 ROWs and land use authorizations, not excluded, would only be considered when
668 consistent with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria (AD-3).
669 Important: Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use
670 authorizations, not excluded, could be considered consistent with the Important
671 Management Zones Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria. (AD-4).
672 General: New ROW and land use authorizations could be considered.

673 **15.6.** LR-6: If the project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing
674 development - the existing transmission line must be removed within a specified
675 amount of time after the new line is installed and energized.

676 **15.7.** LR-7: Existing designated corridors, including Section 368 Corridors, will remain
677 Open (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement).

678 **15.8.** LR-8: Process unauthorized use. If the use is subsequently authorized, it would be
679 authorized consistent with direction for the Management Zones within which it is
680 located and the RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. If the use is
681 not subsequently authorized the site would be reclaimed by removing these features
682 and restoring the habitat.

683 **15.9.** LR-9: Land use authorizations that are temporary in nature would be subject to
684 seasonal or timing restrictions and mitigation requirements regarding habitat loss as
685 needed.

686 **15.10.** LR-10: New ROW applications for water facilities (ditches, canals, pipelines), or
687 amendments to existing water facilities which include additional structures to
688 improve fish passage or benefits to fisheries (new diversions, fish screens) would be

- 689 allowed on a case-by-case bases subject to RDFs and BMPs to reduce impacts to
690 GRSG habitat and mitigation requirements regarding GRSG habitat loss as needed.
- 691 **15.11.** LR-11: When a ROW grant expires, is relinquished, or terminated, the lease holder
692 would be required to reclaim the site by removing overhead lines and other
693 infrastructure and to eliminate avian predator nesting opportunities provided by
694 anthropogenic development on public lands associated with the now void ROW
695 grant (e.g., remove powerline and communication facilities no longer in service).
- 696 **15.12.** LR-12: Work with ROW holders to retrofit existing towers with perch deterrents or
697 other anti-perching devices, where appropriate, to limit GRSG predation.
- 698 **15.13.** LR-13: Land tenure adjustments would be subject to the following disposal,
699 exchange, and acquisition criteria, which include retaining lands with GRSG habitat.
700 Retention of areas with GRSG would reduce the likelihood of habitat conversion to
701 agriculture, urbanization, or other uses that would remove sagebrush habitat and
702 potentially impact sensitive plants. Criteria:
- 703 a. Lands within Core and Important Management Zones would not be available
704 for disposal (Appendix M).
 - 705 b. Acquire habitat within Core and Important Management Zones, when
706 possible (i.e. willing landowner), and retain ownership of habitat within all Zones,
707 except if a land exchange would allow for additional or more contiguous federal
708 ownership patterns.
 - 709 c. Lands within Core and Important Management Zones would be retained
710 unless exchange of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity
711 of Core or Important Management Zones.
 - 712 d. Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality GRSG
713 habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands of higher quality
714 habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRSG habitats or lands providing for threatened
715 and endangered species. These potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the
716 extent or continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of Core Management
717 Zones. Higher priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of
718 sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of sagebrush areas within Core
719 Management Zones currently in public ownership. Lower priority would be given to
720 other lands that would promote enhancement in the Core and Important
721 Management Zones.
 - 722 e. Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide for
723 connectivity of Core Management Zones.
- 724

725 16. Minerals

726 16.1. Fluid Minerals

727 **16.1.1.** Fluid Minerals (FLM)-1: Idaho: Areas within Core Management Zones with no or
728 low potential for fluid mineral development (oil and gas or geothermal) would be
729 closed. Areas within Core Management Zones with moderate to high potential for
730 development and Important Management Zones would be open to mineral leasing and
731 development subject to no surface occupancy, in accordance with the Anthropogenic
732 Disturbance Exceptions (Core – AD-3) and the Anthropogenic Disturbance
733 Development Criteria (Important – AD-4) subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers, timing
734 restrictions and standard stipulations. General Management Zones would be open to
735 mineral leasing and development subject to CSU which includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers,
736 seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations. Montana: Areas within Core
737 Management Zones would be open to leasing subject to no surface occupancy. No
738 waivers, exceptions or modifications would be allowed unless approved by the State
739 Director. General Management Zones would be open to leasing subject to CSU which
740 includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.

741 **16.1.2.** FLM-2: Core Management Zones: Waivers, exemptions or modifications to the
742 NSO stipulation could be considered upon recommendation from the Governor
743 through the Implementation Task Force during the federal site-specific NEPA analysis
744 based on Core Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria
745 (AD-3). Important Management Zones: Waivers, exceptions or modifications to the
746 NSO stipulation could be considered upon recommendation from the Governor
747 through the Implementation Task Force during the federal site-specific NEPA analysis
748 based on the Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Development
749 Criteria (AD-4). In the event a waiver, exception or modification were allowed
750 development would still be subject to CSU which includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers,
751 seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.

752 **Waivers, Exceptions and Modifications (WEMs)** (Source IM-2008-032)

753
754 A waiver is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation, the stipulation would no
755 longer apply anywhere within the lease. Waivers require a 30-day public review and are
756 approved and signed by the State Director.

757
758 An exception is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the lease; exceptions
759 are determined on a case-by-case basis; the stipulation continues to apply to all other
760 sites within the lease. An exception is a limited type of waiver.

761
762 A modification is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or
763 for the term of the lease. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may
764 or may not apply to all sites within the lease to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

765 **16.1.3.** FLM-3: Incorporate required design features, best management practices appropriate
766 to the management area, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions as conditions of
767 approval into any post-lease activities.

768 **16.1.4.** FLM-4: Complete a Master Development Plan on leases where a producing field is
769 proposed to be developed.

770 **16.1.5.** FLM-5: Encourage unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and
771 operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring). The unitization must be

772 designed in a manner to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG according to the Federal
773 Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6.

774 **16.2. Unleased Fluid Minerals**

775 **16.2.1.** FLM-6: Allow temporary geophysical exploration, subject to site-specific RDFs,
776 BMPs, buffers, seasonal restrictions, and daily timing restrictions.

777 **16.2.2.** FLM-7: Parcels nominated for lease in Core or Important Management Zones would
778 be evaluated to determine whether they meet the Anthropogenic Disturbance
779 Exception (AD-3 for CMZ) or Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria
780 (AD-4) for IMZ), prior to lease offering. Parcels which do not meet the criteria would
781 not be offered for lease.

782 **16.3. Locatable Minerals**

783 **16.3.1.** Locatable Minerals (LOC)-1: Lands would remain open to locatable mineral entry in
784 all management zones.

785 **16.3.2.** LOC-2: Apply reasonable and appropriate Conditions of Approval to prevent
786 unnecessary or undue degradation of GRSG habitat when a Plan of Operations is
787 submitted for BLM or FS approval, in accordance with 43 CFR 3809.411(d)(2) (or 36
788 CFR 228.5(a)(3) on National Forest System lands).

789 **16.4. Salable Minerals**

790 **16.4.1.** Salable Minerals (SAL)-1: Core: No new site authorizations would be approved.
791 Important: New site authorizations could be considered consistent with the
792 Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) subject to RDFs, BMPs,
793 buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing community pits within
794 CMZ and IMZ would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions. General: Open to new
795 site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing
796 sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions.

797 **16.4.2.** SAL-2: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat
798 management objectives.

799 **16.4.3.** SAL-3: Require reclamation bonding that would require restoration of GRSG habitat
800 on new site authorizations for mineral material pits in IMZ (this would not apply to
801 free use permits issued to a government entity such as a county road district, but would
802 apply to non-profit entities).

803 **16.5. Non-Energy Solid Mineral Leasable Minerals**

804 **16.5.1.** Non Energy Leasables (NEL)-1: Core and Important Management Zones: Areas
805 within Know Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) will remain open to leasing. CMZ
806 areas outside KPLAs are closed to leasing and prospecting. IMZ areas outside of
807 KPLAs are open to leasing in accordance to the Anthropogenic Disturbance
808 Development Criteria (AD-4) subject to the anthropogenic disturbance cap (AD-1),
809 RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Exceptions may be made for
810 lease modifications and fringe leases where valid existing rights may be affected.
811 General Management Zones: Lands are available for leasing, exploration activities and
812 initial mine development subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers, timing restrictions (seasonal
813 and daily) and standard stipulations.

814 **16.5.2.** NEL-2: Require seasonal and daily timing restrictions in undeveloped non-energy
815 mineral leases when exploration activities or initial mine development is proposed, as
816 appropriate.

817 **16.5.3.** NEL-3: Include RDFs as conditions of approval to mine plans in undeveloped non-
818 energy mineral leases.

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16.6. Mineral Split Estate

16.6.1. Mineral Split Estate (MSE)-1: In coordination with surface land owner, apply stipulations, conservation measures, and design features consistent with those applied to BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands in the management zone where the federal government owns the mineral estate and the surface is non-federal ownership.

16.6.2. MSE-2: Recommend to the state regulatory entity to apply a timing restriction stipulation, COAs, and buffer restricts around occupied leks, when concurring to the approval of authorizations for mineral-related surface disturbance on lands in GRSG habitat where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership.

REVIEW

830 **17. Range Management/Livestock Grazing**

831 17.1. Range Management (RM)-1: Continue to make GRSG habitat available for livestock
832 grazing. Active AUMs for livestock grazing would remain the same, though the number of
833 AUMs available on an allotment may be adjusted based on site-specific conditions to meet
834 management objectives during term permit renewals, AMP development, or other
835 appropriate implementation planning. Additionally, temporary adjustments can be made
836 annually to livestock numbers, the number of AUMs, season of use in accordance with
837 applicable regulations.

838 17.2. RM-2: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing
839 permits consistent with management zone prioritization (MA-4), unless other higher
840 priority considerations exist such as threatened, endangered and proposed species
841 habitat that livestock grazing could affect. Where possible, conduct land health
842 assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.

843 17.3. RM-3: Where opportunities exist, coordinate with other land managers to encourage
844 livestock operations that utilize mixed federal, private and/or state land to be
845 managed at the landscape scale to benefit GRSG and their habitat across land
846 ownerships.

847 17.4. RM-4: CMZ & IMZ: During the land health assessment process, identify the type(s)
848 of seasonal habitat the assessed areas are capable of supporting. Utilize the habitat
849 assessment framework, (Stiver et al. 2014 as amended/replaced) or other BLM or
850 Forest Service approved methodology, in accordance with current policy and
851 guidance to determine whether vegetation structure, condition and composition are
852 meeting GRSG habitat objectives including riparian and lentic areas (HM-OBJ-2;
853 Table 2). Use appropriate Ecological Site Descriptions, reference sheets and state
854 and transition models to inform desired habitat conditions and expected responses
855 to management changes for the land unit being assessed.

856 17.5. RM-5: When modifying grazing management, analyze indirect effects to habitat,
857 including changes in fuel loading and wildfire behavior.

858 17.6. RM-6: When livestock management practices are determined to not be compatible
859 with meeting or making progress towards achievable habitat objectives following
860 consultation, cooperating and coordination with permittees and interested publics,
861 implement changes in grazing management through grazing authorization
862 modifications, or allotment management plan implementation. Potential
863 modifications include, but are not limited to, changes in:

- 864 1) Season or timing of use;
- 865 2) Numbers of livestock;
- 866 3) Distribution of livestock use;
- 867 4) Duration and/or level of use;
- 868 5) Kind of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, or goats) (Briske et al. 2011);
- 869 6) Voluntary measures such as temporary non-use; and
- 870 7) Grazing schedules (including rest or deferment).

871 17.7. RM-7: Where opportunities exist, establish forage reserves to facilitate restoration
872 and rehabilitation efforts in sage-grouse habitat areas.

873 17.8. RM-8: CMZ & IMZ - When an allotment becomes vacant or grazing preference is
874 relinquished, consider voluntary retirement of the allotment or grazing preference in
875 whole or in part, or converting the area to a forage reserve/buffer when doing so
876 would maintain or enhance sage-grouse habitat. GMZ - When an allotment

- 877 becomes vacant or grazing preference is relinquished, consider converting it to a
878 forage reserve/buffer to use during fire rehabilitation or restoration efforts
879 elsewhere, when such actions would result in a net benefit to GRSG habitat and
880 other priority resources.
- 881 **17.9.** RM-9: CMZ & IMZ - Where practical, design pasture rotations to utilize exotic
882 perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands, during GRSG nesting season
883 annually or periodically.
- 884 **17.10.** RM-10: Evaluate the locations where salt/supplements are placed. In coordination
885 with the permittee, have salt/supplements placed in areas which would reduce
886 impacts to GRSG habitat (e.g., existing disturbed areas).
- 887 **17.11.** RM-11: Incorporate RDFs into Terms and Conditions for crossing permits to limit
888 disturbance of occupied leks when trailing livestock across BLM- and Forest Service
889 -administered lands in the spring. Work with permittees in locating over-nighting,
890 watering and bedding locations to minimize impacts to seasonal habitats.
- 891 **17.12.** RM-12: Design any new structural range improvements, following cooperation,
892 consultation and coordination with permittees, to minimize and/or mitigate effects
893 to GRSG habitat. Any new structural range improvements are subject to RDFs
894 (Appendix A). Structural range improvement in this context, include, but are not
895 limited to: fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures;
896 pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water
897 hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments.
- 898 **17.13.** RM-13: During the land health assessment and grazing permit renewal process,
899 evaluate existing livestock management range improvements with respect to their
900 effect on GRSG habitat. Consider removal of projects that are not needed for
901 effective livestock management, are no longer in working condition, and/or
902 negatively affect GRSG habitat, with the exception of functional projects needed for
903 management of habitat for other threatened, endangered or proposed species or
904 other sensitive resources.
- 905 **17.14.** RM-14: Prioritize removal, modification or marking of fences or other structures in
906 areas of high collision risk following cooperation, consultation and coordination with
907 permittees to reduce the incidence of GRSG mortality due to fence strikes (Stevens
908 et al. 2012).
909

910 **18. Wild Horses and Burros**

- 911 **18.1.** Wild Horse and Burro (WHB)-1: Develop or amend BLM Herd Management Area Plans
912 and Forest Service Wild Horse Territory Plans to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and
913 management considerations for all BLM HMAs) and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories.
- 914 **18.2.** WHB-2: When evaluating AML on HMAs within CMZ, evaluate indicators that
915 address structure/condition/composition of vegetation and measurements specific
916 to achieving GRSG habitat objectives.
- 917 **18.3.** WHB-3: Utilize interdisciplinary land health assessments in HMAs containing GRSG
918 habitat to determine whether vegetation characteristics are meeting appropriate
919 seasonal habitat objectives.
- 920 **18.4.** WHB-4: CMZ: Do not expand HMAs. IMZ: Analysis of proposed additions to
921 existing HMA boundaries should consider the direct, indirect and cumulative
922 impacts on GRSG habitat, including the need for additional infrastructure such as
923 boundary fencing, and consider alternative areas outside of CMZ and IMZ.
924

REVIEW

925 **19. Travel Management**

- 926 **19.1.** Travel Management (TM) -1: Limit motorized travel within Idaho BLM Field
927 Offices to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails. This excludes areas previously
928 designated as open through an affirmative land use plan decision or currently under
929 review for designation as open, currently being analyzed in ongoing RMP revision
930 efforts in the Four Rivers, Jarbidge and Upper Snake Field Offices. The initial
931 designation would be “limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails”; this
932 designation would change to “limited to designated roads, primitive roads and trails”,
933 in areas where travel management plans are completed.
- 934 **19.2.** TM-2: Close areas adversely affected by off-highway vehicles immediately to the
935 type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated
936 and measures implemented to prevent recurrence when the authorized officer
937 determines that off-road vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse
938 effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical
939 resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized
940 uses, or other resources. This may include closure or specific routes or areas. (43
941 CFR 8341.2)
- 942 **19.3.** TM-3: Develop Travel Management Plans for each Field Office as described in the
943 BLM Travel Management Handbook 8342.1 and according to the travel
944 management planning guidelines (Appendix N).
- 945 **19.4.** TM-4: During subsequent travel management planning design and designate a travel
946 system to minimize adverse effects on GRSG. Locate areas and trails to minimize
947 harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Give special
948 attention to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats. Allow for
949 route upgrade, closure of existing routes, and creation of new routes to help protect
950 habitat and meet user group needs, thereby reducing the potential for pioneering
951 unauthorized routes. The emphasis of the comprehensive travel and transportation
952 planning within Core Management Zones would be placed on having a neutral or
953 positive effect on GRSG habitat.
- 954 **19.5.** TM-5: Conduct road maintenance activities to avoid disturbance during specific
955 times at different seasons – see seasonal and timing restrictions section.
956

957 **20. Recreation**

958 **20.1.** REC-1: Manage existing recreation uses and sites to minimize adverse effects on
959 GRSG or their habitat through incorporation of RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal
960 restrictions.

961 **20.2.** REC-2: Do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g., campgrounds, trails,
962 trailheads, staging areas) within CMZs and IMZs unless the development would have
963 a neutral effect or be beneficial to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating recreation,
964 diverting use away from critical areas, etc.); or the new construction replaces existing
965 facilities and reduces impacts from the existing facilities as in TM-4, or unless the
966 development is required for visitor safety or resource protection.
967

REVIEW

968 **21. Monitoring**

- 969 **21.1.** Monitoring (MON)-1: Annually complete a review of Wildfire and Invasive Species
970 assessment implementation efforts within GRSG habitat with appropriate USFWS
971 and state agency personnel.
- 972 **21.2.** MON-2: Annually monitor the effectiveness of fuels treatment projects.
- 973 **21.3.** MON-3: Monitor invasive vegetation post vegetation management treatment
- 974 **21.4.** MON-4: Monitor project construction areas for noxious weed and invasive species
975 for at least 3 years, unless control is achieved earlier.
- 976 **21.5.** MON-5: Use lek, nesting and winter habitat maps and key habitat map (updates) to
977 annually assess GRSG population and habitat status in the context of the adaptive
978 management triggers.
- 979 **21.6.** MON-6: Continue to support updates to the Key Habitat map to track vegetation
980 changes in relation to GRSG habitat on a yearly basis, until such a time this process
981 is replaced. The process used to update the Key Habitat Map is described in
982 Appendix F.
- 983 **21.7.** MON-7: Monitor GRSG habitat as described in the monitoring framework plan
984 (Appendix E) in coordination with IDFG and MT FWP.
985
986

987 **Appendices**

988

989 **Appendix A – Required Design Features and Best Management Practices**

990 **Appendix B – Seasonal Timing Restrictions**

991 **Appendix C – Application of Buffers**

992 **Appendix D – Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments/FIAT Team**

993 **Appendix E – Monitoring Framework Plan**

994 **Appendix F – Idaho Key Habitat Map Update Process**

995 **Appendix G – Adaptive Management**

996 **Baseline Map and Description**

997 **Adaptive Management – Soft Trigger Implementation Actions**

998 **Adaptive Livestock Grazing Management Response**

999 **Appendix H – Idaho Anthropogenic Disturbance Process**

1000 **Appendix I – Montana Anthropogenic Disturbance Process**

1001 **Appendix J – Mitigation**

1002 **Regional Mitigation Framework**

1003 **Idaho Mitigation Framework**

1004 **Unmitigated Loss**

1005 **Appendix K – Lands No Longer Available for Disposal**

1006 **Appendix L – Travel Management Planning Guidelines**



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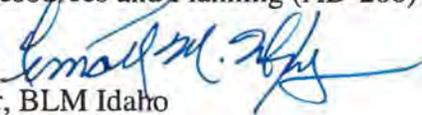
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1610 (931)

MAY 28 2014

EMS TRANSMISSION Memorandum

To: Edwin L. Roberson
Assistant Director, Resources and Planning (AD-200)

From: Timothy M. Murphy 
Acting State Director, BLM Idaho

Jamie E. Connell
State Director, BLM Montana¹

Subject: Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregional Administrative Draft Proposed Plan Update

I. INTRODUCTION

This memo documents the key elements, allocations, and disturbance considerations in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Subregional Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) in response to WO Memo from Ed Roberson (1610 (210) of May 12, 2014). It has been reviewed and concurred with by the State Director in Montana/Dakotas.

The IDswMT effort includes portions of three states (Idaho, Montana, and Utah) and would amend 29 BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) land use plans. The planning area encompasses slightly more than 49 million acres of which 18.1 million acres are identified as GRSG habitat across all ownerships. BLM administered public lands comprise 9.3 million acres (roughly 50%) and USFS lands comprise 1.9 million areas (roughly 10%) of the total GRSG habitat within the subregion. Most of the subregion is located within WAFWA MZ IV with a small portion of southeast Idaho contained within WAFWA MZ II. The primary ongoing threats to GRSG are loss of habitat resulting from wildfire and spread of cheatgrass; of substantially less concern is loss of habitat due to infrastructure and oil and gas development. The ADPP addresses all of the applicable threats identified by population in the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Conservation Objectives Team (COT) report (Table 1).

¹ This memorandum is a coordinated response from both Idaho and Montana BLM. It has been developed in coordination with the Montana BLM and has been concurred with by the Montana State Director.

II. COORDINATION

The ADPP has been developed in close coordination with BLM, USFS, FWS, the State of Idaho through the Governor's Office of Species Conservation and GRSG Task Force and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the State of Montana through Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. The ADPP addresses the objectives described in the COT report and required policies and directives. The FWS provided the final COT threat assessment table as part of their public comments and the BLM held subsequent cooperating agency meetings with FWS, USFS and the State of Idaho to discuss, clarify and resolve the concerns identified in their letter and COT threat assessment table. The BLM has addressed all the concerns identified by FWS and have provided additional conservation measures or additional clarity to existing conservation measures in the ADPP (Table 2).

The State of Montana has prepared a draft strategy that has been reviewed. The Governor of Montana has yet to issue an expected Sage-Grouse Conservation Executive Order that would outline how the State of Montana would address GRSG conservation; therefore, it is not possible at this time to fully determine how the ADPP would compare with the potential State regulatory mechanisms or management actions to protect and conserve GRSG and their habitat. The Montana portion of the planning effort has also been coordinated with the other BLM plans in Montana to ensure some level of consistency within Montana. The ADPP (which applies to federal lands) remains flexible to provide cooperative landscape-level management for the conservation of GRSG which transcends ownership boundaries when coupled with the pending Executive Order from the Governor of Montana (which is anticipated to apply to all land ownerships whenever a state authorization is required).

III. KEY ELEMENTS

The primary threat to GRSG that the IDswMT effort responds to is wildfire. In coordination with the State of Idaho and FWS, the IDswMT ADPP identifies and maps three management zones (Core (ID & MT), Important (ID only) and General (ID & MT))² within five conservation areas (Map 1) which are responsive to the stochastic nature of wildfire and provide protections for GRSG and their habitat. Management actions for fuels and suppression management, in addition to those identified for inclusion from the Fire and Invasives Analysis Team have been included to further respond to the threat of wildfire. The ADPP also includes an adaptive management strategy and a mitigation strategy which utilizes the State of Idaho Mitigation Framework. For the SW Montana portion of the plan these components would be consistent with the Montana strategy.

The ADPP includes allocation decisions (Table 1) and program conservation measures to respond to GRSG threats, including required design features, best management practices, activity, and development buffers for GRSG leks and seasonal or timing restrictions.

The focus of the ADPP, including the delineation of three management zones, is to retain and protect sagebrush cover and GRSG habitat (consistent with Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008, and Knick et al. 2000) through appropriate prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitats and across broader habitat areas. Core Management Zones (CMZ) are delineated to protect large unfragmented, contiguous landscapes from anthropogenic disturbance and to focus wildfire reduction (suppression activities and fuels treatments) associated with the two key metapopulations

² Within the subregion management areas have been delineated into three zones – Core, Important and General, only two of which occur in Montana – Core and General.

within the subregion (Garton et al. 2011). These areas encompass all the seasonal habitats necessary to support approximately 73% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The Important Management Zones (IMZ) are delineated to provide protection to seasonal habitats adjacent to the CMZs and support approximately 22% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The two management zones encompass the FWS identified priority areas for conservation (PAC) and include areas beyond those PAC boundaries that would receive threat amelioration management to help foster connectivity and retention of habitat within CMZ and PAC areas.

The areas identified in the IDswMT subregion include the seasonal habitats relied upon by roughly 95% of the entire GRSG population in the subregion as contrasted with adjacent states where roughly 70-80% of the entire GRSG populations are included within areas identified for primary focus on threat amelioration. The IDswMT ADPP provides threat amelioration management on an additional 1 million acres (243k of Core and 795k of Important) and 3.8% of the breeding males (and population – 687 males and 39 leks) than just those areas identified by USFWS as the most important areas needed for maintaining GRSG representation, redundancy, and resilience across the landscape (USFWS 2013) (Map 2).

While CMZ is equivalent in concept and direction as Priority in the National Policy Team guidance (NPT) (May 1, 2014) and General Management Zones are the equivalent to General areas, the NPT does not have a similar designation as IMZ included within the IDswMT ADPP. This zone is a foundational component of the IDswMT ADPP and directly supports to adaptive management approach which is to adjust threat amelioration management into additional areas if further declines in populations or habitat occur. In coordination efforts with the State of Idaho, this three-tiered management approach was initially developed through the Governor's GRSG Task Force and is supported by State and County representatives on that Task Force. This acceptance in those arenas is helping to support development of the State's management approach for State and private lands within Idaho, consistent with the federal lands.

This three-tiered approach is not consistent with the NPT guidance. With several deviations CMZ allocation management in the IDswMT is consistent with the NPT guidance, in the event that adaptive management triggers are engaged then management in IMZs would then become reflective of Priority management, until that occurrence, IMZs are managed in a more protective approach than typically described for General.

IV. RESPONSE TO FWS COMMENTS ON DRAFT EIS

In the Service's comment letter on the Draft EIS (January 31, 2014) an evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives and their consistency with the COT report was described. The BLM, USFS, FWS and the State of Idaho have worked together over the last several months to reconcile the two co-preferred alternatives into on cohesive approach that responds to the concerns raised by FWS and further refines the approaches previously described in the Draft EIS.

V. CROSS JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES

Management direction within the subregion for Idaho and Montana has been coordinated across state boundaries with Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and Oregon. Allocation level decisions are mostly consistent across those boundaries with some discrepancy adjacent to Wyoming where there are some areas of

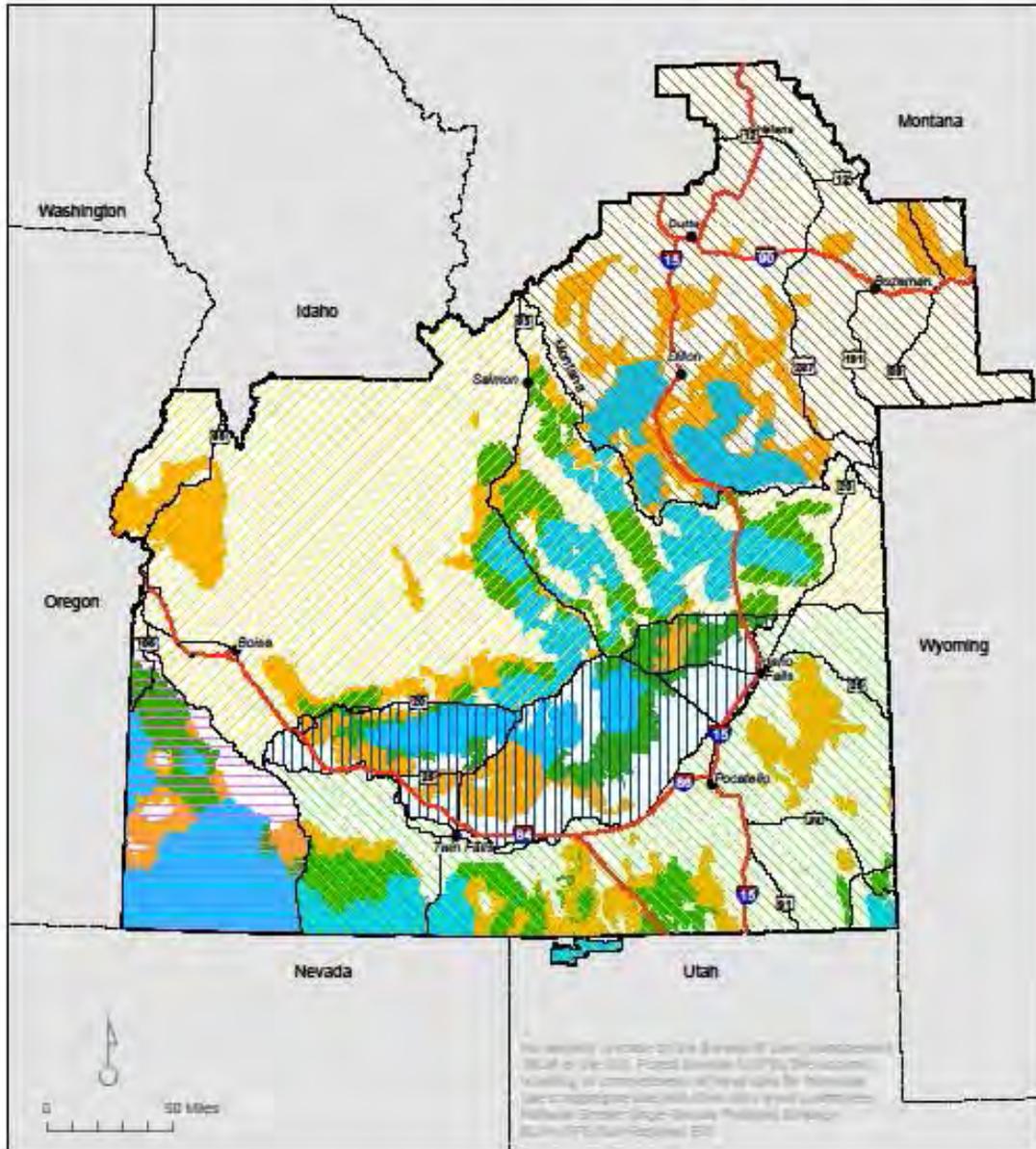
Core Management Zones in Idaho where across the border Wyoming identifies General management areas. There are some similar minor concerns with Utah. Core zones in Idaho and Priority areas in Nevada and Oregon largely match across the boundary and address the same allocation management in those areas.

Other Montana BLM planning efforts have incorporated mitigation and adaptive management approaches. The direction in the Southwestern Montana portion of the Final EIS for these components will differ from Idaho in order to maintain consistency with other Montana BLM plans.

VI. AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

None.

Map 1: Conservation Areas and Management Zones

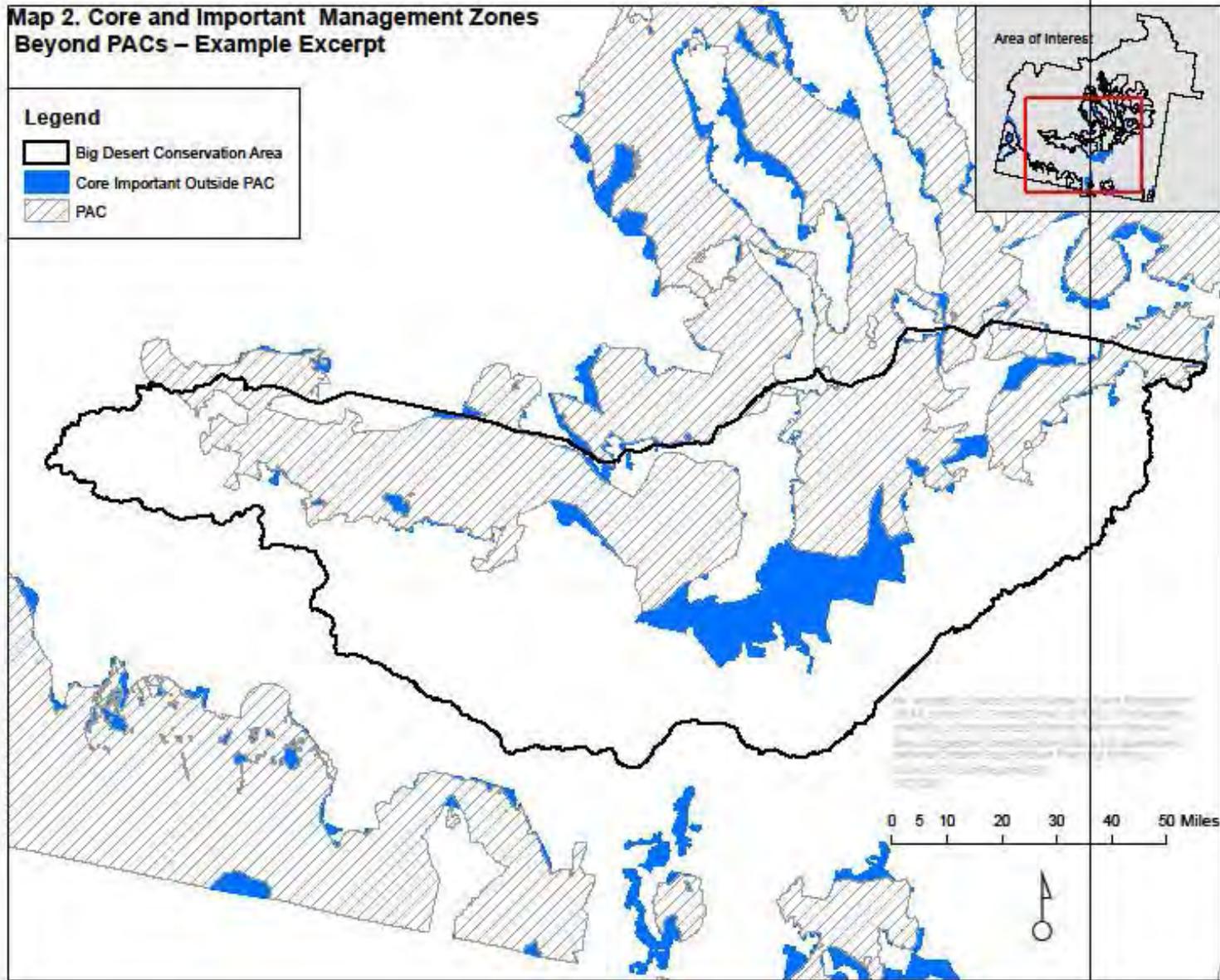


Conservation Area

-  Idaho Desert Conservation Area
-  Idaho Mountain Valleys Conservation Area
-  Idaho Southern Conservation Area
-  Idaho West Owyhee Conservation Area
-  SW Montana Conservation Area

Management Zone

-  Core
-  Important
-  General
-  Analysis Boundary



**Table 1. Allocation/Disturbance Checklist
Idaho and SW Montana EIS - Administrative Draft Proposed Plan**

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
Solar/Wind Energy Development ROW	All Core ³ : (Core is analogous to Priority) Consistent with Priority guidance.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged consistent with Priority.	
	All General: Inconsistent	
High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROW ⁴	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance with very limited exception opportunity.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance with limited exception opportunity as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged even more limitation to the exceptions would apply the same as Core.	
	All General: Inconsistent with guidance, Consistent with COT reduction of threats.	
Other (Minor) ROWs and Land Use Authorizations/Permits	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All General: Consistent with General guidance.	
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Including Geothermal)	Idaho Core: Inconsistent with guidance. Montana Core: Consistent with Rocky Mountain guidance.	Idaho: Oil and Gas: Core areas with low to no potential, which is most of the subregion, are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential, which are

³ Idaho portion of the plan identifies three (3) management delineations – Core, Important and General. Core areas are contained within the boundaries of the USFWS Priority Areas for Conservation (PAC) and make up roughly 66% of those areas. The remaining 33% of the PACs and other areas beyond the PACs are identified as Important Management Areas. This further refinement of management areas is **NOT** consistent with the NPT guidance. The Montana portion of the plan identifies two (2) management delineations – Core and General. Important direction does not apply to any areas in SW Montana. Direction for SW Montana in Core and General management areas as the same as for Idaho unless noted separately in the table.

⁴ Coordination across state boundaries for utility corridors is yet to be completed.

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance, includes additional restrictions to development.	within WAFWA MZ II and adjacent to Wyoming General areas are open, consistent with Wyoming General management (160k acres). Geothermal: Core areas with low or no potential are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential are open. All Core, Important and General areas would implement required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce and eliminate impacts to GRSG. Reasonably foreseeable development scenarios show limited, if any, development likely in the next 10-15 years. This direction is consistent with the COT in reducing the minimal threat that is present.
	All General: Consistent	
Non-Energy Leasable Materials	All Core: Consistent All Important: Consistent All General: Consistent	All Known Phosphate Leasing Areas are outside of GRSG identified Core and Important management zones.
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance. All Important: Consistent with General guidance with stringent limitation criteria. All General: Consistent	Core areas are closed to new mineral material site authorizations and open for sales from within existing sites subject to required design features and seasonal timing restrictions. Important and General areas are open to new mineral material site authorizations subject to required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce impacts to GRSG. No differentiation was made between free use and commercial use permits with regard to use of existing sites.
Disturbance (3 %) WY only (5%)	Idaho Core: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. Montana Core: Consistent with other Montana plans. All Important: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. All General: N/A	A 3% disturbance cap is applied to seasonal habitats of highest concern - nesting and wintering habitat - within Core and Important Management Areas.

Table 2. ADPP Response to FWS Comments

USFWS Concern	Resolution
Consistency across subregional boundaries	The BLM and FS have coordinated across subregional boundaries to further develop consistent approaches, or to clearly describe the rationale for the threat response where inconsistencies exist. Allocation level decisions are consistent across subregional boundaries; some conservation measures vary based on relative threats and habitat conditions/usage.
Disturbance Caps and no unmitigated loss	Disturbance caps have been included and further description of no net unmitigated loss has been included as part of the ADPP. A consistent approach and scale to measuring disturbance has been included with emphasis on seasonal habitats of concern in the Idaho and southwestern Montana subregion.
Adaptive Management Hard and Soft Triggers and an Implementation Team	Adaptive management hard and soft triggers as well as an Implementation Team to help assess these triggers in coordination with the State of Idaho has been included in the ADPP.
Lek buffers and noise protective measures	Buffers and their applicability have been further refined and defined in conjunction with FWS as have appropriate noise protective measures which are now included as required design features.
Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring	These monitoring components have been further described at the broad, mid and fine scales and are included in the ADPP.
Mitigation	Additional description of how mitigation is included as components of project proposals and stepped forward through use of the state mitigation strategies is included in the ADPP. Decision to develop a mitigation board and develop a state specific mitigation strategy consistent with and in conjunction with WAFWA MZ strategies is also included in the ADPP.
Certainty of Effective Implementation (specificity)	Management actions and conservation measures have been refined to more clearly articulate the intent and direction to support the specificity needed by the Service to ensure certainty of implementation.
Impacts Analysis	Work is ongoing to augment the initial impacts analysis described in the Draft EIS. Additional work is being completed to delineate effects with specific regard to priority areas for conservation and the identified threats. This work will be complete in the Final EIS.
Priority Areas for Conservation and Mapping	Further refinement of the GRSG management areas, consistent with the COT and biologically meaningful units has occurred in coordination with the State of Idaho, FWS, BLM and FS. This management area delineation is a foundational component of the Idaho and southwestern Montana ADPP.
Infrastructure	Further refinement and definition of infrastructure criteria with respect to effects on GRSG habitat has been included and describes the application of these criteria in relation to COT objectives in the ADPP.
Wildfire/Invasives	The ADPP includes application of the Wildfire and Invasives Assessment process and other work developed by the Fire and Invasives Assessment Team to address fire concerns. In addition several components of the Idaho State Plan have been incorporated into the ADPP which further prioritize and address wildfire concerns.

Ed's questions regarding ID-BLM Response to NPT 6/4/14

In preparation for our discussion later today, I wanted to provide you with some of the concerns we would like to go over with you and your team regarding the info memo you sent us on 5/29/14. Hopefully you can provide us with some clarification/rationale on a few inconsistencies with the NPT allocation recommendations.

For Priority Habitat (Core/Important):

What is your rationale for managing medial (important) habitat as a ROW avoidance area, instead of managing it as a ROW exclusion area for wind/solar?

Idaho is only closing areas to fluid mineral development that are low potential. What is the biological rationale for opening moderate and high potential areas for development? Are you applying NSO to any core (priority) areas?

Are core and important areas closed to non-energy leasables?

For mineral materials, what is the rationale for leaving medial (important) areas open? For existing sites, are they subject to the 3% disturbance cap and no net unmitigated loss?

For General Habitat

What is your rationale for not managing general habitat as a ROW avoidance area for solar/wind?

What is your rationale for not managing general habitat as a ROW avoidance area for high-voltage transmission ROWs?

Adaptive Management

Is BLM Idaho's adaptive management strategy consistent with the AM sideboards? How does the AM strategy apply to other allocation categories other than ROWs?

Disturbance

What do you mean when you say that BLM Idaho is “inconsistent with specific biological units.” The NPT guidance allowed the sub-regions to provide for their own unit, as long as information could be aggregated up to the PAC level. Also – you state that the cap is only subject to “seasonal habitats of highest concern” – does this mean that you are not applying the cap to all general and priority (core, important, and general)? Who makes the determination of what is of a “highest concern?”

Will the no net unmitigated loss be applied to core, important, and general habitat?

How much medial (important) habitat lies within the PAC boundaries?

Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination

Are there any inconsistencies with how the Forest Service plans to manage their priority and general habitat areas?

Have you resolved all of the FWS stop-light matrix concerns (shifting reds to yellows or greens)?

I look forward to our discussion. After we discuss these questions and reconcile these issues, we can confirm that the data you sent to the NOC is ready for the roll-up or you can send any changes in data on to the NOC.

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In Reply Refer To:
1610 (931)

Memorandum

To: Ed Roberson, Assistant Director, Resources and Planning (AD-200)

From: Tim Murphy, Acting State Director, BLM Idaho

Subject: Supplemental Update for Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregional Administrative Draft Proposed Plan

Date: June 4, 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum documents additional descriptions and rationale in support of the May 28, 2014, update memorandum for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP). This document is organized by the questions and concerns that have been identified and further descriptions are included to responding to those concerns.

II. THREE MANAGEMENT ZONES

The Idaho portion of the ADPP delineates three management zones – Core, Important and General. These management zones represent a continuum of management restrictions/protections for greater sage-grouse (GRSG) and are foundational to the adaptive management strategy contained within the ADPP.

Core Management Zones contain 65% of the occupied leks; 73% of the breeding males; and compose 66% of the USFWS priority areas for conservation (PACs). They are the most restrictive and management direction within these areas consistent with the national policy team direction or goes beyond that direction in its protection of GRSG.

Important Management Zones contain 22% of the breeding males. They compose 33% of the PAC areas plus over 1 million additional acres supporting 4% of the breeding males outside of PAC areas. Core and Important Management Zones support approximately 95% of the population in Idaho.

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG.

Any proposed development within Important Management Zones would be required to meet the following Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria:

- a. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant Conservation Area; and
- b. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management area; and
- c. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation;

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- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs as described; and
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold

The restrictions/protections from development in Core Zones, coupled with the stringent development criteria associated with proposals in Important Zones effectively pushes development to areas outside Core and Important Zones (i.e. the PAC areas); or maintains the standard that any development within Important Zones would not impact the GRSG population and any impacts to habitat would be mitigated.

III. CORE and IMPORTANT ZONES

Rationale for managing Important Zones as ROW avoidance areas for Wind and Solar development.

Core Zones exclude the highest potential areas for these types of developments within GRSG habitat. Any proposed development in Important Zones must comply with the Development Criteria (previous); if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

Biological rationale for opening moderate and high potential areas for fluid mineral development development.

Areas of moderate to high fluid mineral potential would be open in Core and Important Zones, subject to a no surface occupancy restriction which is consistent with the NPT guidance. Areas of low or no potential within Core Zones would be closed – this is more restrictive/protective of GRSG habitat than the NPT guidance.

Core and Important Zones closed to non-energy leasables

Non-energy leasable areas in Idaho are associated with phosphate mining. Areas with this potential have been inventoried and identified as Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) which are the only areas currently open for phosphate leasing. There are no KPLAs within Core or Important Zones, so Core and Important Zones are closed to non-energy leasables.

Rationale for leaving Important Zones open for mineral materials

Core Zones are closed to new site authorizations. Any new site development in Important Zones must comply with the Development Criteria (previous) including the disturbance cap; if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required. Sales from existing pits would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions and required design features.

IV. GENERAL ZONES

Rationale for not managing as a ROW avoidance area for solar/wind

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Presence of a developable resource within General Zones is sparse to non-existent. Any proposed development in General Zones is guided by application of lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

Rationale for not managing as a ROW avoidance area for high-voltage transmission ROWs

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in General Zones is guided by application of lek

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buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

V. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

BLM Idaho's adaptive management strategy consistency with the AM sideboards

The adaptive management strategy included with the ADPP includes adaptive changes that adjustment management of Important Zones. It provides for more restrictive management when a trigger is engaged and it also provides for removing this restrictive management when habitat and populations recover to pre-trigger levels. The concept that an adaptive trigger can only be used to adjust management in a more restrictive direction even if habitat and populations have recovered and would no longer meet the trigger criteria is not consistent with Idaho's incentive-based strategy.

The additional component presented in the National Policy Team guidance of adjusting management to a more restrictive alternative if necessary requires additional discussion with FS, FWS, and our State partners.

VI. DISTURBANCE

Biological significant units that could be aggregated up to the PAC level

Idaho BLM has worked with our partners (FS, FWS and State of Idaho) to define the biologically significant unit for analysis of the disturbance cap/threshold as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core or Important Zones by Conservation Area. This delineation recognizes the strategic importance and value of biologically limiting seasonal habitats and the desire to push development away from and limit additional development within those areas.

This calculation can be aggregated to the PAC level consistent with the National Policy Team guidance.

VII. CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION

Inconsistencies with Forest Service plans

BLM and FS have been coordinating closely through the development of the ADPP. The FS is currently finalizing the FS ADPP and while initial indications are toward consistency there may be several areas requiring further discussion. These discussions are pending until the FS has completed their initial ADPP development.

Resolution of FWS COT consistency

In the Service's comment letter on the Draft EIS (January 31, 2014) an evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives and their consistency with the COT report was described. The BLM, FS, FWS and the State of Idaho have worked together over the last several months to reconcile the two co-preferred alternatives into one cohesive approach that responds to the concerns raised by FWS and further refines the approaches previously described in the Draft EIS. All of the concerns identified by FWS as documented on the COT evaluation table (i.e. stop-light matrix) have been resolved. As a point of clarification this table did not identify any significant areas of concern of inconsistency (red) based on evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives described in the Draft EIS. Several areas of concern were identified (yellow) and these have been resolved by further augmenting of direction in the ADPP.

Appendix A – Required Design Features and Best Management Practices

The following required design features (RDFs) and best management practices (BMPs) are included for consideration and use based upon review of current science and effects analysis (circa 2014) (Table A-1). These made be reviewed and updated through plan maintenance as new information and updated scientific findings become available.

The table is organized by program area grouping the RDFs and BMPs most relevant to that program; however, all relevant RDFs and BMPs, regardless of which program they are grouped under, should be considered during project evaluation and applicable RDFs and BMPs should be applied during implementation. The table identifies the specific measure (numbered) and its appropriate application – as an RDF – required all the time everywhere; as a BMP required when the applicable resources are present; and as a BMP when appropriate and application would reduce impacts and not conflict with other RDFs or BMPs. In some cases the BMPs may not all be appropriate based on local conditions and would be assessed in the appropriate site specific NEPA analysis, these all should be considered and were determined to be beneficial to achieving GRSG habitat objectives included as part of the site specific project. In other cases additional project design criteria or best management practices could be incorporated into project implementation to address site specific concerns not fully addressed by the RDFs or BMPs described here.

Table A-1. Required Design Features and Best Management Practices

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
General			
1. Solicit and consider expertise and ideas from local landowners, working groups, and other federal, state, county, and private organizations during development of projects.			X
Wildfire Suppression			
2. Compile district-level information into state-wide sage-grouse tool boxes. Tool boxes will contain maps, listing of resource advisors, contact information, local guidance, and other relevant information for each district, which will be aggregated into a state-wide document.	X		
3. Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics. The Fire Planning and Fuels Management Division (FA-600) hosts a webpage containing up-to-date maps, instruction memoranda, conservation measures, BMPs, and spatial data specific to fire operations and fuels management/sage-grouse interactions. These resources can be accessed at: http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fpfm/sg/index.html . Additional BLM sage-grouse information can be	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
found at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/fish_wildlife_and/sage-grouse-conservation.html .			
4. Assign a resource advisor with sage-grouse expertise, or who has access to sage-grouse expertise, to all extended attack fires in or near sage-grouse habitat areas. Prior to the fire season, provide training to sage-grouse resource advisors on wildfire suppression organization, objectives, tactics, and procedures to develop a cadre of qualified individuals. Involve state wildlife agency expertise in fire operations through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructing resource advisors during preseason trainings; • qualification as resource advisors; • coordination with resource advisors during fire incidents; • contributing to incident planning with information such as habitat features or other key data useful in fire decision making 	X		
5. At the onset of an emerging wildland fire the Agency Administrators and Fire Management Officers will engage a local Resource Advisor to assess sage-grouse habitat that may be affected by the fire or suppression activities.	X		
6. If complexity of the wildland fire warrants the activation of an Incident Management Team, locally refined information regarding important sage-grouse habitat will be relayed during in brief and continually throughout the incident.		X	
7. On critical fire weather days, pre-position additional fire suppression resources to optimize a quick and efficient response in sage-grouse habitat areas.		X	
8. As appropriate, utilize existing fuel breaks, such as roads or discrete changes in fuel type, as control lines in order to minimize fire spread.		X	
9. During periods of multiple fires, ensure line officers are involved in setting priorities.	X		
10. To the extent possible, locate wildfire suppression facilities (i.e., base camps, spike camps, drop points, staging areas, heli-bases, etc.) in areas where physical disturbance to sage-grouse habitat can be minimized. These include disturbed areas, grasslands, near roads/trails or in other areas where there is existing disturbance or minimal sagebrush cover.	X		
11. Power-wash all firefighting vehicles, to the extent possible, including engines, water tenders, personnel vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) prior to deploying in or near sage-grouse habitat areas to minimize noxious weed spread.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
12. Minimize cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations in sage-grouse habitat.	X		
13. Minimize burnout operations in key sage-grouse habitat areas by constructing direct fireline whenever safe and practical to do so.	X		
14. Utilize retardant, mechanized equipment, and other available resources to minimize burned acreage during initial attack.	X		
15. As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.		X	
16. Adequately document fire operation activities in sage-grouse habitat for potential follow-up coordination activities.	X		
Fuels Management Unless otherwise specified as part of the land use plan consider the full array of fuels management treatment types (prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and biological) when implementing the following RDFs and BMP's.			
17. Where applicable, design fuels treatment objectives to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems, modify fire behavior, restore native plants, and create landscape patterns which most benefit sage-grouse habitat.	X		
18. Provide training to fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas utilized locally.	X		
19. Use burning prescriptions which minimize undesirable effects on vegetation or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of annual grass invasion).	X		
20. Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.	X		
21. Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.	X		
22. Where applicable, incorporate roads and natural fuel breaks into fuel break design.		X	
23. Power-wash all vehicles and equipment involved in fuels management activities, prior to entering the area, to minimize the introduction of undesirable and/or invasive plant species.	X		
24. Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency which facilitate firefighter safety, reduce the potential acres burned, and reduce the fire risk to sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, develop maps for sage-grouse habitat which spatially display existing fuels treatments that can be used to assist suppression	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
activities.			
25. Give priority for implementing specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands, first to sites which are adjacent to or surrounded by Core Management Zones or that reestablish continuity between Core Management Zones. Annual grasslands are a second priority for restoration when the sites are not adjacent to Core Management Zones, but within Important Management Zones. The third priority for annual grassland habitat restoration projects are sites within General Management Zones. The intent is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.	X		
26. As funding and logistics permit, restore annual grasslands to a species composition characterized by perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs or one of that referenced in land use planning documentation.	X		
27. Emphasize the use of native plant species, especially those from a warmer area of the species' current range, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions.	X		
28. Remove standing and encroaching trees within at least 110 yards of occupied sage-grouse leks and other habitats (e.g., nesting, wintering and brood rearing) to reduce the availability of perch sites for avian predators, as resources permit.		X	
29. Protect wildland areas from wildfire originating on private lands, infrastructure corridors, and recreational areas.		X	
30. Reduce the risk of vehicle- or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive species by installing fuel breaks and/or planting perennial vegetation (e.g., green-strips) paralleling road rights-of-way.			X
31. Strategically place and maintain pre-treated strips/areas (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, etc.) to aid in controlling wildfire, should wildfire occur near CMZ or priority restoration areas (such as where investments in restoration have already been made).	X		
32. Design treatments to provide a break in fuel continuity in large, at-risk, expanses of continuous sagebrush. Use local knowledge of fire occurrence, spread patterns, and habitat values at risk to determine the proper placement and size of the fuel break.	X		
33. Use existing agreements with local, county, and state road departments to improve and maintain existing fuel breaks during routine road maintenance. Examples include: blading, mowing, disking, grading, and spraying roadside vegetation.		X	
34. Form partnerships with linear right-of-way holders to		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
maintain fuel breaks, which reduce fuel continuity and serve to protect at-risk landscapes.			
35. Use existing NEPA documentation and authorities, where possible, when conducting road right-of-way maintenance. In many instances, existing authorizations for roads or linear rights-of-way contain provisions for maintenance activities that could be implemented and incorporated into a vegetation and habitat protection strategy without requiring additional NEPA analysis. Document this with a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA).			X
36. Enter into agreements with road departments which may help fund the construction and maintenance of fuel breaks adjacent to roads, as funding permits.		X	
37. Spatially depict the locations of existing and planned fuel breaks in a landscape fuel break map and label each vegetation polygon for reference. Offices will make these maps available to suppression resources for use in fire operations.	X		
Vegetation Treatment			
38. Utilize available plant species based on their adaptation to the site when developing seed mixes. (Lambert 2005; VegSpec).	X		
39. Utilizing the warmer component of a species' current range when selecting native species for restoration when available (Kramer and Havens 2009).		X	
40. Reduce annual grass densities and competition through herbicide, targeted grazing, tillage, prescribed fire, etc. (Pyke 2011).			X
41. Reduce density and competition of introduced perennial grasses using appropriate techniques to accomplish this reduction (Pellant and Lysne 2005).			X
42. Utilize techniques to introduce desired species to the site such as drill seeding, broadcast seeding followed by a seed coverage technique, such as harrowing, churning or livestock trampling, and transplanting container or bare-root seedlings.			X
43. Assess existing on-site vegetation to ascertain if enough desirable perennial vegetation exists to consider techniques to increase on-site seed production to facilitate an increase in density of desired species.		X	
44. Use site preparation techniques that retain existing desirable vegetation.	X		
45. Use "mother plant" techniques or planting of satellite populations of desirable plants to serve as seed sources.		X	
46. Utilize post-treatment control of annual grass and other invasive species.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
47. Utilize new tools and use of new science and research as it becomes available.	X		
48. Give higher priority to vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites where environmental variables contribute to improved chances for project success (Meinke et al. 2009). • Areas where seasonal habitat is limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance (wintering areas, wet meadows and riparian areas, nesting areas, leks, etc.). • Re-establish sagebrush cover in otherwise suitable GRSG with consideration to local needs and conditions using the general priorities in the following order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently burned native areas • Native grassland with suitable forb component • Nonnative grassland with suitable forb component • Recently converted annual grass areas • Native grassland • Nonnative grassland • Where desirable perennial bunchgrasses and/or forbs are deficient in existing sagebrush stands, use appropriate mechanical, aerial or other techniques to re-establish them. Examples include but are not limited to, use of a Lawson aerator with seeding, harrow or chain with seeding, drill seeding, hand planting plugs, aerial seeding or other appropriate technique. • Cooperative efforts that may improve GRSG habitat quality over multiple ownerships. • Projects that may provide connectivity between suitable habitats or expand existing good quality habitats. • Projects that address conifer encroachment into important GRSG habitats. In general the priority for treatment is 1) Phase 1 ($\leq 10\%$ conifer cover), 2) Phase 2 (10-30%), and 3) Phase 3 ($>30\%$). • Replacing stands of annual grasses within otherwise good quality habitats with desirable perennial species. Other factors that contribute to the importance of the restoration project in maintaining or improving GRSG habitat. 	X		
Lands and Realty			

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
49. Where technically and financially feasible, bury distribution powerlines and communication lines within existing disturbance.		X	
50. Above-ground disturbance areas would be seeded with perennial vegetation as per vegetation management.	X		
51. Place infrastructure in already disturbed locations where the habitat has not been fully restored.		X	
52. Cluster disturbances, operations (fracturing stimulation, liquids gathering, etc.) and facilities as close as possible.		X	
53. Co-locate linear facilities within one mile of existing linear facilities.		X	
54. Micro-site linear facilities to reduce impacts to sage-grouse habitats.	X		
55. Locate staging areas outside the Core Management Zones to the extent possible.	X		
56. Consider collocating powerlines, flowlines and pipelines under or immediately adjacent to a road or adjacent to other pipelines first, before considering collocating with other ROW.			X
57. Restrict the construction of tall facilities and fences to the minimum number and amount needed.	X		
58. Use free standing structures where possible, to limit the use of guy wires. Where guy wires are necessary and appropriate bird collision diverters would be used, if doing so would not cause a human safety risk.	X		
59. Place new utility developments (power lines, pipelines, etc.) and transportation routes in existing utility or transportation corridors.		X	
60. Construction and development activities should conform to seasonal restrictions.	X		
Fluid Mineral Leasing			
61. Use directional drilling and/or multi well-pads to reduce surface disturbance.	X		
62. Apply a phased development approach with concurrent reclamation.	X		
63. Place liquid gathering facilities outside of CMZs. Have no tanks at well locations within CMZs to minimize truck traffic and perching and nesting sites for ravens and raptors.	X		
64. Use remote monitoring techniques for production facilities and develop a plan to reduce the frequency of vehicle use (Lyon and Anderson 2003).			X
65. Site and/or minimize linear ROWs or SUAs to reduce disturbance to sagebrush habitats.	X		
66. Design or site permanent structures which create movement (e.g. pump jack) to minimize impacts to GRSG.	X		
67. Equip tanks and other above-ground facilities with		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
structures or devices that discourage nesting of raptors and corvids.			
68. Control the spread and effects of non-native plant species (Gelbard and Belnap 2003, Bergquist et al. 2007, Evangelista et al. 2011). (E.g. by washing vehicles and equipment.)		X	
69. Restrict pit and impoundment construction to reduce or eliminate threats from West Nile virus (Doherty 2007).		X	
<p>70. Remove or re-inject produced water to reduce habitat for mosquitoes that vector West Nile virus. If surface disposal of produced water continues, use the following steps for reservoir design to limit favorable mosquito habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overbuild size of ponds for muddy and non-vegetated shorelines. • Build steep shorelines to decrease vegetation and increase wave actions. • Avoid flooding terrestrial vegetation in flat terrain or low lying areas. • Construct dams or impoundments that restrict down slope seepage or overflow. • Line the channel where discharge water flows into the pond with crushed rock. • Construct spillway with steep sides and line it with crushed rock. • Treat waters with larvicides to reduce mosquito production where water occurs on the surface 		X	
71. In CMZ, limit noise from discretionary activities to not less than 10 decibels above ambient sound levels (typically 20-24 dBA) at occupied leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during breeding season.	X		
72. Require noise shields when drilling during the lek, nesting, brood-rearing, or wintering season.			X
73. The BLM/Forest Service would work with proponents to limit project related noise where it would be expected to reduce functionality of habitats in Core and Important Management Zones.	X		
74. The BLM/Forest Service would evaluate the potential for limitation of new noise sources on a case-by-case basis as appropriate.	X		
75. Limit noise sources that would be expected to negatively impact populations in Core and Important Management Zones and continue to support the establishment of ambient baseline noise levels for occupied leks in Core Management Zones.	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
76. As additional research and information emerges, specific new limitations appropriate to the type of projects being considered would be evaluated and appropriate limitations would be implemented where necessary to minimize potential for noise impacts on sage-grouse core population behavioral cycles.	X		
77. As new research is completed, new specific limitations would be coordinated with the IDFG and MT FWP and partners.	X		
78. Fit transmission towers with anti-perch devices (Lammers and Collopy 2007).			X
79. Require sage-grouse-safe fences.			X
80. Locate new compressor stations outside Core Management Zones and design them to reduce noise that may be directed towards Core Management Zones.	X		
81. Clean up refuse (Bui et al. 2011).	X		
82. Locate man camps outside of priority sage-grouse habitats.	X		
83. Consider using oak (or other material) mats for drilling activities to reduce vegetation disturbance and for roads between closely spaced wells to reduce soil compaction and maintain soil structure to increase likelihood of vegetation reestablishment following drilling.			X
84. Use only closed-loop systems for drilling operations and no reserve pits.	X		
85. Cover (e.g., fine mesh netting or use other effective techniques) all drilling and production pits and tanks regardless of size to reduce sage-grouse mortality.	X		
Roads			
86. Utilize existing roads, or realignments of existing routes to the extent possible.	X		
87. Design roads to an appropriate standard no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended purpose.	X		
88. Do not issue ROWs or SUAs to counties on newly constructed energy or mineral development roads, unless for a temporary use consistent with all other terms and conditions included in this document.	X		
89. Establish speed limits on BLM and FS system roads to reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions or design roads to be driven at slower speeds.			X
90. Coordinate road construction and use among ROW or SUA holders.	X		
91. Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings.			X
92. Use dust abatement on roads and pads.	X		
93. Close and reclaim duplicate roads by restoring original landform and establishing desired vegetation.		X	

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
Roads Specific to Core and Important Management Zones			
94. Locate roads to avoid priority areas and habitats as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X		
95. Establish trip restrictions (Lyon and Anderson 2003) or minimization through use of telemetry and remote well control (e.g., Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).	X		
96. Restrict vehicle traffic to only authorized users on newly constructed routes (using signage, gates, etc.)	X		
Reclamation Activities			
97. Include objectives for ensuring habitat restoration to meet sage-grouse habitat needs in reclamation practices/sites (Pyke 2011).	X		
98. Address post reclamation management in reclamation plan such that goals and objectives are to protect and improve sage-grouse habitat needs.		X	
99. Maximize the area of interim reclamation on long-term access roads and well pads, including reshaping, topsoiling and revegetating cut-and-fill slopes.	X		
100. Restore disturbed areas at final reclamation to the pre-disturbance landforms and desired plant community.	X		
101. Irrigate interim reclamation if necessary for establishing seedlings more quickly.		X	
102. Utilize mulching techniques to expedite reclamation and to protect soils.		X	
Grazing Required Design Features			
103. Avoid building new wire fences within 2 km of occupied leks (Stevens 2011). If this is not feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates.	X		
104. Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.	X		
105. Utilize temporary fencing (e.g., ESR, drop down fencing) where feasible and appropriate to meet management objectives.		X	
106. Fence wetlands (e.g., springs, seeps, wet meadows and/or riparian areas) where appropriate, to maintain or foster progress toward Proper Functioning Condition and to facilitate management of sage-grouse habitat objectives. Where constructing fences or exclosures to improve riparian and/or upland management, incorporate fence marking or other BMPs/RDFs as appropriate.		X	
107. During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately March 15-May 1 in lower elevations)	X		

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
and March 25-May 15 in higher elevations), livestock trailing will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of occupied leks between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse. Over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations on public lands must be at least 1 km from occupied leks during the lekking season to reduce disturbance from sheep, human activity and guard animals.			
108. Work with permittees in locating sheep over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations to minimize impacts to sage-grouse seasonal habitats.	X		
109. When trailing livestock during the lekking or nesting season, use roads or existing trails, to the extent possible to reduce disturbance to roosting, lekking or nesting sage-grouse.		X	
110. Design new spring developments in GRSG habitat to maintain or enhance the free flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Modify developed springs, seeps and associated pipelines to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority GRSG habitat where necessary.		X	
111. Install ramps in new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by GRSG and other wildlife.		X	
West Nile Virus Required Design Features			
112. Construct water return features and maintain functioning float valves to prohibit water from being spilled on the ground surrounding the trough and/or tank and return water to the original water source, to the extent practicable.	X		
113. Minimize the construction of new ponds or reservoirs except as needed to meet important resource management and/or restoration objectives.	X		
114. Develop and maintain non-pond/reservoir watering facilities, such as troughs and bottomless tanks, to provide livestock water.	X		
115. For most spring developments or wells, mosquito breeding habitat usually is not an issue. Flowing cold (less than 50° Fahrenheit) water and steep sides of the stock tanks are not conducive for egg laying or larvae production. If flows are low, the water is warm, or moss production is an issue in the tank, mosquito breeding habitat could exist in the tank.	X		
116. Maintenance of healthy wetlands at spring sources helps control mosquitoes and their larvae by providing habitat for natural predators such as birds, dragonflies and amphibians. Protecting the wetland at the spring source with a fence is an option to consider.			X

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
117. Clean and drain stock tanks before the season starts. If never cleaned or drained, many tanks will fill with silt or debris causing warmer water and heavy vegetation growth conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X	
118. Draining tanks after the period of use is completed, particularly in warmer weather, also reduces potential habitat by eliminating stagnant standing water.		X	
119. Maintain a properly functioning overflow to prevent water from flowing onto the pad and surrounding area, to eliminate or minimize pooling of water that is attractive to breeding mosquitoes.	X		
120. Clean or deepen overflow ponds to maintain colder temperatures to reduce mosquito habitat.		X	
121. Install and maintain float valves on stock tank fill pipes to minimize overflow	X		
122. Harden stock tank pads to reduce tracks that can potentially hold water where mosquitoes may breed.	X		
123. Build ponds with steep shorelines to reduce shallow water (>60 cm) and aquatic vegetation around the perimeter of impoundments to deter colonizing by mosquitos (Knight et al. 2003, cited in NTT report page 61).	X		
124. Consider removing and controlling trees and shrubs to reduce shade and wind barriers on pit and reservoir shorelines if not needed for wildlife, fish, or recreational values.			X
125. Impoundments that remain accessible to livestock and wildlife can cause tracking and nutrient enrichment from manure which can create favorable mosquito breeding habitat. Where this is a concern, it may be desirable to fence the reservoir and pipe the water to a tank.			X
126. Construct dams or impoundments that minimize down-slope seepage or overflow. Seepage and overflow results in down-grade accumulation of vegetated shallow water areas that support breeding mosquitoes.		X	
127. On ponds and reservoirs with enough depth and volume, introduce native fish species, which feed on mosquito larvae.			X
128. Line the overflow of a dam's spillway with crushed rock and constructing the spillway with steep sides to preclude the accumulation of shallow water and vegetation to reduce mosquito habitat.		X	
129. Where an existing reservoir has filled with silt, consider cleaning to reduce shallow water habitat conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X	
130. During confirmed West Nile virus outbreaks in sage-			X

Measure	Required Design Feature	BMP Required when the resources/values are present	BMP Applied if appropriate
grouse habitat, consider larvicide applications.			
Travel Management Required Design Features			
131. Designate or design routes to direct use away from priority areas identified in Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments and still provide for high-quality and sustainable travel routes and administrative access, legislatively mandated requirements, and commercial needs	X		
Recreation Required Design Features			
132. Direct use away from GRSG priority areas as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X		
133. Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids.		X	

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1 **Appendix B – Seasonal Timing Restriction**

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3 During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately March 15-May 1 in lower elevations and March 25-
4 May 15 in higher elevations), project activities will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of
5 occupied leks between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse.

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Idaho and Southwest Montana GRSB Buffers and Seasonal Restrictions Summary

Impacts	Causes ¹	Minimization Measures Seasonal/Timing Restrictions & Buffers	Rationale
Incidental disturbance to individual GRSB within all habitat types during all seasons			
	Public or administrative activities that include incidental foot, aerial, horseback, or other similar travel.	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
	Livestock grazing activities (except where specifically noted below).	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
	Public vehicle travel not otherwise restricted in Travel Management Plans; or administrative vehicle travel on existing routes for maintenance of existing infrastructure, facilities, or vegetation projects; or non-organized/non-permitted activities.	None.	Impacts from these type of activities are immeasurable and would not warrant any minimization measures.
Loss (i.e. death) of nests/eggs, chicks and/or adults that may occur within the nesting⁴ habitat			

during the nesting season			
	<p>Anthropogenic activities such as the use of heavy equipment² or targeted grazing in nesting habitat³ for: 1) implementation of fuels/vegetation/habitat restoration management projects, 2) infrastructure construction or maintenance, 3) geophysical exploration activities; 4) organized motorized recreational events</p>	<p>BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid these activities within nesting habitat during the nesting³ season.</p>	<p>Application of the seasonal nesting habitat restriction would avoid and minimize the loss of nests/chicks/hens. This is a BMP since the impact is loss of individual grouse and is small scale and not population-scale. Disallowing infrastructure maintenance or construction in nesting habitat outright may not be realistic as an RDF. Impacts may be able to be offset via appropriate mitigation.</p>
	<p>Bedding Sheep & Associated Camps</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General: During the nesting season, locate bedding areas and camps outside of sagebrush areas³.</p>	<p>Application of the seasonal nesting habitat restriction would avoid/minimize the loss of nests/chicks by focusing bedding and camps in areas not meeting nest habitat characteristics for sagebrush cover (i.e., use areas less than 15% canopy cover).</p>
	<p>Fences</p>	<p>Existing Fences: RDF: Core and Important; BMP for General- Where consistent with policy, laws and/or regulations relative to Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas and Visual Resource Management, move, modify (e.g. lay down fences) or mark existing fences to reduce collision risk within areas that have a high probability of fence strikes (per</p>	<p>Application of these measures would avoid/minimize the loss of birds to fence strikes.</p>

		Stevens et al. 2012 model or latest science).	
		New Fences: RDF: Core and Important; BMP for General- Do not construct new fences within areas of high collision risk unless marked or modified, consistent with policy, laws and/or regulations relative to Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas and Visual Resource Management .	
Permanent functional or physical loss of a lek or declining attendance at lek⁴			
	Unleased fluid minerals	Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Do not allow wells, pads, facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek. Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Limit average well pad density to no more than 1 per 640 acres within nesting ³ and winter ³ habitat.	This impact may have a population level effect and trip a population trigger therefore we recommended this be an RDF. Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km from grouse leks. The 1/640 density per based on consideration of 1) Harju et al. (2010) who found pad density of 1.54 pad/sq km (1 pad/247 ac) had 13-74% lower attendance at leks and 2) Doherty (2008 page iii and 79) who noted potential

			impacts from oil and gas development were indiscernible at ~1 well/640 acres. IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to minimize risk of tripping a population trigger, hence the 1/640.
	Commercial solar development	<p>RDF: Core-No commercial solar development.</p> <p>RDF: Important- Do not allow new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek⁴.</p> <p>BMP-General: Avoid new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek⁴.</p>	No specific literature available relative to solar development. Recommended buffer is based on recent literature (Harju et al 2010) that 0.6 or 0.25 mile buffers are not. The 2 mile buffer is consistent with Connelly et al. 2000 regarding energy facilities (page 978).
	Roads	BMP: Core, Important, General: Do not construct new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks ⁴ .	Patricelli et al. 2012 (Recommendations for interim protections in WY) recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat. We apply it here as a lek-centric BMP because we may need to construct a road near a lek (perhaps for fire operations/access or to allow access to private lands or per ROW need). If we buffer roads in the Core or Important Zone via a

			<p>large lek buffer, it may lead to disturbance of a much larger area of nesting habitat in the course of avoiding the lek and buffers. The BMP would at least allow for siting to avoid the lek, and reducing road noise near the lek, without compromising broader landscapes.</p>
	<p>Commercial/ industrial Pipelines (oil, gas, slurry, and similar)</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General. minimize removal of sagebrush within 0.6 miles of leks⁴.</p>	<p>Application of this measure is designed to minimize loss of sagebrush in the vicinity of the lek. The main concern was with loss of sagebrush in vicinity of lek, that is used by GRSG for cover. The 0.6 mile buffer is based on rationale in the Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan as below:</p> <p>BACKGROUND INFORMATION: From Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan Appendix B: [Lek Habitat (March through mid-May) - The basis and rationale for the first radius, 0.6 miles from a lek (Fig. B-1), is developed by summarizing data from 5 separate studies of daytime movements of adult male sage-grouse during the breeding season (Carr 1967, Wallestad and Schladweiler 1974, Rothenmaier 1979, Emmons 1980, Schoenberg 1982), because daytime movements of adult male</p>

			<p>GRSG during the breeding season do not vary greatly. Wallestad and Schladweiler (1974) found daily movements of adult males ranged between 0.2 and 0.8 miles from leks, with a maximum cruising radius of 0.9 - 1.2 miles. Ellis et al. (1987) reported that dispersal flights of male GRSG (to day-use areas) ranged from 0.3 – 0.5 miles, with the longest flights ranging from 1.2 – 1.3 miles. Carr (1967) recorded a cruising radius for male GRSG that ranged from 0.9-1.1 miles. Rothenmaier (1979) found that 60-80% of male GRSG locations were within 0.6 - 0.7 miles of a lek. Emmons (1980) reported that male dispersal distances to day-use areas of 0.1 miles were common and that 67% of all use areas were greater than 0.3 miles from the lek. In addition, Schoenberg (1982) found that male daily movements averaged 0.6 miles, but ranged from 0.02 - 1.5 miles.</p> <p>Male GRSG activity patterns during the breeding season include strutting during the early morning hours, feeding and loafing during the day, and roosting on the lek during the night. Grouse attending the lek do</p>
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			<p>not always roost on the exact location where the strutting occurs the next morning. Occasionally (this is lek-dependent), grouse roost in adjacent sagebrush cover. Ultimately, male GRSG require an open area for strutting, and sagebrush immediately adjacent for feeding and loafing. Sagebrush adjacent to the lek is also used as escape cover from predators or other types of disturbance. Female GRSG that attend the lek also use the area in this zone in the same fashion as do males (Patterson 1952, Barnett and Crawford 1994, Coggins 1998).]</p> <p>Study locations noted above: Carr-Colorado; Wallestad and Schladweiller- Montana; Emmons-Colorado; Schoenberg- Colorado; Rothenmaier –unable to locate Univ. WY Thesis but study area not defined.</p>
	<p>Miscellaneous anthropogenic structures/ activities (e.g., corrals, water windmills, apiaries, signs, informational kiosks, etc.)</p>	<p>BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid human activities or placement of new structures as noted within 2 miles (3.2 km) mi of a lek⁴ or ensure they are out of the viewshed of the lek.</p>	<p>This is a catch all to reduce impact of miscellaneous structures where possible (some are tall⁵, such as water windmill, some are small, but have human activity- such as kiosks) or activities not otherwise addressed in this table. Based on</p>

			<p>biology team discussion and input, and Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines that state, “avoid building powerlines and other tall structures that provide perch sites for raptors within 3 km of seasonal habitats” (page 977). Avoiding “seasonal habitats” entirely by 3 km would preclude any of these activities at all in Core, Important or General, but siting 2 miles + from leks as a BMP would nonetheless help protect leks from disturbance. Adding the “viewshed” caveat can help with siting in cases where topography or such screens view of the activity or structure.</p>
	<p>Campgrounds and other developed recreation facilities (trailheads etc.)</p>	<p>BMP: Core, Important, General. Avoid development of new campgrounds or recreation facilities in nesting habitat.</p>	<p>Biology team discussion. No literature specific to this issue. Aldrich (2012) mentions GRSG avoidance threshold 2.5 km from any single development at patch scale.</p>
	<p>OHV Play or Open Areas</p>	<p>RDF-Core and Important; BMP for General. No new Open or Play areas.</p>	<p>Rationale is to reduce risk for further noise, habitat loss, fire risk in the Core, Important and General zones.</p>
	<p>Solid Minerals</p>		<p>These measures for solid minerals are intended to reduces noise and human disturbance to lekking</p>

			birds. Siting/ avoidance buffers not realistic due to the nature of mineral deposits.
		Locatables-BMP Core, Important, General: Access roads and associated infrastructure not on the mining claim-Avoid disturbance to leks ⁴ during the lekking season.	Regulations 43 CFR 3809.420 performance standards, speak to T/E, and habitat. As a BMP, it provides an opportunity to work with the developer where we can, such as routing access roads etc., siting of facilities/infrastructure etc., that are off the claim, that we have some discretion with.
		Salables- RDF: Core: Do not construct new salable development within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks ⁴ .	<u>Salables</u> - No literature specific to salables but buffer distance is based on the noise literature for roads. See Patricelli et al. 2012 (WY recommendations for interim noise protections) that recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat. Chose RDF for Core and BMP in Important and General habitat since new Salable pits (e.g., gravel) may be necessary to support road maintenance or improvement for access by fire operations or for other locally important factors.

		<p>Leasables-non-energy (e.g., phosphate)-</p> <p>RDF-Core and Important: New phosphate leasing is administratively unavailable.</p> <p>BMP-Core, Important, General- On existing leases avoid disturbance to leks⁴ during the lekking season</p>	<p><u>Leasables:</u></p> <p>None presently known in Core based on current mapping, but Core RDF included in case of a trigger trip and re-delineation of IDswMT subregional management zones.</p> <p>In “Important” there is only one such area with existing lease and Known Phosphate Lease Areas (KPLAs), just west of Bear. It is Federal mineral/private surface. No interest in surface mining but there is interest by a company in underground development. Company is proposing facilities on surface, but working with IDFG locally. Lek within .3 mile.</p> <p>BMP for lek disturbance for all Management Zones in case of trigger trip and IDswMT Management Zone re-delineation and since there are some KPLAs in the General Management Zone. Working with proponent to reduce lek disturbance is realistic and may take on different forms, such as road access, placement of facilities, etc.. However, “exclusion” buffers are not realistic given the nature of the</p>
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			location of solid mineral deposits (i.e., cannot site elsewhere). For these, incorporation of appropriate mitigation, in addition to the lek BMP may need to be a primary focus.
	Wind development (commercial)	<p>RDF: Core-No commercial wind development .</p> <p>BMP: Important and General: Avoid wind development in nesting and/or winter habitat.</p>	<p><u>Wind</u>: Labeau et al. (2014) stated that erecting wind turbines at least 5 km from nesting and brood rearing habitat should reduce negative impacts, at least in the short term. However putting a 5 km (3 mile) buffer around leks in Important habitat, would create a defacto closure for the most part, inconsistent with the intent of the Important designation. Hence BMP to avoid placement in nesting or winter habitat.</p>
	Communication Towers	<p>RDF: Core -Do not allow communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek⁴ unless needed to address public safety needs.</p> <p>BMP- Important and General-- Avoid communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek⁴ unless needed to address public safety needs.</p>	<p>Johnson et al. (2011 pg. 427) noted "Analogously, across all management zones there was a steady downward pattern of trends of lek counts as the number of towers increased, either within 5 km (Fig. 21) or within 18 km (Fig. 22)."</p>
	Transmission Lines	<p>RDF: Core, Important, General: Do not allow transmission line construction within 600 m of a</p>	<p>A 600 m GRSG avoidance zone reported per Gillan et al. (2013). No other spatial buffer supported</p>

		lek. BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid transmission line construction within 2 miles (3.2 km) of a lek.	by literature. While 600 m is a citable buffer, a 2 mile zone as BMP for Transmission is recommended as well. Based on Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines to avoid tall structures in important seasonal habitats.
	Distribution Lines	BMP: Core, Important and General-Avoid distribution line construction within 600 m of a lek or bury where possible	600 m, based on Gillan et al. BMP as this may not always be feasible.
Temporary functional loss of a lek⁴. SEASONAL RESTRICTION			
	Anthropogenic activities that result in noise or visual disturbance that may lead to sustained avoidance of the lek during a particular lekking season.	RDF: Core and Important- No repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season ³ . BMP-General: Avoid repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season ³ .	Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km (~ 1 mile) from grouse leks. . IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to managing disturbance to minimize risk of disturbance.
	Sheep Bedding & Sheep Camps	BMP Core, Important, General: Avoid bedding sheep and placing camps within 0.6 mi of a lek	No literature. BMP based on biology team consensus.

		during the lekking season.	
	Organized Recreational Events	RDF Core and Important-Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season. BMP General- Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season.	Biology team consensus. No specific literature relative to buffers for recreational events but can manage this through avoiding the appropriate season. This threat (organized recreational events) is a short term, typically one-day event, with temporary disruption from noise the main issue.
Permanent functional or physical loss of nesting or winter habitat.			
	Anthropogenic development or activities that result in loss of habitat or constant or repeated noise levels or objects on the landscape that result in permanent avoidance of the habitat.	Ensure > 80% of the landscape is functionally and physically meeting GRSG habitat objectives appropriate to the seasonal habitat ³ .	Impacts resulting from loss of habitat vary depending on the extent of the habitat lost. Minimal loss of habitat (e.g. removal of small amounts of sagebrush cover) would not likely result in any measurable impacts to GRSG individuals or the associated populations. More extensive loss of habitat may result in increased probability of population level impacts, and trigger trips, through the increased probability that leks will no longer persist.
	Roads	BMP: Core, Important, General: Avoid construction of new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.

		within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of nesting habitat.	
	Unleased Fluid Minerals	Stipulation: Core, Important, General: Limit average well pad density to no more than 1/640 acres within nesting ³ and winter ³ habitat.	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Commercial Solar	RDF: Core-No commercial solar development. RDF: Important: Do not allow facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek ⁴ . BMP-Important: Avoid placing new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek ⁴ .	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Campgrounds	BMP-Core, Important, General. Avoid development of new campgrounds or recreation facilities in nesting habitat.	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	OHV Play and Open areas	RDF-Core and Important. No new Open or Play areas. BMP-General: Avoid new Open or Play areas	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.
	Wind Development (commercial)	RDF Core. No commercial wind development .	See citations used for permanent loss of leks, above.

		BMP: Important: Avoid wind development in nesting habitat	
Temporary functional loss of winter habitat			
	Anthropogenic activities that result in noise or visual disturbance that may lead to avoidance of a particular wintering area during a particular wintering season.	RDF: Core, Important- No repeated or sustained disturbance from construction activities in winter habitat during the wintering season. BMP General: Avoid repeated or sustained disturbance from construction activities in winter habitat during the wintering season.	No known buffer. Biology team recommendation.

1
2 ¹ Land use allocations or activities provided below are examples, but are not limited to those listed.

3
4 ² Heavy equipment includes but is not limited to: tractors, discs, drills, mowers, Lawson aerators, large sprayers, masticators, dozers, graders, large
5 trucks, excavators, backhoes cranes.

6
7 ³ As per Habitat Objectives table. Based on local GRSG seasonal use dates. Lekking ~ March 1-May 2⁵ depending on elevation; Nesting /early
8 brood ~April 1-June 30; Winter ~December 1-February 28. Source-Modified from ISAC 2006.

9
10 ⁴ Occupied lek as per IDFG definitions (active during at least one of past 5 years). Undetermined status leks will be evaluated on a case by case at
11 the site specific scale during project-level NEPA.

12
13 ⁵ Definition of “tall structure”: Any structure that has the potential to disrupt lekking or nesting GRSG and/or decrease the use of an area. This
14 includes but is not limited to communication towers, meteorological towers, electrical transmission or distribution towers, etc.

15

Appendix D

Taken From Appendix K in Draft EIS - Update Pending

Draft Greater Sage-Grouse Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessment



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K. GRSG Wildland Fire & Invasive Species Assessment

The following process is a suggestion for a consistent approach in conducting an assessment of the GRSG habitat and wildfire threat at the local planning area level. Variations to this approach may be made based on ID team discussion or unique issues in a given planning area. This example format is intended to portray the degree of specificity required for offices which will complete these assessments. Note that this process has similarities to watershed analysis and ecoregional assessments, and as such these documents may prove useful where they exist.

K.1 Introduction

Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments (hereafter referred to as “stepdown assessments”) are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas/treatment opportunities for fuels management, fire management, and restoration. Priority areas are spatial delineations where treatments, management actions, or other emphasis should be placed due to factors such as habitat quality, threats, or opportunities to protect, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat. The stepdown assessments will serve as a bridge between RMPs and project level planning, and will position planning efforts to conduct project-scale NEPA following RMP Records of Decision.

The stepdown assessment process involves four steps, beginning with characterization of the planning area and concluding with spatial delineation of priority areas. The content and methods used by Forest Service (FS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in these documents should be consistent to ensure that priority areas are defined using similar criteria. These criteria and methods should be narratively described such that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and other audiences can understand the factors considered.

K.2 Step 1: Characterization of Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat

The purpose of this step is to broadly establish context of the planning area and sage-grouse habitat.

K.2.1 Location and Spatial Extent

Describe the location of the planning area, and the relationship of GRSG habitat within the planning area.

K.2.2 Relationship to the Larger Scale Setting

How does the planning area lie within the larger context of GRSG habitat?

K.2.3 Quantifying Habitat within Planning Area

Brief description of GRSG habitat described in terms of acreage, habitat classes (e.g., PPH, PGH, and/or PACs)

Note: A summary map showing the planning area with habitat features is appropriate in Step 1. A tabular summary may also be included.

K.3 Step 2: Issues and Key Management Questions

The purpose of this step is to devise management questions related to the issues of fuels management, fire management, and restoration. Note that this step should not answer each management question. Rather, management questions are answered in Step 4 through specific, quantified data.

K.3.1 Overview

In coordination with state wildlife agencies, the FWS, and your interdisciplinary team, develop an introductory section here which describes why fire or vegetation conditions pose a threat to GRSG in the local planning area. Describe where fire or vegetation conditions are a significant threat to GRSG habitat, and where fire, fuels, and restoration activities may help enhance habitat. In a brief paragraph or two, summarize the relationships between wildland fire, fuels management and invasives/restoration in the planning area. Examples would include annual grass/wildfire cycle, juniper encroachment into GRSG habitat, recently disturbed areas, etc.

K.3.2 Key Management Questions

Issue #1: Fuels Management

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Based on fire risk to important GRSG habitats, what types of fuels treatments should be implemented that will reduce the risk? Where should fuels treatments be prioritized, and what's the amount of treatment acres/miles needed for long-term enhancement and protection of GRSG habitat?
2. Based on opportunities for fire to improve/restore GRSG habitats, what types of fuels treatments should be implemented that will increase ability to allow fire? Where should fuels treatments be prioritized, and what amount of treatment is needed for long-term enhancement and protection of GRSG habitat?
3. What fuel reduction techniques will be most effective; including, but not limited to grazing, prescribed fire, chemical, biological and mechanical treatments?
4. What are the criteria for defining priority fuels management areas (example would be the intersection of high burn probability, PPH, lek locations, and established GRSG population)?
5. Are there opportunities to utilize a coordinated approach across jurisdictional boundaries?
6. Are there areas where fuel treatments help restore GRSG habitat as well as reduce risk?

Issue #2: Fire Management

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Where is the greatest wildfire risk, considering trends in fire occurrence, fuel conditions, and highly valued GRSG habitat?
2. Where will fire suppression resources be most successful to mitigate the risk and protect GRSG Habitats?
3. Where do opportunities exist that could enhance or improve suppression capability in important GRSG habitats?
 - a. For example, increased water availability through installation of heli wells or water storage tanks.
 - b. Decreased response time through pre-positioned resources or staffing remote stations.
4. Where should wildfire be managed to achieve Land Use Plan (LUP) objectives for improving or restoring GRSG habitat (limiting juniper expansion)?
5. What are the criteria for defining priority fire management areas? An example would be the intersection of PPH, lek locations, and high burn probability.
6. How can fire management be coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries to reduce risk or to improve GRSG habitat?

Issue #3: Restoration

In narrative format, develop management questions such as:

1. Are there opportunities for restoration treatments to protect, enhance or maintain GRSG habitat? Assume that funding is not a constraint, and describe which sites are biologically suitable for restoration to GRSG habitat in a reasonable period.
2. Considering the entire planning area, what are the site conditions, such as dominant vegetation, elevation, or precipitation zones, where restoration efforts have been proven to be most successful in the recent past? An example would be mountain sagebrush sites over 5000' in elevation, and in a 16" or greater precipitation zone.
3. What are the criteria for defining priority restoration areas? An example would be recent burns, moderately disturbed sites, or recovering allotment pastures which have not crossed ecological thresholds or become highly degraded. These may or may not be covered by existing ESR plans.
4. Are there opportunities to utilize a coordinated approach across jurisdictional boundaries?

K.4 Step 3: Current Conditions and Trends

The purpose of this step is to develop information relevant to the issues and key questions identified in Step 2. It provides a snapshot of the present condition, statement of causal factors, and a summary of the trends which are occurring.

K.4.1 Biological Summary of Vegetation, Invasive Species, and Fire Regimes

[In this introductory section, provide a general biological summary of the planning area. Provide a narrative description of ecological trends, including description of plant communities, fire regimes, and other dominant biological factors affecting GRSG habitat.]

- Describe how fire has influenced current vegetation patterns. Are there large areas of even-aged communities, fine-scale mosaics, annual grass monocultures?
- Describe if fire regimes are intact, or if they are altered. If they are altered, describe why. Use fire regime variables such as fire frequency, severity, or size to elucidate your points.
- Describe dominant cover types making up the planning area. These can be broad seral stage groupings, general lifeforms, or more fine-scale information such as plant associations, habitat types, or ecological systems. Note: this information should be available in the RMP or FMP.
- What has been the impact of fire exclusion (e.g., increased conifer encroachment, decadent shrub communities, etc)?
- What is the current extent of annual grasses and other invasive species?
- What are the effects of invasive species on land health? On trends in plant succession? On fire regimes?

K.4.2 Fuels Management

- Describe current fuels management practices within the planning area (what are the types of fuels treatments commonly applied to which management issues)?
- How has past fuels management influenced today's planning area (e.g., creation of mosaics, protecting certain features, increasing invasives, etc)?
- What are causal factors which have created a need for fuels management practices?
- What are the trends in the fuels management program related to budget or capability?

K.4.3 Fire Management

- Describe the current fire suppression workload.

- Describe fire occurrence trends (include discussion of fire size, numbers of starts, ignition locations)
- Describe causal factors influencing suppression effectiveness.
- Describe suppression capabilities. Discuss types and numbers of resources within office, through interagency agreements, and through resource sharing

K.4.4 Restoration

- Describe invasive species which are present in the planning area
- Describe landscape conditions which may be suitable for restoration within the planning area, and the results of recent restoration efforts in the planning area
- Describe invasive species occurrence
- Describe causal factors influencing restoration needs.

K.4.5 Methodology

- What are the analysis methods to be utilized and analysis assumptions?

K.4.6 Use of Best Available Science

- Describe data sets used, such as the FSIM layer, local data, etc. [Many data sets being used in RMPs will also be applicable to stepdown assessments].
- What are the elements of science used?

K.5 Step 4: Identification of Treatment Opportunities, Priority Areas, and Actions

The purpose of this step is to utilize the information from steps 2 and 3 in order to quantify the overall need for treatment or other actions. Specifically, this step should spatially identify and quantify priority areas, using the criteria established in Step 2. Next, this step should identify treatment opportunities which fall within priority areas. Furthermore, treatments should be prioritized and an implementation schedule developed, reflecting the reality that not every acre in need of treatment can receive action within the planning horizon.

K.5.1 Fuels Management

- Spatially delineate priority areas for fuels management, based upon criteria established in Step 2. Fuels priority areas should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Linear fuel break along roads
 - Other linear fuel breaks to create anchor points
 - Prescribed burning
 - Mechanical (e.g., conifer removal)
 - Other mechanical, biological, or chemical treatment

- Quantify the number of acres of needed fuels treatments.
- If they exist, spatially delineate areas where fuel treatments would increase the ability to use fire to improve/enhance GRSG habitat?
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Identify coordination needed between renewable resource, fire management, and fuels management staff to facilitate planning and implementation of fuels treatments.
- Quantify a projected level of treatment within fuels management priority areas.
- Identify treatments to be planned within fuels management priority areas.
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for proposed treatments.

K.5.2 Fire Management

- Spatially delineate priority areas for fire suppression, based upon criteria established in Step 2. Priority areas for fire management should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Initial attack priority areas;
 - Resource pre-positioning and movement priority areas;
 - Remote station staffing priority areas, if appropriate
 - Include tables, maps or other supporting information
- Quantify the number of acres of GRSG habitats for aggressive initial attack that were identified at highest risk from losing key habitat components.
- Quantify the number and type of suppression resources that will be staged or otherwise pre-positioned, as well as the associated conditions, in order to enhance initial attack capabilities.
- Spatially delineate areas where opportunities exist to enhance or improve suppression capability.
 - Include tables, maps or other supporting information.
- Spatially delineate areas where wildfire can be managed to achieve RMP objectives.
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Quantify the number of acres within fire management priority areas
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for fire suppression proposed actions.

K.5.3 Restoration

- Spatially delineate priority areas for restoration, using criteria established in Step 2. Priority areas for restoration should be delineated by type, such as:
 - Seeding priority areas (aerial, drill, broadcast, or other);
 - Invasive species priority areas (herbicide, mechanical, biological, combination);
 - Priority areas requiring combinations of treatments (e.g., herbicide followed by seeding).
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Identify locations where post-fire restoration treatments should be focused.
 - Include tables, maps or appropriate info.
- Spatially identify invasive species occurrence
- Identify coordination needed between renewable resource, fire management, and fuels management staff to facilitate planning and implementation of restoration treatments.
- Quantify the projected level of treatment within restoration priority areas.
- Identify treatments to be planned within restoration priority areas.
- Include a priority or implementation schedule for proposed restoration treatments.

K.5.4 Annual Treatment Needs

1. Based on the information above and within the planning area, what are the annual needs based on the key questions and summary statements?

K.5.5 Annual Treatment Abilities

1. Putting GRSG habitat protection and enhancement into perspective with other high valued resources and important land management goals, how does the annual need relate to capabilities?
2. What are the realistic annual expectations in fire management, fuels management, and restoration for the next 5 years?

Appendix B

Fuels Management Required Design Features for Sage-Grouse Conservation

1. Where applicable, design fuels treatment objectives to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems, modify fire behavior, restore native plants, and create landscape patterns which most benefit sage-grouse habitat.
2. Provide training to fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas utilized locally.
3. Use burning prescriptions which minimize undesirable effects on vegetation or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of annual grass invasion).
4. Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.
5. Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.
6. Where applicable, incorporate roads and natural fuel breaks into fuel break design.
7. Power-wash all vehicles and equipment involved in fuels management activities, prior to entering the area, to minimize the introduction of undesirable and/or invasive plant species.
8. Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency which facilitate firefighter safety, reduce the potential acres burned, and reduce the fire risk to sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, develop maps for sage-grouse habitat which spatially display existing fuels treatments that can be used to assist suppression activities.
9. Give priority for implementing specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands, first to sites which are adjacent to or surrounded by preliminary priority habitat (PPH) or that reestablish continuity between priority habitats. Annual grasslands are a second priority for restoration when the sites are not adjacent to PPH, but within two miles of PPH. The third priority for annual grassland habitat restoration projects are sites beyond two miles of PPH. The intent is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.
10. As funding and logistics permit, restore annual grasslands to a species composition characterized by perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs or one of that referenced in land use planning documentation.
11. Emphasize the use of native plant species, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions.

12. Remove standing and encroaching trees within at least 110 yards of occupied sage-grouse leks and other habitats (e.g., nesting, wintering and brood rearing) to reduce the availability of perch sites for avian predators, as resources permit.
13. Protect wildland areas from wildfire originating on private lands, infrastructure corridors, and recreational areas.
14. Reduce the risk of vehicle- or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive species by installing fuel breaks and/or planting perennial vegetation (e.g., green-strips) paralleling road rights-of-way.
15. Strategically place and maintain pre-treated strips/areas (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, etc.) to aid in controlling wildfire, should wildfire occur near PPH or important restoration areas (such as where investments in restoration have already been made).

Appendix C Fire Operations Required Design Features for Sage-Grouse Conservation

1. Compile District/Forest level information into state-wide sage-grouse tool boxes. Tool boxes will contain maps, listing of resource advisors, contact information, local guidance, and other relevant information for each District/Forest, which will be aggregated into a state-wide document.
2. Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics.
3. Assign a resource advisor with sage-grouse expertise, or who has access to sage-grouse expertise, to all extended attack fires in or near sage-grouse habitat. Prior to the fire season, provide training to sage-grouse resource advisors on wildfire suppression organization, objectives, tactics, and procedures to develop a cadre of qualified individuals. Involve state wildlife agency expertise in fire operations through:
 - instructing resource advisors during preseason trainings;
 - qualification as resource advisors;
 - coordination with resource advisors during fire incidents;
 - contributing to incident planning with information such as habitat features or other key data useful in fire decision making
4. On critical fire weather days, pre-position additional fire suppression resources to optimize a quick and efficient response in sage-grouse habitat areas.
5. As appropriate, utilize existing fuel breaks, such as roads or discrete changes in fuel type, as control lines in order to minimize fire spread.
6. During periods of multiple fires, ensure line officers are involved in setting priorities.
7. To the extent possible, locate wildfire suppression facilities (i.e., base camps, spike camps, drop points, staging areas, heli-bases, etc.) in areas where physical disturbance to sage-grouse habitat can be minimized. These include disturbed areas, grasslands, near roads/trails or in other areas where there is existing disturbance or minimal sagebrush cover.
8. Power-wash all firefighting vehicles, to the extent possible, including engines, water tenders, personnel vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) prior to deploying in or near sage-grouse habitat areas to minimize noxious weed spread.
9. Minimize unnecessary cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations in sage-grouse habitat.
10. Minimize burnout operations in key sage-grouse habitat areas by constructing direct fireline whenever safe and practical to do so.

11. Utilize retardant, mechanized equipment, and other available resources to minimize burned acreage during initial attack.
12. As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.
13. Adequately document fire operation activities in sage-grouse habitat for potential follow-up coordination activities.

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THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Forest Service

*Developed by
the Interagency
Greater
Sage-Grouse
Disturbance
and Monitoring
Subteam*

May 30, 2014

The Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework

Developed by the Interagency Greater Sage-Grouse Disturbance and Monitoring Subteam

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INTRODUCTION

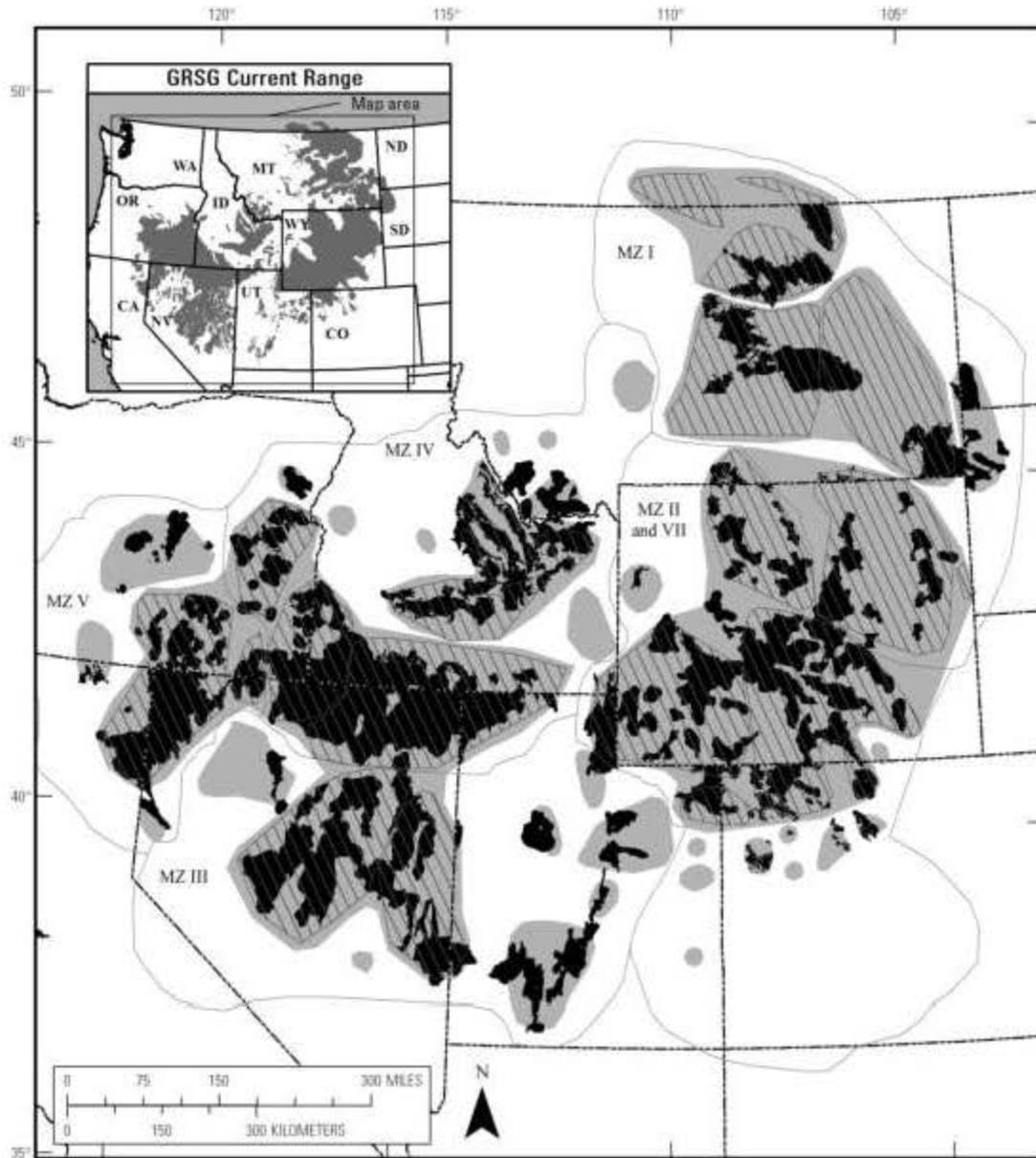
The purpose of this U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework (hereafter, monitoring framework) is to describe the methods to monitor habitats and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the BLM's national planning strategy (attachment to BLM Instruction Memorandum 2012-044), the BLM resource management plans (RMPs), and the USFS's land management plans (LMPs) to conserve the species and its habitat. The regulations for the BLM (43 CFR 1610.4-9) and the USFS (36 CFR part 209, published July 1, 2010) require that land use plans establish intervals and standards, as appropriate, for monitoring and evaluations based on the sensitivity of the resource to the decisions involved. Therefore, the BLM and the USFS will use the methods described herein to collect monitoring data and to evaluate implementation and effectiveness of the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) (hereafter, sage-grouse) planning strategy and the conservation measures contained in their respective land use plans (LUPs). A monitoring plan specific to the Environmental Impact Statement, land use plan, or field office will be developed after the Record of Decision is signed. For a summary of the frequency of reporting, see Attachment A, An Overview of Monitoring Commitments. Adaptive management will be informed by data collected at any and all scales.

To ensure that the BLM and the USFS are able to make consistent assessments about sage-grouse habitats across the range of the species, this framework lays out the methodology—at multiple scales—for monitoring of implementation and disturbance and for evaluating the effectiveness of BLM and USFS actions to conserve the species and its habitat. Monitoring efforts will include data for measurable quantitative indicators of sagebrush availability, anthropogenic disturbance levels, and sagebrush conditions. Implementation monitoring results will allow the BLM and the USFS to evaluate the extent that decisions from their LUPs to conserve sage-grouse and their habitat have been implemented. State fish and wildlife agencies will collect population monitoring information, which will be incorporated into effectiveness monitoring as it is made available.

This multiscale monitoring approach is necessary, as sage-grouse are a landscape species and conservation is scale-dependent to the extent that conservation actions are implemented within seasonal habitats to benefit populations. The four orders of habitat selection (Johnson 1980) used in this monitoring framework are described by Connelly et al. (2003) and were applied specifically to the scales of sage-grouse habitat selection by Stiver et al. (*in press*) as first order (broad scale), second order (mid scale), third order (fine scale), and fourth order (site scale). Habitat selection and habitat use by sage-grouse occur at multiple scales and are driven by multiple environmental and behavioral factors. Managing and monitoring sage-grouse habitats are complicated by the differences in habitat selection across the range and habitat use by individual birds within a given season. Therefore, the tendency to look at a single indicator of habitat suitability or only one scale limits managers' ability to identify the threats to sage-grouse

and to respond at the appropriate scale. For descriptions of these habitat suitability indicators for each scale, see “Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: Multiscale Habitat Assessment Tool” (HAF; Stiver et al. *in press*).

Monitoring methods and indicators in this monitoring framework are derived from the current peer-reviewed science. Rangewide, best available datasets for broad- and mid-scale monitoring will be acquired. If these existing datasets are not readily available or are inadequate, but they are necessary to inform the indicators of sagebrush availability, anthropogenic disturbance levels, and sagebrush conditions, the BLM and the USFS will strive to develop datasets or obtain information to fill these data gaps. Datasets that are not readily available to inform the fine- and site-scale indicators will be developed. These data will be used to generate monitoring reports at the appropriate and applicable geographic scales, boundaries, and analysis units: across the range of sage-grouse as defined by Schroeder et al. (2004), and clipped by Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Management Zone (MZ) (Stiver et al. 2006) boundaries and other areas as appropriate for size (e.g., populations based on Connelly et al. 2004). (See Figure 1, Map of Greater Sage-Grouse range, populations, subpopulations, and Priority Areas for Conservation as of 2013.) This broad- and mid-scale monitoring data and analysis will provide context for RMP/LMP areas; states; GRSG Priority Habitat, General Habitat, and other sage-grouse designated management areas; and Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs), as defined in “Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) Conservation Objectives: Final Report” (Conservation Objectives Team [COT] 2013). Hereafter, all of these areas will be referred to as “sage-grouse areas.”



**GRSG PACs, Subpopulations and Populations
LEGEND**

-  Subpopulations
-  COT PACs
-  Populations

Sources:
 Current Range: Schroeder et al., 2004
 Populations: Connelly et al., 2004
 Subpopulations: Connelly et al., 2004
 PACs: USFWS COT Report, 2013

Figure 1. Map of Greater Sage-Grouse range, populations, subpopulations, and Priority Areas for Conservation as of 2013.

This monitoring framework is divided into two sections. The broad- and mid-scale methods, described in Section I, provide a consistent approach across the range of the species to monitor implementation decisions and actions, mid-scale habitat attributes (e.g., sagebrush availability and habitat degradation), and population changes to determine the effectiveness of the planning strategy and management decisions. (See Table 1, Indicators for monitoring implementation of the national planning strategy, RMP/LMP decisions, sage-grouse habitat, and sage-grouse populations at the broad and mid scales.) For sage-grouse habitat at the fine and site scales, described in Section II, this monitoring framework describes a consistent approach (e.g., indicators and methods) for monitoring sage-grouse seasonal habitats. Funding, support, and dedicated personnel for broad- and mid-scale monitoring will be renewed annually through the normal budget process. For an overview of BLM and USFS multiscale monitoring commitments, see Attachment A.

Table 1. Indicators for monitoring implementation of the national planning strategy, RMP/LMP decisions, sage-grouse habitat, and sage-grouse populations at the broad and mid scales.

Implementation		Habitat		Population (State Wildlife Agencies)
<i>Geographic Scales</i>		Availability	Degradation	Demographics
Broad Scale: From the range of sage-grouse to WAFWA Management Zones	BLM/USFS National planning strategy goal and objectives	Distribution and amount of sagebrush within the range	Distribution and amount of energy, mining, and infrastructure facilities	WAFWA Management Zone population trend
Mid Scale: From WAFWA Management Zone to populations; PACs	RMP/LMP decisions	Mid-scale habitat indicators (HAF; Table 2 herein, e.g., percent of sagebrush per unit area)	Distribution and amount of energy, mining, and infrastructure facilities (Table 2 herein)	Individual population trend

I. BROAD AND MID SCALES

First-order habitat selection, the broad scale, describes the physical or geographical range of a species. The first-order habitat of the sage-grouse is defined by populations of sage-grouse associated with sagebrush landscapes, based on Schroeder et al. 2004, and Connelly et al. 2004, and on population or habitat surveys since 2004. An intermediate scale between the broad and mid scales was delineated by WAFWA from floristic provinces within which similar environmental factors influence vegetation communities. This scale is referred to as the WAFWA Sage-Grouse Management Zones (MZs). Although no indicators are specific to this scale, these MZs are biologically meaningful as reporting units.

Second-order habitat selection, the mid-scale, includes sage-grouse populations and PACs. The second order includes at least 40 discrete populations and subpopulations (Connelly et al. 2004). Populations range in area from 150 to 60,000 mi² and are nested within MZs. PACs range from 20 to 20,400 mi² and are nested within population areas.

Other mid-scale landscape indicators, such as patch size and number, patch connectivity, linkage areas, and landscape matrix and edge effects (Stiver et al. *in press*) will also be assessed. The methods used to calculate these metrics will be derived from existing literature (Knick et al. 2011, Leu and Hanser 2011, Knick and Hanser 2011).

A. Implementation (Decision) Monitoring

Implementation monitoring is the process of tracking and documenting the implementation (or the progress toward implementation) of RMP/LMP decisions. The BLM and the USFS will monitor implementation of project-level and/or site-specific actions and authorizations, with their associated conditions of approval/stipulations for sage-grouse, spatially (as appropriate) within Priority Habitat, General Habitat, and other sage-grouse designated management areas, at a minimum, for the planning area. These actions and authorizations, as well as progress toward completing and implementing activity-level plans, will be monitored consistently across all planning units and will be reported to BLM and USFS headquarters annually, with a summary report every 5 years, for the planning area. A national-level GRSG Land Use Plan Decision Monitoring and Reporting Tool is being developed to describe how the BLM and the USFS will consistently and systematically monitor and report implementation-level activity plans and implementation actions for all plans within the range of sage-grouse. A description of this tool for collection and reporting of tabular and spatially explicit data will be included in the Record of Decision or approved plan. The BLM and the USFS will provide data that can be integrated with other conservation efforts conducted by state and federal partners.

B. Habitat Monitoring

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), in its 2010 listing decision for the sage-grouse, identified 18 threats contributing to the destruction, modification, or curtailment of sage-grouse habitat or range (75 FR 13910 2010). The BLM and the USFS will, therefore, monitor the relative extent of these threats that remove sagebrush, both spatially and temporally, on all lands within an analysis area, and will report on amount, pattern, and condition at the appropriate and applicable geographic scales and boundaries. These 18 threats have been aggregated into three broad- and mid-scale measures to account for whether the threat predominantly removes sagebrush or degrades habitat. (See Table 2, Relationship between the 18 threats and the three habitat disturbance measures for monitoring.) The three measures are:

Measure 1: Sagebrush Availability (percent of sagebrush per unit area)

Measure 2: Habitat Degradation (percent of human activity per unit area)

Measure 3: Energy and Mining Density (facilities and locations per unit area)

These three habitat disturbance measures will evaluate disturbance on all lands, regardless of land ownership. The direct area of influence will be assessed with the goal of accounting for actual removal of sagebrush on which sage-grouse depend (Connelly et al. 2000) and for habitat degradation as a surrogate for human activity. Measure 1 (sagebrush availability) examines where disturbances have removed plant communities that support sagebrush (or have broadly removed sagebrush from the landscape). Measure 1, therefore, monitors the change in sagebrush availability—or, specifically, where and how much of the sagebrush community is available within the range of sage-grouse. The sagebrush community is defined as the ecological systems that have the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation and seasonal sage-grouse habitats within the range of sage-grouse (see Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability). Measure 2 (see Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring) and Measure 3 (see Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density) focus on where habitat degradation is occurring by using the footprint/area of direct disturbance and the number of facilities at the mid scale to identify the relative amount of degradation per geographic area of interest and in areas that have the capability of supporting sagebrush and seasonal sage-grouse use. Measure 2 (habitat degradation) not only quantifies footprint/area of direct disturbance but also establishes a surrogate for those threats most likely to have ongoing activity. Because energy development and mining activities are typically the most intensive activities in sagebrush habitat, Measure 3 (the density of active energy development, production, and mining sites) will help identify areas of particular concern for such factors as noise, dust, traffic, etc. that degrade sage-grouse habitat.

Table 2. Relationship between the 18 threats and the three habitat disturbance measures for monitoring.

Note: Data availability may preclude specific analysis of individual layers. See the detailed methodology for more information.

USFWS Listing Decision Threat	Sagebrush Availability	Habitat Degradation	Energy and Mining Density
Agriculture	X		
Urbanization	X		
Wildfire	X		
Conifer encroachment	X		
Treatments	X		
Invasive Species	X		
Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)		X	X
Energy (coal mines)		X	X
Energy (wind towers)		X	X
Energy (solar fields)		X	X
Energy (geothermal)		X	X
Mining (active locatable, leasable, and saleable developments)		X	X
Infrastructure (roads)		X	
Infrastructure (railroads)		X	
Infrastructure (power lines)		X	
Infrastructure (communication towers)		X	
Infrastructure (other vertical structures)		X	
Other developed rights-of-way		X	

The methods to monitor disturbance found herein differ slightly from methods used in Manier et al. 2013, which provided a baseline environmental report (BER) of datasets of disturbance across jurisdictions. One difference is that, for some threats, the BER data were for federal lands only. In addition, threats were assessed individually, using different assumptions from those in this monitoring framework about how to quantify the location and magnitude of threats. The methodology herein builds on the BER methodology and identifies datasets and procedures to use the best available data across the range of the sage-grouse and to formulate a consistent approach to quantify impact of the threats through time. This methodology also describes an approach to combine the threats and calculate each of the three habitat disturbance measures.

B.1. Sagebrush Availability (Measure 1)

Sage-grouse populations have been found to be more resilient where a percentage of the landscape is maintained in sagebrush (Knick and Connelly 2011), which will be determined by sagebrush availability. Measure 1 has been divided into two submeasures to describe sagebrush availability on the landscape:

Measure 1a: the current amount of sagebrush on the geographic area of interest, and

Measure 1b: the amount of sagebrush on the geographic area of interest compared with the amount of sagebrush the landscape of interest could ecologically support.

Measure 1a (the current amount of sagebrush on the landscape) will be calculated using this formula: [the existing updated sagebrush layer] divided by [the geographic area of interest]. The appropriate geographic areas of interest for sagebrush availability include the species' range, WAFWA MZs, populations, and PACs. In some cases these sage-grouse areas will need to be aggregated to provide an estimate of sagebrush availability with an acceptable level of accuracy.

Measure 1b (the amount of sagebrush for context within the geographic area of interest) will be calculated using this formula: [existing sagebrush divided by [pre-EuroAmerican settlement geographic extent of lands that could have supported sagebrush]. This measure will provide information to set the context for a given geographic area of interest during evaluations of monitoring data. The information could also be used to inform management options for restoration or mitigation and to inform effectiveness monitoring.

The sagebrush base layer for Measure 1 will be based on geospatial vegetation data adjusted for the threats listed in Table 2. The following subsections of this monitoring framework describe the methodology for determining both the current availability of sagebrush on the landscape and the context of the amount of sagebrush on the landscape at the broad and mid scales.

a. Establishing the Sagebrush Base Layer

The current geographic extent of sagebrush vegetation within the rangewide distribution of sagegrouse populations will be ascertained using the most recent version of the Existing Vegetation Type (EVT) layer in LANDFIRE (2013). LANDFIRE EVT was selected to serve as the sagebrush base layer for five reasons: 1) it is the only nationally consistent vegetation layer that has been updated multiple times since 2001; 2) the ecological systems classification within LANDFIRE EVT includes multiple sagebrush type classes that, when aggregated, provide a more accurate (compared with individual classes) and seamless sagebrush base layer across jurisdictional boundaries; 3) LANDFIRE performed a rigorous accuracy assessment from which to derive the rangewide uncertainty of the sagebrush base layer; 4) LANDFIRE is consistently used in several recent analyses of sagebrush habitats (Knick et al. 2011, Leu and Hanser 2011, Knick and Hanser 2011); and 5) LANDFIRE EVT can be compared against the geographic extent of lands that are believed to have had the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation pre-EuroAmerican settlement [LANDFIRE Biophysical Setting (BpS)]. This fifth reason provides a reference point for understanding how much sagebrush currently remains in a defined geographic area of interest compared with how much sagebrush existed historically (Measure 1b). Therefore, the BLM and the USFS have determined that LANDFIRE provides the best available data at broad and mid scales to serve as a sagebrush base layer for monitoring changes in the geographic extent of sagebrush. The BLM and the USFS, in addition to aggregating the sagebrush types into the sagebrush base layer, will aggregate the accuracy assessment reports from LANDFIRE to document the cumulative accuracy for the sagebrush base layer. The BLM—through its Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) program and, specifically, the BLM’s landscape monitoring framework (Taylor et al. 2014)—will provide field data to the LANDFIRE program to support continuous quality improvements of the LANDFIRE EVT layer. The sagebrush layer based on LANDFIRE EVT will allow for the mid-scale estimation of the existing percent of sagebrush across a variety of reporting units. This sagebrush base layer will be adjusted by changes in land cover and successful restoration for future calculations of sagebrush availability (Measures 1a and 1b).

This layer will also be used to determine the trend in other landscape indicators, such as patch size and number, patch connectivity, linkage areas, and landscape matrix and edge effects (Stiver et al. *in press*). In the future, changes in sagebrush availability, generated annually, will be included in the sagebrush base layer. The landscape metrics will be recalculated to examine changes in pattern and abundance of sagebrush at the various geographic boundaries. This information will be included in effectiveness monitoring (See Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring).

Within the USFS and the BLM, forest-wide and field office–wide existing vegetation classification mapping and inventories are available that provide a much finer level of data than what is provided through LANDFIRE. Where available, these finer-scale products will be useful for additional and complementary mid-scale indicators and local-scale analyses (see Section II,

Fine and Site Scales). The fact that these products are not available everywhere limits their utility for monitoring at the broad and mid scale, where consistency of data products is necessary across broader geographies.

Data Sources for Establishing and Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

There were three criteria for selecting the datasets for establishing and monitoring the change in sagebrush availability (Measure 1):

- Nationally consistent dataset available across the range
- Known level of confidence or accuracy in the dataset
- Continual maintenance of dataset and known update interval

Datasets meeting these criteria are listed in Table 3, Datasets for establishing and monitoring changes in sagebrush availability.

LANDFIRE Existing Vegetation Type (EVT) Version 1.2

LANDFIRE EVT represents existing vegetation types on the landscape derived from remote sensing data. Initial mapping was conducted using imagery collected in approximately 2001. Since the initial mapping there have been two update efforts: version 1.1 represents changes before 2008, and version 1.2 reflects changes on the landscape before 2010. Version 1.2 will be used as the starting point to develop the sagebrush base layer.

Sage-grouse subject matter experts determined which of the ecological systems from the LANDFIRE EVT to use in the sagebrush base layer by identifying the ecological systems that have the capability of supporting sagebrush vegetation and that could provide suitable seasonal habitat for the sage-grouse. (See Table 4, Ecological systems in BpS and EVT capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and capable of providing suitable seasonal habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse.) Two additional vegetation types that are not ecological systems were added to the EVT: *Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana* Shrubland Alliance and *Quercus gambelii* Shrubland Alliance. These alliances have species composition directly related to the Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland ecological system and the Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland ecological system, both of which are ecological systems in LANDFIRE BpS. In LANDFIRE EVT, however, in some map zones, the Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland ecological system and the Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland ecological system were named *Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana* Shrubland Alliance and *Quercus gambelii* Shrubland Alliance, respectively.

Table 3. Datasets for establishing and monitoring changes in sagebrush availability.

Dataset	Source	Update Interval	Most Recent Version Year	Use
BioPhysical Setting v1.1	LANDFIRE	Static	2008	Denominator for sagebrush availability
Existing Vegetation Type v1.2	LANDFIRE	Static	2010	Numerator for sagebrush availability
Cropland Data Layer	National Agricultural Statistics Service	Annual	2012	Agricultural updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
National Land Cover Dataset Percent Imperviousness	Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC)	5-Year	2011 (next available in 2016)	Urban area updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
Fire Perimeters	GeoMac	Annual	2013	< 1,000-acre fire updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability
Burn Severity	Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity	Annual	2012 (2-year delay in data availability)	> 1,000-acre fire updates; removes existing sagebrush from numerator of sagebrush availability except for unburned sagebrush islands

Table 4. Ecological systems in BpS and EVT capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and capable of providing suitable seasonal habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse.

Ecological System	Sagebrush Vegetation that the Ecological System has the Capability of Producing
Colorado Plateau Mixed Low Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Columbia Plateau Low Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i>

Columbia Plateau Scabland Shrubland	<i>Artemisia rigida</i>
Columbia Plateau Steppe and Grassland	<i>Artemisia</i> spp.
Great Basin Xeric Mixed Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longicaulis</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>xericensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>xericensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tripartita</i> ssp. <i>tripartita</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Curl-Leaf Mountain Mahogany Woodland and Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Mixed Salt Desert Scrub	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia spinescens</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Montane Sagebrush Steppe	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>spiciformis</i>
Inter-Mountain Basins Semi-Desert Shrub-Steppe	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Northwestern Great Plains Mixed Grass Prairie	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Northwestern Great Plains Shrubland	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>
Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Rocky Mountain Lower Montane-Foothill Shrubland	<i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>
Western Great Plains Floodplain Systems	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i>
Western Great Plains Sand Prairie	<i>Artemisia cana</i> ssp. <i>cana</i>
Wyoming Basins Dwarf Sagebrush Shrubland and Steppe	<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> ssp. <i>longiloba</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tripartita</i> ssp. <i>rupicola</i>
<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> Shrubland Alliance (EVT only)	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
<i>Quercus gambelii</i> Shrubland Alliance (EVT only)	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>

Accuracy and Appropriate Use of LANDFIRE Datasets

Because of concerns over the thematic accuracy of individual classes mapped by LANDFIRE, all ecological systems listed in Table 4 will be merged into one value that represents the sagebrush base layer. With all ecological systems aggregated, the combined accuracy of the sagebrush base layer (EVT) will be much greater than if all categories were treated separately.

LANDFIRE performed the original accuracy assessment of its EVT product on a map zone basis. There are 20 LANDFIRE map zones that cover the historical range of sage-grouse as defined by Schroeder (2004). (See Attachment B, User and Producer Accuracies for Aggregated Ecological Systems within LANDFIRE Map Zones.) The aggregated sagebrush base layer for monitoring had user accuracies ranging from 57.1% to 85.7% and producer accuracies ranging from 56.7% to 100%.

LANDFIRE EVT data are not designed to be used at a local level. In reports of the percent sagebrush statistic for the various reporting units (Measure 1a), the uncertainty of the percent sagebrush will increase as the size of the reporting unit gets smaller. LANDFIRE data should never be used at the 30m pixel level (900m² resolution of raster data) for any reporting. The smallest geographic extent for using the data to determine percent sagebrush is at the PAC level; for the smallest PACs, the initial percent sagebrush estimate will have greater uncertainties compared with the much larger PACs.

Agricultural Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

The dataset for the geographic extent of agricultural lands will come from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Cropland Data Layer (CDL) (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/Release/index.htm>). CDL data are generated annually, with estimated producer accuracies for “large area row crops ranging from the mid 80% to mid-90%,” depending on the state (http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/sarsfaqs2.htm#Section3_18.0). Specific information on accuracy may be found on the NASS metadata website (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/research/Cropland/metadata/meta.htm>). CDL provided the only dataset that matches the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated) for use in this monitoring framework and represents the best available agricultural lands mapping product.

The CDL data contain both agricultural classes and nonagricultural classes. For this effort, and in the baseline environmental report (Manier et al. 2013), nonagricultural classes were removed from the original dataset. The excluded classes are:

Barren (65 & 131), Deciduous Forest (141), Developed/High Intensity (124), Developed/Low Intensity (122), Developed/Med Intensity (123), Developed/Open Space (121), Evergreen Forest (142), Grassland Herbaceous (171), Herbaceous Wetlands (195), Mixed Forest (143), Open

Water (83 & 111), Other Hay/Non Alfalfa (37), Pasture/Hay (181), Pasture/Grass (62), Perennial Ice/Snow (112), Shrubland (64 & 152), Woody Wetlands (190).

The rule set for adjusting the sagebrush base layer for agricultural lands (and for updating the base layer for agricultural lands in the future) is that once an area is classified as agriculture in any year of the CDL, those pixels will remain out of the sagebrush base layer even if a new version of the CDL classifies that pixel as one of the nonagricultural classes listed above. The assumption is that even though individual pixels may be classified as a nonagricultural class in any given year, the pixel has not necessarily been restored to a natural sagebrush community that would be included in Table 4. A further assumption is that once an area has moved into agricultural use, it is unlikely that the area would be restored to sagebrush. Should that occur, however, the method and criteria for adding pixels back into the sagebrush base layer would follow those found in the sagebrush restoration monitoring section of this monitoring framework (see Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability).

Urban Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

The National Land Cover Database (NLCD) (Fry et al. 2011) includes a percent imperviousness dataset that was selected as the best available dataset to be used for urban adjustments and monitoring. These data are generated on a 5-year cycle and are specifically designed to support monitoring efforts. Other datasets were evaluated and lacked the spatial specificity that was captured in the NLCD product. Any new impervious pixel in NLCD will be removed from the sagebrush base layer through the monitoring process. Although the impervious surface layer includes a number of impervious pixels outside of urban areas, this is acceptable for the adjustment and monitoring for two reasons. First, an evaluation of national urban area datasets did not reveal a layer that could be confidently used in conjunction with the NLCD product to screen impervious pixels outside of urban zones. This is because unincorporated urban areas were not being included, thus leaving large chunks of urban pixels unaccounted for in this rule set. Second, experimentation with setting a threshold on the percent imperviousness layer that would isolate rural features proved to be unsuccessful. No combination of values could be identified that would result in the consistent ability to limit impervious pixels outside urban areas. Therefore, to ensure consistency in the monitoring estimates, all impervious pixels will be used.

Fire Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

Two datasets were selected for performing fire adjustments and updates: GeoMac fire perimeters and Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity (MTBS). An existing data standard in the BLM requires that all fires of more than 10 acres are to be reported to GeoMac; therefore, there will be many small fires of less than 10 acres that will not be accounted for in the adjustment and monitoring attributable to fire. Using fire perimeters from GeoMac, all sagebrush pixels falling

within the perimeter of fires less than 1,000 acres will be used to adjust and monitor the sagebrush base layer.

For fires greater than 1,000 acres, MTBS was selected as a means to account for unburned sagebrush islands during the update process of the sagebrush base layer. The MTBS program (<http://www.mtbs.gov>) is an ongoing, multiyear project to map fire severity and fire perimeters consistently across the United States. One of the burn severity classes within MTBS is an unburned to low-severity class. This burn severity class will be used to represent unburned islands of sagebrush within the fire perimeter for the sagebrush base layer. Areas within the other severity classes within the fire perimeter will be removed from the base sagebrush layer during the update process. Not all wildfires, however, have the same impacts on the recovery of sagebrush habitat, depending largely on soil moisture and temperature regimes. For example, cooler, moister sagebrush habitat has a higher potential for recovery or, if needed, restoration than does the warmer, dryer sagebrush habitat. These cooler, moister areas will likely be detected as sagebrush in future updates to LANDFIRE.

Conifer Encroachment Adjustment for the Sagebrush Base Layer

Conifer encroachment into sagebrush vegetation reduces the spatial extent of sage-grouse habitat (Davies et al. 2011, Baruch-Mordo et al. 2013). Conifer species that show propensity for encroaching into sagebrush vegetation resulting in sage-grouse habitat loss include various juniper species, such as Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*), western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), pinyon species, including singleleaf pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) and pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) (Gruell et al. 1986, Grove et al. 2005, Davies et al. 2011).

A rule set for conifer encroachment was developed to adjust the sagebrush base layer. To capture the geographic extent of sagebrush that is likely to experience conifer encroachment, ecological systems within LANDFIRE EVT version 1.2 (NatureServe 2011) were identified if they had the capability of supporting both the conifer species (listed above) and sagebrush vegetation. Those ecological systems were deemed to be the plant communities with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation. (See Table 5, Ecological systems with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation.) Sagebrush vegetation was defined as including sagebrush species or subspecies that provide habitat for the Greater Sage-Grouse and that are included in the HAF. (See Attachment C, Sagebrush Species and Subspecies Included in the Selection Criteria for Building the EVT and BpS Layers.) An adjacency analysis was conducted to identify all sagebrush pixels that were directly adjacent to these conifer ecological systems, and these pixels were removed from the sagebrush base layer.

Table 5. Ecological systems with conifers most likely to encroach into sagebrush vegetation.

EVT Ecological Systems	Coniferous Species and Sagebrush Vegetation that the Ecological System has the Capability of Producing
Colorado Plateau Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia pygmaea</i>
Columbia Plateau Western Juniper Woodland and Savanna	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> <i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia rigida</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
East Cascades Oak-Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodland	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i>
Great Basin Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus monophylla</i> <i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Northern Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland and Savanna	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Rocky Mountain Foothill Limber Pine-Juniper Woodland	<i>Juniperus osteosperma</i> <i>Juniperus scopulorum</i> <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Rocky Mountain Poor-Site Lodgepole Pine Forest	<i>Pinus contorta</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> <i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>
Southern Rocky Mountain Pinyon-Juniper Woodland	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Juniperus monosperma</i> <i>Artemisia bigelovii</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
Southern Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>

	<i>Pinus edulis</i> <i>Pinus contorta</i> <i>Juniperus</i> spp. <i>Artemisia nova</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> <i>Artemisia arbuscula</i> <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>vaseyana</i>
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Invasive Annual Grasses Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

There are no invasive species datasets from 2010 to the present (beyond the LANDFIRE data) that meet the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated) for use in the determination of the sagebrush base layer. For a description of how invasive species land cover will be incorporated in the sagebrush base layer in the future, see Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability.

Sagebrush Restoration Adjustments for the Sagebrush Base Layer

There are no datasets from 2010 to the present that could provide additions to the sagebrush base layer from restoration treatments that meet the three criteria (nationally consistent, known level of accuracy, and periodically updated); therefore, no adjustments were made to the sagebrush base layer calculated from the LANDFIRE EVT (version 1.2) attributable to restoration activities since 2010. Successful restoration treatments before 2010 are assumed to have been captured in the LANDFIRE refresh.

b. Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

Monitoring Sagebrush Availability

Sagebrush availability will be updated annually by incorporating changes to the sagebrush base layer attributable to agriculture, urbanization, and wildfire. The monitoring schedule for the existing sagebrush base layer updates is as follows:

2010 Existing Sagebrush Base Layer = [Sagebrush EVT] minus [2006 Imperviousness Layer] minus [2009 and 2010 CDL] minus [2009/10 GeoMac Fires that are less than 1,000 acres] minus [2009/10 MTBS Fires that are greater than 1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter] minus [Conifer Encroachment Layer]

2012 Existing Sagebrush Update = [2010 Existing Sagebrush Base Layer] minus [2011 Imperviousness Layer] minus [2011 and 2012 CDL] minus [2011/12 GeoMac Fires < 1,000 acres] minus [2011/12 MTBS Fires that are greater than 1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter]

Monitoring Existing Sagebrush post 2012 = [Previous Existing Sagebrush Update Layer] minus [Imperviousness Layer (if new data are available)] minus [Next 2 years of CDL] minus [Next 2 years of GeoMac Fires < 1,000 acres] minus [Next 2 years of MTBS Fires that are greater than

1,000 acres, excluding unburned sagebrush islands within the perimeter] plus
[restoration/monitoring data provided by the field]

Monitoring Sagebrush Restoration

Restoration after fire, after agricultural conversion, after seedings of introduced grasses, or after treatments of pinyon pine and/or juniper are examples of updates to the sagebrush base layer that can add sagebrush vegetation back into sagebrush availability in the landscape. When restoration has been determined to be successful through rangewide, consistent, interagency fine- and site-scale monitoring, the polygonal data will be used to add sagebrush pixels back into the broad- and mid-scale sagebrush base layer.

Measure 1b: Context for Monitoring the Amount of Sagebrush in a Geographic Area of Interest

Measure 1b describes the amount of sagebrush on the landscape of interest compared with the amount of sagebrush the landscape of interest could ecologically support. Areas with the potential to support sagebrush were derived from the BpS data layer that describes sagebrush pre-EuroAmerican settlement (v1.2 of LANDFIRE).

The identification and spatial locations of natural plant communities (vegetation) that are believed to have existed on the landscape (BpS) were constructed based on an approximation of the historical (pre-EuroAmerican settlement) disturbance regime and how the historical disturbance regime operated on the current biophysical environment. BpS is composed of map units that are based on NatureServe (2011) terrestrial ecological systems classification.

The ecological systems within BpS used for this monitoring framework are those ecological systems that are capable of supporting sagebrush vegetation and of providing seasonal habitat for sage-grouse (Table 4). Ecological systems selected included sagebrush species or subspecies that are included in the HAF and listed in Attachment C.

The BpS layer does not have an associated accuracy assessment, given the lack of any reference data. Visual inspection of the BpS data, however, reveals inconsistencies in the labeling of pixels among LANDFIRE map zones. The reason for these inconsistencies is that the rule sets used to map a given ecological system will vary among map zones based on different physical, biological, disturbance, and atmospheric regimes of the region. These variances can result in artificial edges in the map. Metrics will be calculated, however, at broad spatial scales using BpS potential vegetation type, not small groupings or individual pixels. Therefore, the magnitude of these observable errors in the BpS layer will be minor compared with the size of the reporting units. Since BpS will be used to identify broad landscape patterns of dominant vegetation, these inconsistencies will have only a minor impact on the percent sagebrush availability calculation. *As with the LANDFIRE EVT, LANDFIRE BpS data are not designed to be used at a local level. LANDFIRE data should never be used at the 30m pixel level for reporting.*

In conclusion, sagebrush availability data will be used to inform effectiveness monitoring and initiate adaptive management actions as necessary. The 2010 estimate of sagebrush availability will serve as the base year, and an updated estimate for 2012 will be reported in 2014 after all datasets become available. The 2012 estimate will capture changes attributable to wildfire, agriculture, and urban development. Subsequent updates will always include new fire and agricultural data and new urban data when available. Restoration data that meet the criteria for adding sagebrush areas back into the sagebrush base layer will be factored in as data allow. Given data availability, there will be a 2-year lag (approximately) between when the estimate is generated and when the data used for the estimate become available (e.g., the 2014 sagebrush availability will be included in the 2016 estimate).

Future Plans

Geospatial data used to generate the sagebrush base layer will be available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and geospatial gateway or through the authoritative data source. Legacy datasets will be preserved so that trends may be calculated. Additionally, accuracy assessment data for all source datasets will be provided on the portal either spatially, where applicable, or through the metadata. Accuracy assessment information was deemed vital to help users understand the limitation of the sagebrush estimates; it will be summarized spatially by map zone and will be included in the portal.

LANDFIRE plans to begin a remapping effort in 2015. This remapping has the potential to improve the overall quality of data products greatly, primarily through the use of higher-quality remote sensing datasets. Additionally, the BLM and the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC) are working to improve the accuracy of vegetation map products for broad- and mid-scale analyses through the Grass/Shrub mapping effort. The Grass/Shrub mapping effort applies the Wyoming multiscale sagebrush habitat methodology (Homer et al. 2009) to depict spatially the fractional percent cover estimates for five components rangewide and West-wide. These five components are percent cover of sagebrush vegetation, percent bare ground, percent herbaceous vegetation (grass and forbs combined), annual vegetation, and percent shrubs. A benefit of the design of these fractional cover maps is that they facilitate monitoring "within" class variation (e.g., examination of declining trend in sagebrush cover for individual pixels). This "within" class variation can serve as one indicator of sagebrush quality that cannot be derived from LANDFIRE's EVT information. The Grass/Shrub mapping effort is not a substitute for fine-scale monitoring but will leverage fine-scale data to support the validation of the mapping products. An evaluation will be conducted to determine if either dataset is of great enough quality to warrant replacing the existing sagebrush layers. At the earliest, this evaluation will occur in 2018 or 2019, depending on data availability.

B.2. Habitat Degradation Monitoring (Measure 2)

The measure of habitat degradation will be calculated by combining the footprints of threats identified in Table 2. The footprint is defined as the direct area of influence of “active” energy and infrastructure; it is used as a surrogate for human activity. Although these analyses will try to summarize results at the aforementioned meaningful geographic areas of interest, some may be too small to report the metrics appropriately and may be combined (smaller populations, PACs within a population, etc.). Data sources for each threat are found in Table 6, Geospatial data sources for habitat degradation. Specific assumptions (inclusion criteria for data, width/area assumptions for point and line features, etc.) and methodology for each threat, and the combined measure, are detailed below. All datasets will be updated annually to monitor broad- and mid-scale year-to-year changes and to calculate trends in habitat degradation to inform adaptive management. A 5-year summary report will be provided to the USFWS.

a. Habitat Degradation Datasets and Assumptions

Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)

This dataset will compile information from three oil and gas databases: the proprietary IHS Enerdeq database, the BLM Automated Fluid Minerals Support System (AFMSS) database, and the proprietary Platts (a McGraw-Hill Financial Company) GIS Custom Data (hereafter, Platts) database of power plants. Point data from wells active within the last 10 years from IHS and producing wells from AFMSS will be considered as a 5-acre (2.0ha) direct area of influence centered on the well point, as recommended by the BLM WO-300 (Minerals and Realty Management). Plugged and abandoned wells will be removed if the date of well abandonment was before the first day of the reporting year (i.e., for the 2015 reporting year, a well must have been plugged and abandoned by 12/31/2014 to be removed). Platts oil and gas power plants data (subset to operational power plants) will also be included as a 5-acre (2.0ha) direct area of influence.

Additional Measure: Reclaimed Energy-related Degradation. This dataset will include those wells that have been plugged and abandoned. This measure thereby attempts to measure energy-related degradation that has been reclaimed but not necessarily fully restored to sage-grouse habitat. This measure will establish a baseline by using wells that have been plugged and abandoned within the last 10 years from the IHS and AFMSS datasets. Time lags for lek attendance in response to infrastructure have been documented to be delayed 2–10 years from energy development activities (Harju et al. 2010). Reclamation actions may require 2 or more years from the Final Abandonment Notice. Sagebrush seedling establishment may take 6 or more years from the point of seeding, depending on such variables as annual precipitation, annual temperature, and soil type and depth (Pyke 2011). This 10-year period is conservative and assumes some level of habitat improvement 10 years after plugging. Research by Hemstrom et al. (2002), however,

proposes an even longer period—more than 100 years—for recovery of sagebrush habitats, even with active restoration approaches. Direct area of influence will be considered 3 acres (1.2ha) (J. Perry, personal communication, February 12, 2014). This additional layer/measure could be used at the broad and mid scale to identify areas where sagebrush habitat and/or potential sagebrush habitat is likely still degraded. This layer/measure could also be used where further investigation at the fine or site scale would be warranted to: 1) quantify the level of reclamation already conducted, and 2) evaluate the amount of restoration still required for sagebrush habitat recovery. At a particular level (e.g., population, PACs), these areas and the reclamation efforts/success could be used to inform reclamation standards associated with future developments. Once these areas have transitioned from reclamation standards to meeting *restoration* standards, they can be added back into the sagebrush availability layer using the same methodology as described for adding restoration treatment areas lost to wildfire and agriculture conversion (see Monitoring Sagebrush Restoration in Section I.B.1.b., Monitoring Sagebrush Availability). This dataset will be updated annually from the IHS dataset.

Energy (coal mines)

Currently, there is no comprehensive dataset available that identifies the footprint of active coal mining across all jurisdictions. Therefore, point and polygon datasets will be used each year to identify coal mining locations. Data sources will be identified and evaluated annually and will include at a minimum: BLM coal lease polygons, U.S. Energy Information Administration mine occurrence points, U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement coal mining permit polygons (as available), and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Mineral Resources Data System mine occurrence points. These data will inform where active coal mining may be occurring. Additionally, coal power plant data from Platts power plants database (subset to operational power plants) will be included. Aerial imagery will then be used to digitize manually the active coal mining and coal power plants surface disturbance in or near these known occurrence areas. While the date of aerial imagery varies by scale, the most current data available from Esri and/or Google will be used to locate (generally at 1:50,000 and below) and digitize (generally at 1:10,000 and below) active coal mine and power plant direct area of influence. Coal mine location data source and imagery date will be documented for each digitized coal polygon at the time of creation. Subsurface facility locations (polygon or point location as available) will also be collected if available, included in density calculations, and added to the active surface activity layer as appropriate (if an actual direct area of influence can be located).

Energy (wind energy facilities)

This dataset will be a subset of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Digital Obstacles point file. Points where “Type_” = “WINDMILL” will be included. Direct area of influence of these point features will be measured by converting to a polygon dataset as a direct area of

influence of 3 acres (1.2ha) centered on each tower point. See the BLM’s “Wind Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement” (BLM 2005). Additionally, Platts power plants database will be used for transformer stations associated with wind energy sites (subset to operational power plants), also with a 3-acre (1.2ha) direct area of influence.

Energy (solar energy facilities)

This dataset will include solar plants as compiled with the Platts power plants database (subset to operational power plants). This database includes an attribute that indicates the operational capacity of each solar power plant. Total capacity at the power plant was based on ratings of the in-service unit(s), in megawatts. Direct area of influence polygons will be centered over each point feature representing 7.3ac (3.0ha) per megawatt of the stated operational capacity, per the report of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), “Land-Use Requirements for Solar Power Plants in the United States” (Ong et al. 2013).

Energy (geothermal energy facilities)

This dataset will include geothermal wells in existence or under construction as compiled with the IHS wells database and power plants as compiled with the Platts database (subset to operational power plants). Direct area of influence of these point features will be measured by converting to a polygon dataset of 3 acres (1.2ha) centered on each well or power plant point.

Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable)

This dataset will include active locatable mining locations as compiled with the proprietary InfoMine database. Aerial imagery will then be used to digitize manually the active mining surface disturbance in or near these known occurrence areas. While the date of aerial imagery varies by scale, the most current data available from Esri and/or Google will be used to locate (generally at 1:50,000 and below) and digitize (generally at 1:10,000 and below) active mine direct area of influence. Mine location data source and imagery date will be documented for each digitized polygon at the time of creation. Currently, there are no known compressive databases available for leasable or saleable mining sites beyond coal mines. Other data sources will be evaluated and used as they are identified or as they become available. Point data may be converted to polygons to represent direct area of influence unless actual surface disturbance is available.

Infrastructure (roads)

This dataset will be compiled from the proprietary Esri StreetMap Premium for ArcGIS. Dataset features that will be used are: Interstate Highways, Major Roads, and Surface Streets to capture most paved and “crowned and ditched” roads while not including “two-track” and 4-wheel-drive routes. These minor roads, while not included in the broad- and mid-scale monitoring, may support a volume of traffic that can have deleterious effects on sage-grouse leks. It may be

appropriate to consider the frequency and type of use of roads in a NEPA analysis for a proposed project. This fine- and site-scale analysis will require more site-specific data than is identified in this monitoring framework. The direct area of influence for roads will be represented by 240.2ft, 84.0ft, and 40.7ft (73.2m, 25.6m, and 12.4m) total widths centered on the line feature for Interstate Highways, Major Roads, and Surface Streets, respectively (Knick et al. 2011). The most current dataset will be used for each monitoring update. *Note: This is a related but different dataset than what was used in BER (Manier et al. 2013). Individual BLM/USFS planning units may use different road layers for fine- and site-scale monitoring.*

Infrastructure (railroads)

This dataset will be a compilation from the Federal Railroad Administration Rail Lines of the USA dataset. Non-abandoned rail lines will be used; abandoned rail lines will not be used. The direct are of influence for railroads will be represented by a 30.8ft (9.4m) total width (Knick et al. 2011) centered on the non-abandoned railroad line feature.

Infrastructure (power lines)

This line dataset will be derived from the proprietary Platts transmission lines database. Linear features in the dataset attributed as “buried” will be removed from the disturbance calculation. Only “In Service” lines will be used; “Proposed” lines will not be used. Direct area of influence will be determined by the kV designation: 1–199 kV (100ft/30.5m), 200–399 kV (150ft/45.7m), 400–699 kV (200ft/61.0m), and 700-or greater kV (250ft/76.2m) based on average right-of-way and structure widths, according to BLM WO-300 (Minerals and Realty Management).

Infrastructure (communication towers)

This point dataset will be compiled from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) communication towers point file; all duplicate points will be removed. It will be converted to a polygon dataset by using a direct area of influence of 2.5 acres (1.0ha) centered on each communication tower point (Knick et al. 2011).

Infrastructure (other vertical structures)

This point dataset will be compiled from the FAA’s Digital Obstacles point file. Points where “Type_” = “WINDMILL” will be removed. Duplicate points from the FCC communication towers point file will be removed. Remaining features will be converted to a polygon dataset using a direct area of influence of 2.5 acres (1.0ha) centered on each vertical structure point (Knick et al. 2011).

Other Developed Rights-of-Way

Currently, no additional data sources for other rights-of-way have been identified; roads, power lines, railroads, pipelines, and other known linear features are represented in the categories

described above. The newly purchased IHS data do contain pipeline information; however, this database does not currently distinguish between above-ground and underground pipelines. If additional features representing human activities are identified, they will be added to monitoring reports using similar assumptions to those used with the threats described above.

b. Habitat Degradation Threat Combination and Calculation

The threats targeted for measuring human activity (Table 2) will be converted to direct area of influence polygons as described for each threat above. These threat polygon layers will be combined and features dissolved to create one overall polygon layer representing footprints of active human activity in the range of sage-grouse. Individual datasets, however, will be preserved to indicate which types of threats may be contributing to overall habitat degradation.

This measure has been divided into three submeasures to describe habitat degradation on the landscape. Percentages will be calculated as follows:

Measure 2a. Footprint by geographic area of interest: Divide area of the active/direct footprint by the total area of the geographic area of interest (% disturbance in geographic area of interest).

Measure 2b. Active/direct footprint by historical sagebrush potential: Divide area of the active footprint that coincides with areas with historical sagebrush potential (BpS calculation from habitat availability) within a given geographic area of interest by the total area with sagebrush potential within the geographic area of interest (% disturbance on potential historical sagebrush in geographic area of interest).

Measure 2c. Active/direct footprint by current sagebrush: Divide area of the active footprint that coincides with areas of existing sagebrush (EVT calculation from habitat availability) within a given geographic area of interest by the total area that is current sagebrush within the geographic area of interest (% disturbance on current sagebrush in geographic area of interest).

B.3. Energy and Mining Density (Measure 3)

The measure of density of energy and mining will be calculated by combining the locations of energy and mining threats identified in Table 2. This measure will provide an estimate of the intensity of human activity or the intensity of habitat degradation. The number of energy facilities and mining locations will be summed and divided by the area of meaningful geographic areas of interest to calculate density of these activities. Data sources for each threat are found in Table 6. Specific assumptions (inclusion criteria for data, width/area assumptions for point and line features, etc.) and methodology for each threat, and the combined measure, are detailed

below. All datasets will be updated annually to monitor broad- and mid-scale year-to-year changes and 5-year (or longer) trends in habitat degradation.

Table 6. Geospatial data sources for habitat degradation (Measure 2).

Degradation Type	Subcategory	Data Source	Direct Area of Influence	Area Source
Energy (oil & gas)	Wells	IHS; BLM (AFMSS)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (coal)	Mines	BLM; USFS; Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; USGS Mineral Resources Data System	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri/Google Imagery
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Energy (wind)	Wind Turbines	Federal Aviation Administration	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (solar)	Fields/Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	7.3ac (3.0ha)/MW	NREL
Energy (geothermal)	Wells	IHS	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Mining	Locatable Developments	InfoMine	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Infrastructure (roads)	Surface Streets (Minor Roads)	Esri StreetMap Premium	40.7ft (12.4m)	USGS
	Major Roads	Esri StreetMap Premium	84.0ft (25.6m)	USGS
	Interstate Highways	Esri StreetMap Premium	240.2ft (73.2m)	USGS
Infrastructure (railroads)	Active Lines	Federal Railroad Administration	30.8ft (9.4m)	USGS
Infrastructure (power lines)	1-199kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	100ft (30.5m)	BLM WO-300
	200-399 kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	150ft (45.7m)	BLM WO-300
	400-699kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	200ft (61.0m)	BLM WO-300
	700+kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	250ft (76.2m)	BLM WO-300
Infrastructure (communication)	Towers	Federal Communications Commission	2.5ac (1.0ha)	BLM WO-300

a. Energy and Mining Density Datasets and Assumptions

Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (coal mines)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (wind energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (solar energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Energy (geothermal energy facilities)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable)

(See Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring.)

b. Energy and Mining Density Threat Combination and Calculation

Datasets for energy and mining will be collected in two primary forms: point locations (e.g., wells) and polygon areas (e.g., surface coal mining). The following rule set will be used to calculate density for meaningful geographic areas of interest including standard grids and per polygon:

- 1) Point locations will be preserved; no additional points will be removed beyond the methodology described above. Energy facilities in close proximity (an oil well close to a wind tower) will be retained.
- 2) Polygons will not be merged, or features further dissolved. Thus, overlapping facilities will be retained, such that each individual threat will be a separate polygon data input for the density calculation.
- 3) The analysis unit (polygon or 640-acre section in a grid) will be the basis for counting the number of mining or energy facilities per unit area. Within the analysis unit, all point features will be summed, and any individual polygons will be counted as one (e.g., a coal mine will be counted as one facility within population). Where polygon features overlap multiple units (polygons or pixels), the facility will be counted as one in each unit where the polygon occurs (e.g., a polygon crossing multiple 640-acre

sections would be counted as one in each 640-acre section for a density per 640-acre-section calculation).

- 4) In methodologies with different-sized units (e.g., MZs, populations, etc.) raw facility counts will be converted to densities by dividing the raw facility counts by the total area of the unit. Typically this will be measured as facilities per 640 acres.
- 5) For uniform grids, raw facility counts will be reported. Typically this number will also be converted to facilities per 640 acres.
- 6) Reporting may include summaries beyond the simple ones above. Zonal statistics may be used to smooth smaller grids to help display and convey information about areas within meaningful geographic areas of interest that have high levels of energy and/or mining activity.
- 7) Additional statistics for each defined unit may also include adjusting the area to include only the area with the historical potential for sagebrush (BpS) or areas currently sagebrush (EVT).

Individual datasets and threat combination datasets for habitat degradation will be available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and geospatial gateway. Legacy datasets will be preserved so that trends may be calculated.

C. Population (Demographics) Monitoring

State wildlife management agencies are responsible for monitoring sage-grouse populations within their respective states. WAFWA will coordinate this collection of annual population data by state agencies. These data will be made available to the BLM according to the terms of the forthcoming Greater Sage-Grouse Population Monitoring Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (2014) between WAFWA and the BLM. The MOU outlines a process, timeline, and responsibilities for regular data sharing of sage-grouse population and/or habitat information for the purposes of implementing sage-grouse LUPs/amendments and subsequent effectiveness monitoring. Population areas were refined from the "Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) Conservation Objectives: Final Report" (COT 2013) by individual state wildlife agencies to create a consistent naming nomenclature for future data analyses. These population data will be used for analysis at the applicable scale to supplement habitat effectiveness monitoring of management actions and to inform the adaptive management responses.

D. Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring will provide the data needed to evaluate BLM and USFS actions toward reaching the objective of the national planning strategy (BLM IM 2012-044)—to conserve sage-grouse populations and their habitat—and the objectives for the land use planning

area. Effectiveness monitoring methods described here will encompass multiple larger scales, from areas as large as the WAFWA MZ to the scale of this LUP. Effectiveness data used for these larger-scale evaluations will include all lands in the area of interest, regardless of surface ownership/management, and will help inform where finer-scale evaluations are needed, such as population areas smaller than an LUP or PACs within an LUP (described in Section II, Fine and Site Scales). Data will also include the trend of disturbance within these areas of interest to inform the need to initiate adaptive management responses as described in the land use plan.

Effectiveness monitoring reported for these larger areas provides the context to conduct effectiveness monitoring at finer scales. This approach also helps focus scarce resources to areas experiencing habitat loss, degradation, or population declines, without excluding the possibility of concurrent, finer-scale evaluations as needed where habitat or population anomalies have been identified through some other means.

To determine the effectiveness of the sage-grouse national planning strategy, the BLM and the USFS will evaluate the answers to the following questions and prepare a broad- and mid-scale effectiveness report:

- 1) Sagebrush Availability and Condition:
 - a. What is the amount of sagebrush availability and the change in the amount and condition of sagebrush?
 - b. What is the existing amount of sagebrush on the landscape and the change in the amount relative to the pre-EuroAmerican historical distribution of sagebrush (BpS)?
 - c. What is the trend and condition of the indicators describing sagebrush characteristics important to sage-grouse?
- 2) Habitat Degradation and Intensity of Activities:
 - a. What is the amount of habitat degradation and the change in that amount?
 - b. What is the intensity of activities and the change in the intensity?
 - c. What is the amount of reclaimed energy-related degradation and the change in the amount?
- 3) What is the population estimation of sage-grouse and the change in the population estimation?
- 4) How are the BLM and the USFS contributing to changes in the amount of sagebrush?
- 5) How are the BLM and the USFS contributing to disturbance?

The compilation of broad- and mid-scale data (and population trends as available) into an effectiveness monitoring report will occur on a 5-year reporting schedule (see Attachment A), which may be accelerated to respond to critical emerging issues (in consultation with the USFWS and state wildlife agencies). In addition, effectiveness monitoring results will be used to identify emerging issues and research needs and inform the BLM and the USFS adaptive

management strategy (see the adaptive management section of this Environmental Impact Statement).

To determine the effectiveness of the sage-grouse objectives of the land use plan, the BLM and the USFS will evaluate the answers to the following questions and prepare a plan effectiveness report:

- 1) Is this plan meeting the sage-grouse habitat objectives?
- 2) Are sage-grouse areas within the LUP meeting, or making progress toward meeting, land health standards, including the Special Status Species/wildlife habitat standard?
- 3) Is the plan meeting the disturbance objective(s) within sage-grouse areas?
- 4) Are the sage-grouse populations within this plan boundary and within the sage-grouse areas increasing, stable, or declining?

The effectiveness monitoring report for this LUP will occur on a 5-year reporting schedule (see Attachment A) or more often if habitat or population anomalies indicate the need for an evaluation to facilitate adaptive management or respond to critical emerging issues. Data will be made available through the BLM's EGIS web portal and the geospatial gateway.

Methods

At the broad and mid scales (PACs and above) the BLM and the USFS will summarize the vegetation, disturbance, and (when available) population data. Although the analysis will try to summarize results for PACs within each sage-grouse population, some populations may be too small to report the metrics appropriately and may need to be combined to provide an estimate with an acceptable level of accuracy. Otherwise, they will be flagged for more intensive monitoring by the appropriate landowner or agency. The BLM and the USFS will then analyze monitoring data to detect the trend in the amount of sagebrush; the condition of the vegetation in the sage-grouse areas (MacKinnon et al. 2011); the trend in the amount of disturbance; the change in disturbed areas owing to successful restoration; and the amount of new disturbance the BLM and/or the USFS has permitted. These data could be supplemented with population data (when available) to inform an understanding of the correlation between habitat and PACs within a population. This overall effectiveness evaluation must consider the lag effect response of populations to habitat changes (Garton et al. 2011).

Calculating Question 1, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The amount of sagebrush available in the large area of interest will use the information from Measure 1a (I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability) and calculate the change from the 2012 baseline to the end date of the reporting period. To calculate the change in the amount of sagebrush on the landscape to compare with the historical areas with potential to support sagebrush, the information from Measure 1b (I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability) will be used. To calculate the trend in the condition of sagebrush at the mid scale, three sources of data will be used: the BLM's Grass/Shrub mapping effort (Future Plans in Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability); the results from the calculation of the landscape

indicators, such as patch size (described below); and the BLM's Landscape Monitoring Framework (LMF) and sage-grouse intensification effort (also described below). The LMF and sage-grouse intensification effort data are collected in a statistical sampling framework that allows calculation of indicator values at multiple scales.

Beyond the importance of sagebrush availability to sage-grouse, the mix of sagebrush patches on the landscape at the broad and mid scale provides the life requisite of space for sage-grouse dispersal needs (see the HAF). The configuration of sagebrush habitat patches and the land cover or land use between the habitat patches at the broad and mid scales also defines suitability. There are three significant habitat indicators that influence habitat use, dispersal, and movement across populations: the size and number of habitat patches, the connectivity of habitat patches (linkage areas), and habitat fragmentation (scope of unsuitable and non-habitats between habitat patches). The most appropriate commercial software to measure patch dynamics, connectivity, and fragmentation at the broad and mid scales will be used, along with the same data layers derived for sagebrush availability.

The BLM initiated the LMF in 2011 in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The objective of the LMF effort is to provide unbiased estimates of vegetation and soil condition and trend using a statistically balanced sample design across BLM lands. Recognizing that sage-grouse populations are more resilient where the sagebrush plant community has certain characteristics unique to a particular life stage of sage-grouse (Knick and Connelly 2011, Stiver et al. *in press*), a group of sage-grouse habitat and sagebrush plant community subject matter experts identified those vegetation indicators collected at LMF sampling points that inform sage-grouse habitat needs. The experts represented the Agricultural Research Service, BLM, NRCS, USFWS, WAFWA, state wildlife agencies, and academia. The common indicators identified include: species composition, foliar cover, height of the tallest sagebrush and herbaceous plant, intercanopy gap, percent of invasive species, sagebrush shape, and bare ground. To increase the precision of estimates of sagebrush conditions within the range of sage-grouse, additional plot locations in occupied sage-grouse habitat (Sage-Grouse Intensification) were added in 2013. The common indicators are also collected on sampling locations in the NRCS National Resources Inventory Rangeland Resource Assessment (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/?&cid=stelprdb1041620>).

The sage-grouse intensification baseline data will be collected over a 5-year period, and an annual sage-grouse intensification report will be prepared describing the status of the indicators. Beginning in year 6, the annual status report will be accompanied with a trend report, which will be available on an annual basis thereafter, contingent on continuation of the current monitoring budget. This information, in combination with the Grass/Shrub mapping information, the mid-scale habitat suitability indicator measures, and the sagebrush availability information will be used to answer Question 1 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 2, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: Evaluations of the amount of habitat degradation and the intensity of the activities in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 2 (Section I.B.2., Habitat Degradation Monitoring) and Measure 3 (Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density). The field office will collect data on the amount of reclaimed energy-related degradation on plugged and abandoned and oil/gas well sites. The data are expected to demonstrate that the reclaimed sites have yet to meet the habitat restoration objectives for sage-grouse habitat. This information, in combination with the amount of habitat degradation, will be used to answer Question 2 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 3, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The change in sage-grouse estimated populations will be calculated from data provided by the state wildlife agencies, when available. This population data (Section I.C., Population [Demographics] Monitoring) will be used to answer Question 3 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 4, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The estimated contribution by the BLM or the USFS to the change in the amount of sagebrush in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 1a (Section I.B.1., Sagebrush Availability). This measure is derived from the national datasets that remove sagebrush (Table 3). To determine the relative contribution of BLM and USFS management, the current Surface Management Agency geospatial data layer will be used to differentiate the amount of change for each management agency for this measure in the geographic areas of interest. This information will be used to answer Question 4 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 5, National Planning Strategy Effectiveness: The estimated contribution by the BLM or the USFS to the change in the amount of disturbance in the area of interest will use the information from Measure 2a (Section I.B.2., Monitoring Habitat Degradation) and Measure 3 (Section I.B.3., Energy and Mining Density). These measures are all derived from the national disturbance datasets that degrade habitat (Table 6). To determine the relative contribution of BLM and USFS management, the current Surface Management Agency geospatial data layer will be used to differentiate the amount of change for each management agency for these two measures in the geographic areas of interest. This information will be used to answer Question 5 of the National Planning Strategy Effectiveness Report.

Answers to the five questions for determining the effectiveness of the national planning strategy will identify areas that appear to be meeting the objectives of the strategy and will facilitate identification of population areas for more detailed analysis. Conceptually, if the broad-scale monitoring identifies increasing sagebrush availability and improving vegetation conditions, decreasing disturbance, and a stable or increasing population for the area of interest, there is evidence that the objectives of the national planning strategy to maintain populations and their habitats have been met. Conversely, where information indicates that sagebrush is decreasing and vegetation conditions are degrading, disturbance in sage-grouse areas is increasing, and/or

populations are declining relative to the baseline, there is evidence that the objectives of the national planning strategy are not being achieved. Such a determination would likely result in a more detailed analysis and could be the basis for implementing more restrictive adaptive management measures.

With respect to the land use plan area, the BLM and the USFS will summarize the vegetation, disturbance, and population data to determine if the LUP is meeting the plan objectives. Effectiveness information used for these evaluations includes BLM/USFS surface management areas and will help inform where finer-scale evaluations are needed, such as seasonal habitats, corridors, or linkage areas. Data will also include the trend of disturbance within the sage-grouse areas, which will inform the need to initiate adaptive management responses as described in the land use plan.

Calculating Question 1, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The condition of vegetation and the allotments meeting land health standards (as articulated in “BLM Handbook 4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards”) in sage-grouse areas will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in meeting the vegetation objectives for sage-grouse habitat set forth in the plan. The field office/ranger district will be responsible for collecting this data. In order for this data to be consistent and comparable, common indicators, consistent methods, and an unbiased sampling framework will be implemented following the principles in the BLM’s AIM strategy (Taylor et al. 2014; Toevs et al. 2011; MacKinnon et al. 2011), in the BLM’s Technical Reference “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005), and in the HAF (Stiver et al. *in press*) or other approved WAFWA MZ-consistent guidance to measure and monitor sage-grouse habitats. This information will be used to answer Question 1 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 2, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: Sage-grouse areas within the LUP that are achieving land health stands (or, if trend data are available, that are making progress toward achieving them)—particularly the Special Status Species/wildlife habitat land health standard—will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in achieving the habitat objectives set forth in the plan. Field offices will follow directions in “BLM Handbook 4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards,” to ascertain if sage-grouse areas are achieving or making progress toward achieving land health standards. One of the recommended criteria for evaluating this land health standard is the HAF indicators.

Calculating Question 3, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The amount of habitat disturbance in sage-grouse areas identified in this LUP will be used to determine the LUP’s effectiveness in meeting the plan’s disturbance objectives. National datasets can be used to calculate the amount of disturbance, but field office data will likely increase the accuracy of this estimate. This information will be used to answer Question 3 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Calculating Question 4, Land Use Plan Effectiveness: The change in estimated sage-grouse populations will be calculated from data provided by the state wildlife agencies, when available, and will be used to determine LUP effectiveness. This population data (Section I.C., Population [Demographics] Monitoring) will be used to answer Question 4 of the Land Use Plan Effectiveness Report.

Results of the effectiveness monitoring process for the LUP will be used to inform the need for finer-scale investigations, initiate adaptive management actions as described in the land use plan, initiate causation determination, and/or determine if changes to management decisions are warranted. The measures used at the broad and mid scales will provide a suite of characteristics for evaluating the effectiveness of the adaptive management strategy.

II. FINE AND SITE SCALES

Fine-scale (third-order) habitat selected by sage-grouse is described as the physical and geographic area within home ranges during breeding, summer, and winter periods. At this level, habitat suitability monitoring should address factors that affect sage-grouse use of, and movements between, seasonal use areas. The habitat monitoring at the fine and site scale (fourth order) should focus on indicators to describe seasonal home ranges for sage-grouse associated with a lek or lek group within a population or subpopulation area. Fine- and site-scale monitoring will inform LUP effectiveness monitoring (see Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring) and the hard and soft triggers identified in the LUP's adaptive management section.

Site-scale habitat selected by sage-grouse is described as the more detailed vegetation characteristics of seasonal habitats. Habitat suitability characteristics include canopy cover and height of sagebrush and the associated understory vegetation. They also include vegetation associated with riparian areas, wet meadows, and other mesic habitats adjacent to sagebrush that may support sage-grouse habitat needs during different stages in their annual cycle.

As described in the Conclusion (Section III), details and application of monitoring at the fine and site scales will be described in the implementation-level monitoring plan for the land use plan. The need for fine- and site-scale-specific habitat monitoring will vary by area, depending on proposed projects, existing conditions, habitat variability, threats, and land health. Examples of fine- and site-scale monitoring include: habitat vegetation monitoring to assess current habitat conditions; monitoring and evaluation of the success of projects targeting sage-grouse habitat enhancement and/or restoration; and habitat disturbance monitoring to provide localized disturbance measures to inform proposed project review and potential mitigation for project impacts. Monitoring plans should incorporate the principles outlined in the BLM's AIM strategy (Toevs et al. 2011) and in "AIM-Monitoring: A Component of the Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring Strategy" (Taylor et al. 2014). Approved monitoring methods are:

- “BLM Core Terrestrial Indicators and Methods” (MacKinnon et al. 2011);
- The BLM’s Technical Reference “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005); and,
- “Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: Multiscale Assessment Tool” (Stiver et al. *in press*).

Other state-specific disturbance tracking models include: the BLM’s Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool (<http://ddct.wygisc.org/>) and the BLM’s White River Data Management System in development with the USGS. Population monitoring data (in cooperation with state wildlife agencies) should be included during evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken at the fine and site scales.

Fine- and site-scale sage-grouse habitat suitability indicators for seasonal habitats are identified in the HAF. The HAF has incorporated the Connelly et al. (2000) sage-grouse guidelines as well as many of the core indicators in the AIM strategy (Toevs et al. 2011). There may be a need to develop adjustments to height and cover or other site suitability values described in the HAF; any such adjustments should be ecologically defensible. To foster consistency, however, adjustments to site suitability values at the local scale should be avoided unless there is strong, scientific justification for making those adjustments. That justification should be provided. WAFWA MZ adjustments must be supported by regional plant productivity and habitat data for the floristic province. If adjustments are made to the site-scale indicators, they must be made using data from the appropriate seasonal habitat designation (breeding/nesting, brood-rearing, winter) collected from sage-grouse studies found in the relevant area and peer-reviewed by the appropriate wildlife management agency(ies) and researchers.

When conducting land health assessments, the BLM should follow, at a minimum, “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et al. 2005) and the “BLM Core Terrestrial Indicators and Methods” (MacKinnon et al. 2011). For assessments being conducted in sage-grouse designated management areas, the BLM should collect additional data to inform the HAF indicators that have not been collected using the above methods. Implementation of the principles outlined in the AIM strategy will allow the data to be used to generate unbiased estimates of condition across the area of interest; facilitate consistent data collection and rollup analysis among management units; help provide consistent data to inform the classification and interpretation of imagery; and provide condition and trend of the indicators describing sagebrush characteristics important to sage-grouse habitat (see Section I.D., Effectiveness Monitoring).

III. CONCLUSION

This Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework was developed for all of the Final Environmental Impact Statements involved in the sage-grouse planning effort. As such, it describes the monitoring activities at the broad and mid scales and provides a guide for the BLM and the USFS to collaborate with partners/other agencies to develop the land use plan- specific monitoring plan.

IV. THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE DISTURBANCE AND MONITORING SUBTEAM MEMBERSHIP

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Attachment A. An Overview of Monitoring Commitments

	Broad and Mid Scales					Fine and Site Scales
	Implementation	Sagebrush Availability	Habitat Degradation	Population	Effectiveness	
How will the data be used?	Track and document implementation of land use plan decisions and inform adaptive management	Track changes in land cover (sagebrush) and inform adaptive management	Track changes in disturbance (threats) to sage-grouse habitat and inform adaptive management	Track trends in sage-grouse populations (and/or leks; as determined by state wildlife agencies) and inform adaptive management	Characterize the relationship among disturbance, implementation actions, and sagebrush metrics and inform adaptive management	Measure seasonal habitat, connectivity at the fine scale, and habitat conditions at the site scale, calculate disturbance, and inform adaptive management
Who is collecting the data?	BLM FO and USFS Forest	NOC and NIFC	National datasets (NOC), BLM FOs, and USFS Forests as applicable	State wildlife agencies through WAFWA	Comes from other broad- and mid-scale monitoring types, analyzed by the NOC	BLM FO and SO, USFS Forests and RO (with partners)
How often are the data collected, reported, and made available to USFWS?	Collected and reported annually; summary report every 5 years	Updated and changes reported annually; summary report every 5 years	Collected and changes reported annually; summary report every 5 years	State data reported annually per WAFWA MOU; summary report every 5 years	Collected and reported every 5 years (coincident with LUP evaluations)	Collection and trend analysis ongoing, reported every 5 years or as needed to inform adaptive management
What is the spatial scale?	Summarized by LUP with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by PACs (size dependent) with flexibility for reporting by other units	Summarized by MZ and LUP with flexibility for reporting by other units (e.g., PAC)	Variable (e.g., projects and seasonal habitats)
What are the potential personnel and budget impacts?	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment	At a minimum, current skills and capacity must be maintained; data management costs are TBD	At a minimum, current skills and capacity must be maintained; data layer purchase cost are TBD	No additional personnel or budget impacts for the BLM or the USFS	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment	Additional capacity or re-prioritization of ongoing monitoring work and budget realignment

Who has primary and secondary responsibilities for reporting?	1) BLM FO & SO; USFS Forest & RO 2) BLM & USFS Planning	1) NOC 2) WO	1) NOC 2) BLM SO, USFS RO, & appropriate programs	1) WAFWA & state wildlife agencies 2) BLM SO, USFS RO, NOC	1) Broad and mid scale at the NOC, LUP at BLM SO, USFS RO	1) BLM FO & USFS Forests 2) BLM SO & USFS RO
What new processes/tools are needed?	National implementation datasets and analysis tools	Updates to national land cover data	Data standards and rollup methods for these data	Standards in population monitoring (WAFWA)	Reporting methodologies	Data standards data storage; and reporting

FO (field office); NIFC (National Interagency Fire Center); NOC (National Operations Center); RO (regional office); SO (state office); TBD (to be determined); WO (Washington Office)

Attachment B. User and Producer Accuracies for Aggregated Ecological Systems within LANDFIRE Map Zones

LANDFIRE Map Zone Name	User Accuracy	Producer Accuracy	% of Map Zone within Historical Schroeder
Wyoming Basin	76.9%	90.9%	98.5%
Snake River Plain	68.8%	85.2%	98.4%
Missouri River Plateau	57.7%	100.0%	91.3%
Grand Coulee Basin of the Columbia Plateau	80.0%	80.0%	89.3%
Wyoming Highlands	75.3%	85.9%	88.1%
Western Great Basin	69.3%	75.4%	72.9%
Blue Mountain Region of the Columbia Plateau	85.7%	88.7%	72.7%
Eastern Great Basin	62.7%	80.0%	62.8%
Northwestern Great Plains	76.5%	92.9%	46.3%
Northern Rocky Mountains	72.5%	89.2%	42.5%
Utah High Plateaus	81.8%	78.3%	41.5%
Colorado Plateau	65.3%	76.2%	28.8%
Middle Rocky Mountains	78.6%	73.3%	26.4%
Cascade Mountain Range	57.1%	88.9%	17.3%
Sierra Nevada Mountain Range	0.0%	0.0%	12.3%
Northwestern Rocky Mountains	66.7%	60.0%	7.3%
Southern Rocky Mountains	58.6%	56.7%	7.0%
Northern Cascades	75.0%	75.0%	2.6%
Mogollon Rim	66.7%	100.0%	1.7%
Death Valley Basin	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%

There are two anomalous map zones with 0% user and producer accuracies, attributable to no available reference data for the ecological systems of interest.

User accuracy is a map-based accuracy that is computed by looking at the reference data for a class and determining the percentage of correct predictions for these samples. For example, if I select any sagebrush pixel on the classified map, what is the probability that I'll be standing in a sagebrush stand when I visit that pixel location in the field? *Commission Error* equates to including a pixel in a class when it should have been excluded (i.e., commission error = $1 - \text{user's accuracy}$).

Producer accuracy is a reference-based accuracy that is computed by looking at the predictions produced for a class and determining the percentage of correct predictions. In other words, if I know that a particular area is sagebrush (I've been out on the ground to check), what is the probability that the digital map will correctly identify that pixel as sagebrush? *Omission Error* equates to excluding a pixel that should have been included in the class (i.e., omission error = $1 - \text{producer's accuracy}$).

Attachment C. Sagebrush Species and Subspecies Included in the Selection Criteria for Building the EVT and BpS Layers

- *Artemisia arbuscula* subspecies *longicaulis*
- *Artemisia arbuscula* subspecies *longiloba*
- *Artemisia bigelovii*
- *Artemisia nova*
- *Artemisia papposa*
- *Artemisia pygmaea*
- *Artemisia rigida*
- *Artemisia spinescens*
- *Artemisia tripartita* subspecies *rupicola*
- *Artemisia tripartita* subspecies *tripartita*
- *Tanacetum nuttallii*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *bolanderi*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *cana*
- *Artemisia cana* subspecies *viscidula*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *wyomingensis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *tridentata*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *vaseyana*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *spiciformis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* subspecies *xericensis*
- *Artemisia tridentata* variety *pauciflora*
- *Artemisia frigida*
- *Artemisia pedatifida*

1 **Appendix F – Idaho Key Habitat Map Update Process**
2

3 As directed in IM ID-2013-010, Idaho BLM annually updates the Key Habitat map. The purpose
4 of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to request updates to the Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat
5 Planning Map. The update is needed to reflect habitat changes resulting from wildfire,
6 succession, and vegetation treatments that occurred or were observed since the last update. This
7 update is also intended to capture additional edits recommended by the field offices, sage-grouse
8 Local Working Groups (LWG), or agency partners in sage-grouse conservation.
9

10 **Factors to Consider During Edits:** The following factors are applicable to land of any
11 ownership status for which the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) data are available, or for
12 which data or other information are provided by non-BLM partners. If such new data are
13 unavailable, or not provided by partners, retain the existing spatial data in the dataset:
14

- 15 1. Wildfires that have occurred in the most recent calendar year fire season on land
16 administered by the BLM and on land not administered by the BLM.
17
- 18 2. Vegetation management projects that have been completed within key habitat or
19 potential restoration areas of sage-grouse planning areas. This includes activities
20 such as burned area rehabilitation seeding projects, sagebrush thinning/reduction,
21 conifer thinning/reduction, restoration of annual grasslands, new fuel breaks, etc.
22 However, only consider those treatment areas completed and where a change in
23 habitat classification has occurred (e.g., from annual grassland to perennial
24 grassland; perennial grassland to key habitat, etc.). Areas planned for treatment
25 or in the process of treatment (e.g., cheatgrass chemical treatment is completed,
26 but seeding is pending) should not be included until an observed change in habitat
27 category is achieved.
28
- 29 3. Changes in habitat status resulting from vegetation succession, such as perennial
30 grasslands that have transitioned to key habitat due to increased sagebrush cover.
31
- 32 4. Habitat mapping errors or omissions that have been identified in the existing
33 Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat Planning Map and other edits recommended by sage-
34 grouse conservation partners, as appropriate. For this item, it is crucial that BLM
35 field office biologists or an alternate staff specialist coordinate closely with their
36 agency partners, especially the UFSFS and the Idaho Department of Fish and
37 Game (IDFG), to actively solicit and resolve additional suggested edits that we
38 may not be aware of. Those edits must also be incorporated into the respective
39 BLM office’s update submission. This is vital to ensure that the update is
40 completed efficiently and as collaboratively as possible.
41
- 42 5. Since the Idaho Sage-grouse Habitat Planning Map is intended for use by all
43 conservation partners in Idaho, it is important that we maintain a seamless
44 coverage across land ownerships. In that regard, when editing, do not clip out
45 BLM (or non-BLM land) on the basis of land ownership. Rather, make edits
46 based on vegetation boundaries only, using the best available information and

- 47 professional judgment. If you have uncertainties about accuracies for certain
48 areas, document that in the metadata as appropriate.
49
- 50 6. Based on discussions during map updates in recent years, we will again use a 10.0
51 acre minimum polygon size for wildfires since data are readily available to that
52 scale. For vegetation treatments, we will also use a minimum area of 10 acres.
53 For sagebrush or other vegetation patches (e.g., key habitat, perennial grassland,
54 annual grassland, conifer encroachment), delineate habitat to the extent you have
55 data, recognizing that some offices may have more recent, finer resolution data
56 than others.
57
- 58 7. Areas that have recently burned, for which the field has little or no information as
59 to habitat status, should be classified as “recent burn.” Efforts to document the
60 general habitat status in these areas should be made the following field season if
61 possible, in preparation for the next map update. The field may also attribute
62 2013 fires as perennial grassland or annual grassland, as appropriate.
63
- 64 8. Sage-grouse habitat polygon descriptions relevant to this IM include key habitat,
65 perennial grassland, annual grassland, and conifer encroachment potential
66 restoration areas.
67
- 68 o Key habitat includes areas of generally intact sagebrush that provide sage-
69 grouse habitat during some portion of the year.
 - 70 o Perennial grassland can be reclassified as key habitat once average
71 sagebrush canopy cover is at least 10 percent.
 - 72 o Annual grassland areas may be reclassified as perennial grassland once a
73 restoration, fuels treatment or related project, such as an Emergency
74 Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) seeding, is considered successful
75 (i.e., seeded perennial species have successfully established).
 - 76 o Conifer encroachment areas may be reclassified as key habitat following
77 treatment of conifers if sagebrush cover is at least 10 percent and there is a
78 perennial understory. They can also be reclassified as perennial
79 grasslands if native perennial herbaceous species are dominant or if an
80 associated restoration seeding is successful.
81
- 82 9. Field offices must ensure that original project-level data utilized in this update,
83 including Global Positioning System data files, spatial, tabular and metadata
84 associated with specific vegetation treatments, restoration projects, ES&R
85 projects, etc., are archived at the field level and readily accessible in the event of
86 future data calls.
87

Appendix G

Part I – Baseline Map and Description of Development

Part II - Adaptive Management - Soft Trigger Considerations and Implementation Actions

The Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force would utilize monitoring information to assess when triggers have been tripped. When information indicates that the soft habitat or population trigger may have been tripped, a Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force - aided by the technical expertise of IDF&G - will assess the factor(s) leading to the decline and identify potential management actions. The Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force may consider possible changes in management to the CMA. As to the IMA, the Sage-Grouse Implementation Team may review the causes for decline and potential management changes only to the extent those factors significantly impair the state's ability to meet the overall management objective. It is anticipated IDF&G will collect data annually and will make recommendations to the Implementation Team by August 31st for population triggers and January 15th for habitat triggers.

Only where the monitoring information indicates the cause(s) of the decline is not a primary threat will the Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force analyze the secondary threats to the species and determine whether further management actions are needed.

Potential Implementation Level Actions to Consider in the Event Soft Trigger Criteria are Met

- ✓ Increase monitoring and evaluation of sage-grouse populations in Core Management Area (area of concern).
- ✓ Implement Core Management Area management strategy in corresponding Important Management Area of the same Conservation Area.
- ✓ Implement Core Management Area RDFs in corresponding Important Management Area of the same Conservation Area.
- ✓ Not allow any new (large) infrastructure development within the Core Management Area (no exceptions allowed).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on primary threats in the Core Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on secondary threats in the Core Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Apply Core Management Area criteria for all primary threats, and/or all secondary threats to the Important Management Area.
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on primary threats in the Important Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).
- ✓ Reallocate resources to focus on secondary threats in the Important Management Area (e.g. direct resources from other parts of the state to the area of concern).

Part III – Livestock Grazing Management Response

If Livestock Grazing is determined to be a Causal Factor Consider the Following Measures:

- 48
- 49 1. Employ grazing management systems that ensure adequate nesting and early brood rearing
- 50 habitat within the breeding landscape.
- 51 2. When use-pattern mapping or monitoring demonstrates an opportunity to adjust livestock
- 52 distribution to benefit occupied sage-grouse breeding habitat, include as appropriate herding,
- 53 salting, and water-source management (e.g., turning troughs/pipelines on/off, extending
- 54 pipelines/moving troughs) in grazing programs.
- 55 3. If available and feasible, utilize exotic perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands to
- 56 avoid breeding season of use of occupied sage-grouse habitat.
- 57 4. Modify authorized seasons of use within grazing permits to provide greater flexibility in
- 58 managing livestock for the benefit of sage-grouse.
- 59 5. Where appropriate, maintain residual herbaceous vegetation at the end of the
- 60 growing/grazing season to contribute to nesting and brood-rearing habitat during the
- 61 coming nesting season. Table 5.
- 62 6. Insure that permittees are informed of management and movement requirements related to
- 63 avoidance of recent burns, rehabilitation seedings or other restoration sites.
- 64 7. Manage grazing of riparian areas, meadows, springs, and seeps in a manner that promotes
- 65 vegetative structure and composition appropriate to the site. In some cases enclosure fencing
- 66 may be a viable option. However, recognize the availability and quality of desired herbaceous
- 67 species may be improved by periodic grazing use of the enclosure.
- 68 8. Implement management actions (grazing decisions, allotment management
- 69 plan/conservation plan development, or other agreements) to modify grazing management
- 70 to meet seasonal sage-grouse habitat requirements. Employ proper grazing management by
- 71 providing flexibility in scheduling the intensity, timing, duration and frequency of grazing use
- 72 over time that best promotes management objectives. During drought periods, prioritize
- 73 evaluating effects of drought in the CMA relative to grouse needs for food and cover.
- 74 Ensure that post-drought management allows for vegetation recovery that meets sage-grouse
- 75 needs in priority sage-grouse habitat areas.
- 76 9. When using salt or mineral supplements: a) place them in existing disturbed sites, areas with
- 77 reduced sagebrush cover—e.g., seedings or cheatgrass sites—to reduce impacts to sage-
- 78 grouse breeding habitat, b) where feasible use salts or mineral supplements to improve
- 79 management of livestock for the benefit of sage-grouse habitat.
- 80 10. In general, avoid constructing new fences within 2 km of occupied leks. Where feasible,
- 81 place new, taller structures, such as corrals, loading facilities, water-storage tanks, windmills,
- 82 etc., at least 2 km from occupied leks to reduce opportunities for perching raptors. Careful
- 83 consideration, based on local conditions, should also be given to the placement of new
- 84 fences or structures near other important seasonal habitats (winter-use areas, movement
- 85 corridors etc.) to reduce potential impacts.
- 86 11. New spring developments in sage-grouse habitat should be designed to maintain or enhance
- 87 the free-flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Analyze developed springs,
- 88 seeps and associated pipelines to determine if modifications are necessary to maintain the
- 89 continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority sage-grouse habitat. Make
- 90 modifications where necessary, considering impacts to other water users when such
- 91 considerations are neutral or beneficial to sage-grouse.
- 92 12. Ensure that new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks are fitted with
- 93 ramps to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by sage-grouse and other wildlife. Do
- 94 not use floating boards or similar objects, as these are too unstable and are ineffective. Use
- 95 BMPs to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus.

- 96 13. When placing new water developments in sage-grouse breeding habitat, choose sites and
97 designs that will provide the greatest enhancement for sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat.
- 98 14. Avoid new water developments in higher quality native breeding/early brood habitats that
99 have not had significant prior grazing use except in situations in which water developments
100 may aid in better livestock distribution across the allotment and will not adversely impact the
101 species.
- 102 15. Identify and when feasible, establish strategically located forage reserves focusing on areas
103 unsuitable for sage-grouse habitat restoration or lower priority habitat restoration areas.
- 104 16. Monitor for, and treat invasive species associated with, existing range improvements.
- 105 17. Consider initiating vegetative manipulation projects where sagebrush canopy cover exceeds
106 optimal characteristics to promote grass and forb understory growth. These projects should
107 only be undertaken where it can be achieved without negatively impacting the species.

108
109 **Adaptive Grazing Management Response**

110
111 BLM will individually analyze those allotments and pastures within the relevant Conservation Area.
112 Given limited agency resources, prioritization will be given to areas that have the potential to
113 provide the greatest benefit to sage-grouse. Allocation of resources should be concentrated on
114 allotments within the CMA that have declining sage-grouse populations. Following those permits
115 within the CMA, resources will be further prioritized to allotments within the IMA with breeding
116 habitats that have decreasing lek counts. Sage-grouse populations that are stable or trending upward
117 will be a lower priority for permit renewal and the adaptive assessment process. The
118 assessment/determination process for sage-grouse pursuant to Standard 8 will consider published
119 characteristics of sage-grouse habitat and the Ecological Site Descriptions, existing vegetation,
120 habitat inventories/assessments (Stiver et al. 2010), and where available, state and transition models
121 that describe vegetation and other physical attributes for sage-grouse. The related characteristics
122 within the categories shown below will also be included. These characteristics indicate the ability of a
123 given area to provide sage-grouse habitat.

124
125 Category 1: The grazing allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the existing
126 vegetation and existing ecological condition (seral state) to provide sage-grouse habitat

127
128 Category 2: The grazing allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the ecological
129 potential to provide sage-grouse habitat.

130
131 Where an allotment or pasture meets one of these Categories above, the GRSG Habitat
132 Management Objectives will be incorporated into relevant resource management plans as the desired
133 conditions with the understanding that these desired conditions may not be achievable:

- 134 (a) due to the existing ecological condition, ecological potential or the existing vegetation; or
- 135 (b) due to causal events unrelated to existing livestock grazing.

136
137 Allotments will only be managed for the primary seasonal habitat that it has the potential to support.
138 Typically, summer habitats will be managed to provide the conditions described in Table 3; winter
139 Table 4; and breeding habitats in Table 5. Based on these habitat characteristics, BLM will conduct
140 fine and site scale-habitat assessments to help inform grazing management. Where necessary, a
141 determination of factors causing any failure to achieve the habitat characteristics GRSG HMOs will
142 be conducted at a resolution sufficient to document the habitat condition. This determination will
143 include consideration of local spatial and inter-annual variability. A determination of issues

144 attributable to livestock grazing management shall not result from one year of data at a specific
145 location within an allotment. If the process and conditions outlined above demonstrate that
146 livestock grazing is limiting achievement of the habitat characteristics GRSG HMOs, renewed
147 permits will include measures to achieve desired habitat conditions. These measures must be tailored
148 to address the specific management issues associated with seasonal habitat limitations identified in
149 the fine-scale assessments.

150

151

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1 **Appendix H – Anthropogenic Disturbance**

2
3 **Disturbance Density Calculation**

4
5 **GRSG Local/Site Disturbance Calculation**

- 6
7 • **All sub-regions:** Agreed to use the same types of disturbances for fine/site scale monitoring
8 as were used for broad and mid-scale analysis. Would use local data and/or more current
9 satellite imagery if available. Recognize that site specific data, where available, provide a
10 more accurate measure of land cover, disturbance and conifer encroachment than Landfire.
11 In the long-term, ensure fine/site scale monitoring provides results that can be used across
12 the GRSG range and “rolled up” for reporting purposes. In the short term (<5 years),
13 locally derived vegetation data may not be available or easily rolled up, so use of seamless
14 land cover data such as Sagestitch is recommended.

15
16 Great Basin sub-regions agreed to use the same type of data sets as used for broad and mid-scale to
17 monitor local/site level conditions. Supplement with local data where available and/or more
18 accurate. The following data layers or local surrogate would be used.

- 19
20 1. Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities) Based on local info, actual footprint;
21 see NOC language for certain exceptions.
22 2. Energy (coal mines) Actual footprint
23 3. Energy (wind towers) Based on local info, actual footprint
24 4. Energy (solar fields) Based on local info, actual footprint
25 5. Energy (geothermal) Based on local info, actual footprint
26 6. Mining (active developments; locatable, leasable, saleable) Based on local info, actual
27 footprint
28 7. Infrastructure (roads) actual footprint; see road attachment for specific guidance
29 8. Infrastructure (railroads) abandoned railroads are NOT a disturbance
30 9. Infrastructure (power lines) Using NOC guidance, apply these widths:
31 <100 kV: use ROW width
32 100-199kV: 100 ft
33 200-399kV:150 ft
34 400-699kV: 200 ft
35 700-799kV: 250 ft
36 10. Infrastructure (communication towers, fire lookouts, met towers) Based on local info, actual
37 footprint
38 11. Other developed rights-of-ways
39
40

41 The National Monitoring Framework lists the data sets by threat. These are:
 42

FWS Listing Decision Threat	Sagebrush Habitat Availability	Habitat Degradation (Human Activities)	Density of Energy and Mining Facilities
Agriculture	X		
Urbanization	X		
Wildfire	X		
Conifer encroachment	X		
Treatments	X*		
Invasive Species	X*		
Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)		X	X
Energy (coal mines)		X	X
Energy (wind towers)		X	X
Energy (solar fields)		X	X
Energy (geothermal)		X	X
Mining (active locatable, leasable, and salable developments)		X	X
Infrastructure (roads)		X	
Infrastructure (railroads)		X	
Infrastructure (power lines)		X	
Infrastructure (communication towers)		X	
Infrastructure (other vertical structures)		X	
Other developed rights of ways		X*	

43
44 The following data sets would *not* be used to calculate anthropogenic disturbance, but would be
45 used in the habitat baseline to estimate habitat availability or the amount of sagebrush on the
46 landscape within biologically significant units. Use best available data, where Landfire or Sagestitch
47 could be used for biophysical setting (bps), compared to existing vegetation type.

- 48
49 1. Habitat treatments
50 2. Wildfire
51 3. Invasive plants
52 4. Conifer encroachment
53 5. Agriculture
54 6. Urbanization, Ex-urban and rural development
55

56 **Biologically Significant Unit:**

- 57
58 - Idaho proposes use of Priority (Core) and Important management areas that generally match
59 PACs, but also anticipates assessing disturbance at other scales including nesting and winter
60 habitat, 5 km lek neighborhood, Conservation Areas and/or at the project-scale, depending on
61 need.
62
63
64 • For all subregions, data from these units would be rolled up to the PAC and WAFWA
65 Management Zone, to meet FWS needs. In addition, units must be edge matched/aligned
66 with neighboring states. All sub-regions acknowledge there may be locally important
67 biologically significant units smaller than PACs which may or may not be rolled up to PAC
68 level. The Subregions also acknowledge that assessing disturbance at larger scales such as
69 certain PACs, or via rollup of data, provides a baseline metric for future comparison, but
70 dilution may likely mask disturbance concerns occurring at more local scales.

71
72
73 ***Travel and Transportation Disturbance in Sage-Grouse Habitat***

74
75
76 The following would count as disturbance:
77 Linear transportation features identified as roads that have a maintenance intensity of 3 or 5
78 Linear transportation features identified as primitive roads, temporary routes, or
79 administrative routes that have a functional classification and a maintenance intensity of level
80 3 or 5

81
82 Non-Disturbance

83
84 The following items would not count as disturbance:
85 Linear transportation features identified as trails.
86 Linear transportation features identified as primitive roads, temporary routes, or
87 administrative routes that have a maintenance intensity of either level 0 or 1.

88 Linear transportation features identified as primitive routes.
89 Linear disturbances.
90
91

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92 *Travel and Transportation Management Definitions*

93

94 **Roads** are linear routes managed for use by low clearance vehicles having four or more wheels, and
95 are maintained for regular and continuous use.

96

97 **Primitive Roads** are linear routes managed for use by four-wheel drive or high-clearance vehicles.
98 They do not normally meet any design standards.

99

100 **Trails** are linear routes managed for human-powered, stock, or OHV forms of transportation or for
101 historical or heritage values. Trails are not generally managed for use by four-wheel drive or high-
102 clearance vehicles.

103

104 **Linear Disturbances** are human-made linear features that are not part of the designated
105 transportation network are identified as “Transportation Linear Disturbances.” These may include
106 engineered (planned) as well as unplanned single and two-track linear features that are not part of
107 the BLM’s transportation system.

108 **Primitive Routes** are any transportation linear feature located within a WSA or lands with
109 wilderness characteristics designated for protection by a land use plan and not meeting the
110 wilderness inventory road definition.

111

112 **Temporary routes** are short-term overland roads, primitive roads or trails which are authorized or
113 acquired for the development, construction or staging of a project or event that has a finite lifespan.
114 Temporary routes are not intended to be part of the permanent or designated transportation
115 network and must be reclaimed when their intended purpose(s) has been fulfilled. Temporary routes
116 should be constructed to minimum standards necessary to accommodate the intended use; the intent
117 is that the project proponent (or their representative) will reclaim the route once the original project
118 purpose or need has been completed. Temporary routes are considered emergency, single use or
119 permitted activity access. Unless they are specifically intended to accommodate public use, they
120 should not be made available for that use. A temporary route will be authorized or acquired for the
121 specific time period and duration specified in the written authorization (permit, ROW, lease,
122 contract etc.) and will be scheduled and budgeted for reclamation to prevent further vehicle use and
123 soil erosion from occurring by providing adequate drainage and re-vegetation.

124

125 **Administrative routes** are those that are limited to authorized users (typically motorized access).
126 These are existing routes that lead to developments that have an administrative purpose, where the
127 agency or permitted user must have access for regular maintenance or operation. These authorized
128 developments could include such items as power lines, cabins, weather stations, communication
129 sites, spring

130

131 *Maintenance Intensities*

132

133 **Level 0**

134

135 Maintenance Description:

136 Existing routes that will no longer be maintained and no longer be declared a route. Routes
137 identified as Level 0 are identified for removal from the Transportation System entirely.

138

139 Maintenance Objectives:

- 140 • No planned annual maintenance.
- 141 • Meet identified environmental needs.
- 142 • No preventative maintenance or planned annual maintenance activities.

143
144 **Level 1**

145
146 Maintenance Description:
147 Routes where minimum (low intensity) maintenance is required to protect adjacent lands and
148 resource values. These roads may be impassable for extended periods of time.

- 149
150 Maintenance Objectives:
- 151 • Low (Minimal) maintenance intensity.
 - 152 • Emphasis is given to maintaining drainage and runoff patterns as needed to protect
153 adjacent lands. Grading, brushing, or slide removal is not performed unless route bed
154 drainage is being adversely affected, causing erosion.
 - 155 • Meet identified resource management objectives.
 - 156 • Perform maintenance as necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
 - 157 • No preventative maintenance.
 - 158 • Planned maintenance activities limited to environmental and resource protection.
 - 159 • Route surface and other physical features are not maintained for regular traffic.

160
161 **Level 3**

162
163 Maintenance Description:
164 Routes requiring moderate maintenance due to low volume use (for example, seasonally or
165 year-round for commercial, recreational, or administrative access). Maintenance Intensities
166 may not provide year-round access but are intended to generally provide resources
167 appropriate to keep the route in use for the majority of the year.

- 168
169 Maintenance Objectives:
- 170 • Medium (Moderate) maintenance intensity.
 - 171 • Drainage structures will be maintained as needed. Surface maintenance will be conducted
172 to provide a reasonable level of riding comfort at prudent speeds for the route conditions
173 and intended use. Brushing is conducted as needed to improve sight distance when
174 appropriate for management uses. Landslides adversely affecting drainage receive high
175 priority for removal; otherwise, they will be removed on a scheduled basis.
 - 176 • Meet identified environmental needs.
 - 177 • Generally maintained for year-round traffic.
 - 178 • Perform annual maintenance necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
 - 179 • Perform preventative maintenance as required to generally keep the route in acceptable
180 condition.
 - 181 • Planned maintenance activities should include environmental and resource protection
182 efforts, annual route surface.
 - 183 • Route surface and other physical features are maintained for regular traffic.

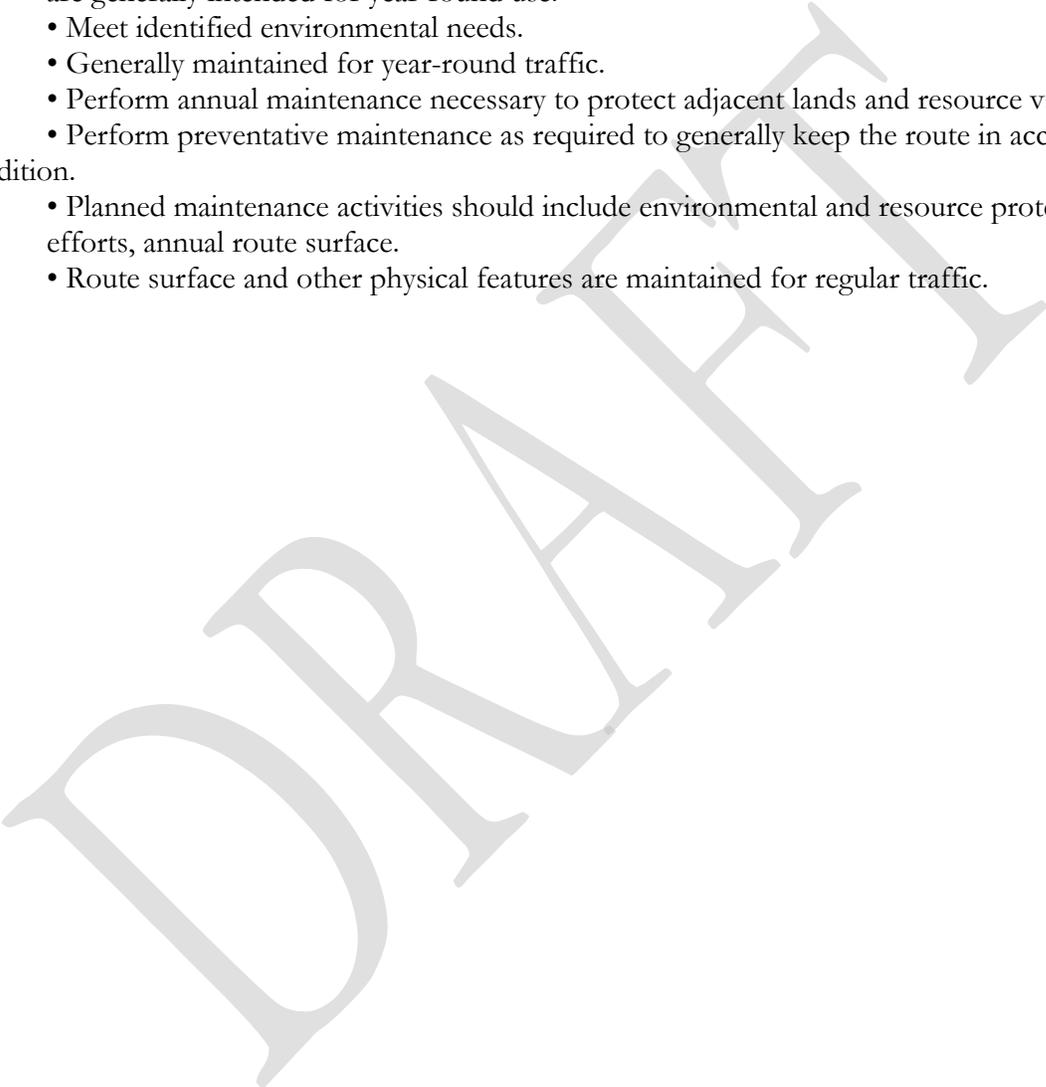
184
185 **Level 5**

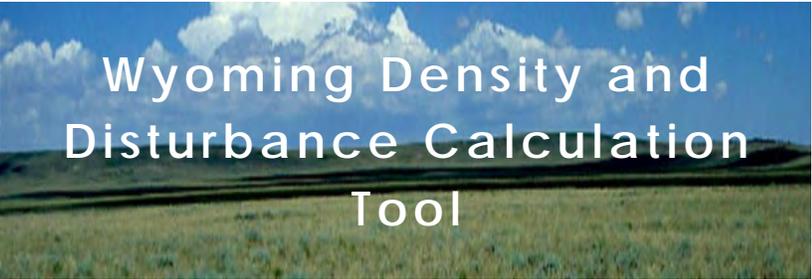
186
187 Maintenance Description:

188 Route for high (maximum) maintenance due to year-round needs, high volume of traffic, or
189 significant use. Also may include route identified through management objectives as
190 requiring high intensities of maintenance or to be maintained open on a year-round basis.
191

192 Maintenance Objectives:

- 193 • High (Maximum) maintenance intensity.
- 194 • The entire route will be maintained at least annually. Problems will be repaired as
195 discovered. These routes may be closed or have limited access due to weather conditions but
196 are generally intended for year-round use.
- 197 • Meet identified environmental needs.
- 198 • Generally maintained for year-round traffic.
- 199 • Perform annual maintenance necessary to protect adjacent lands and resource values.
- 200 • Perform preventative maintenance as required to generally keep the route in acceptable
201 condition.
- 202 • Planned maintenance activities should include environmental and resource protection
203 efforts, annual route surface.
- 204 • Route surface and other physical features are maintained for regular traffic.
205





Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool



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&
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Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Procedures

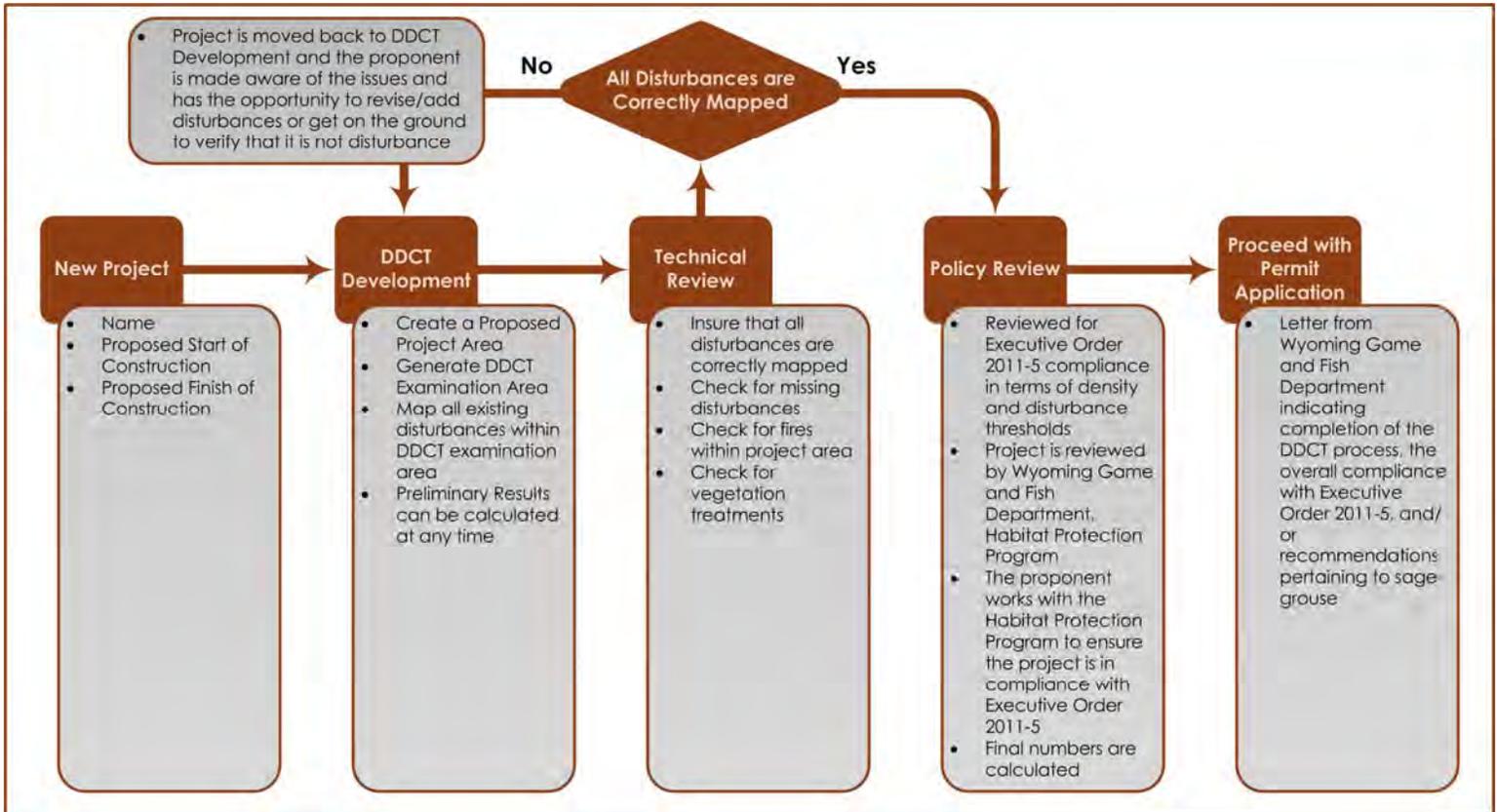
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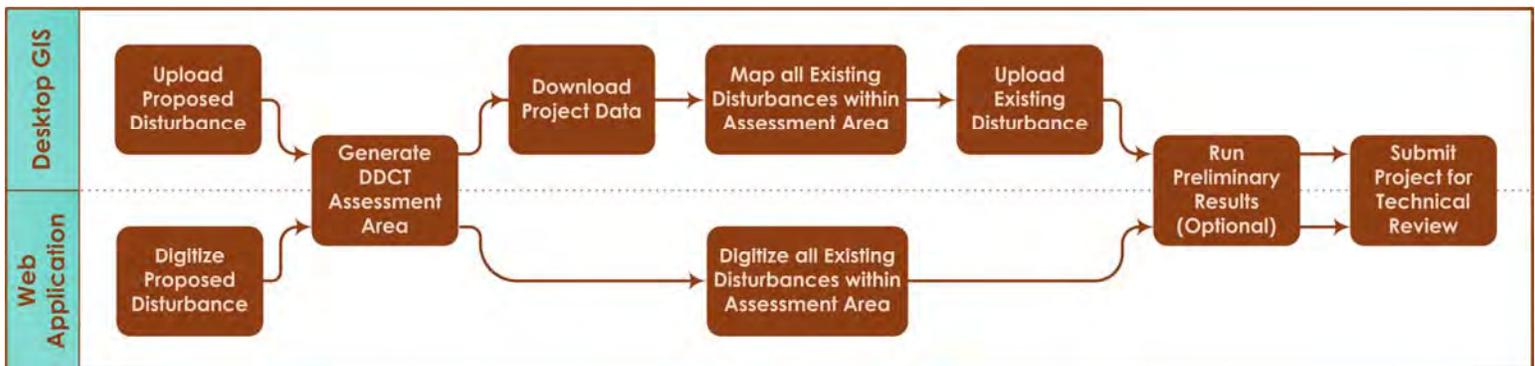
Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool Workflow

The online Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool (DDCT) is setup to be run as a process

● Permitting Workflow



● DDCT Development Workflow



Wyoming DDCT Workflow

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool Navigation

Project List

Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links

The screenshot shows the DDCT BETA web application. On the left is a 'Project List' table with columns for Project Name, Project ID, and Status. On the right is a 'Map Viewer' showing a map of Wyoming with county boundaries and labels. The interface includes navigation buttons (Home, Project Details, Edit, Create New) and website links (Signed in as, Web App Example, Home, Site Map, My Account, Sign Out). Annotations include 'Zoom in', 'Zoom out', 'Zoom Indicator', 'Map Navigation and Layer Information', 'Scale Text', 'Scale Bar', and 'Scale Indicator'.

Project Navigation Buttons

- Go to the Users List of Projects, See Details of Existing Projects, Edit Existing Projects, and Create New Projects
 - ➔ List – Opens a list of users existing projects
 - ➔ Details – Opens the selected project details screen
 - ➔ Edit – Opens the selected project edit screen
 - ➔ Create New – Opens the new project creation wizard



● Project List Area

- Shows Basic Project Details, and Allows interaction with Project
 - ➔ Displays Project Name, Project ID, and Status
 - ➔ Single click on a project zooms the Map Viewer to either the Project Boundary, or the Project Area if the boundary has not been generated
 - ➔ Double Click opens the **Project Edit Screen** with the **Edit** tab selected

Project Name	Project ID	Status
Random Well Pad	20120606_1	DDCT Development
Project Name	Project ID	Project Status

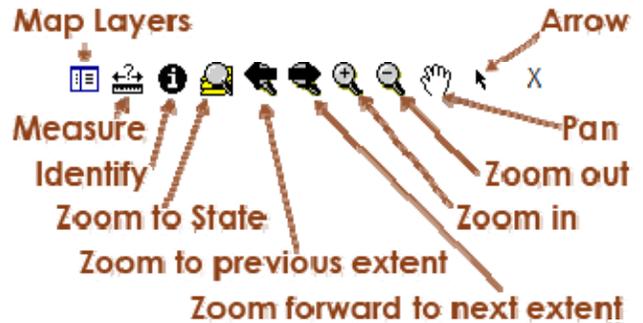
● Project Status

- Project Status Information
 - ➔ DDCT Development
 - **Project editing** is enabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled
 - ➔ Technical Review
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled
 - ➔ Technical Review Complete
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - **Final results** are enabled
 - ➔ Policy Review
 - Project editing is disabled
 - **Preliminary results** are enabled
 - Final results are disabled

● Map Navigation and Layer Information

- Layer, Information, and Navigation Tools

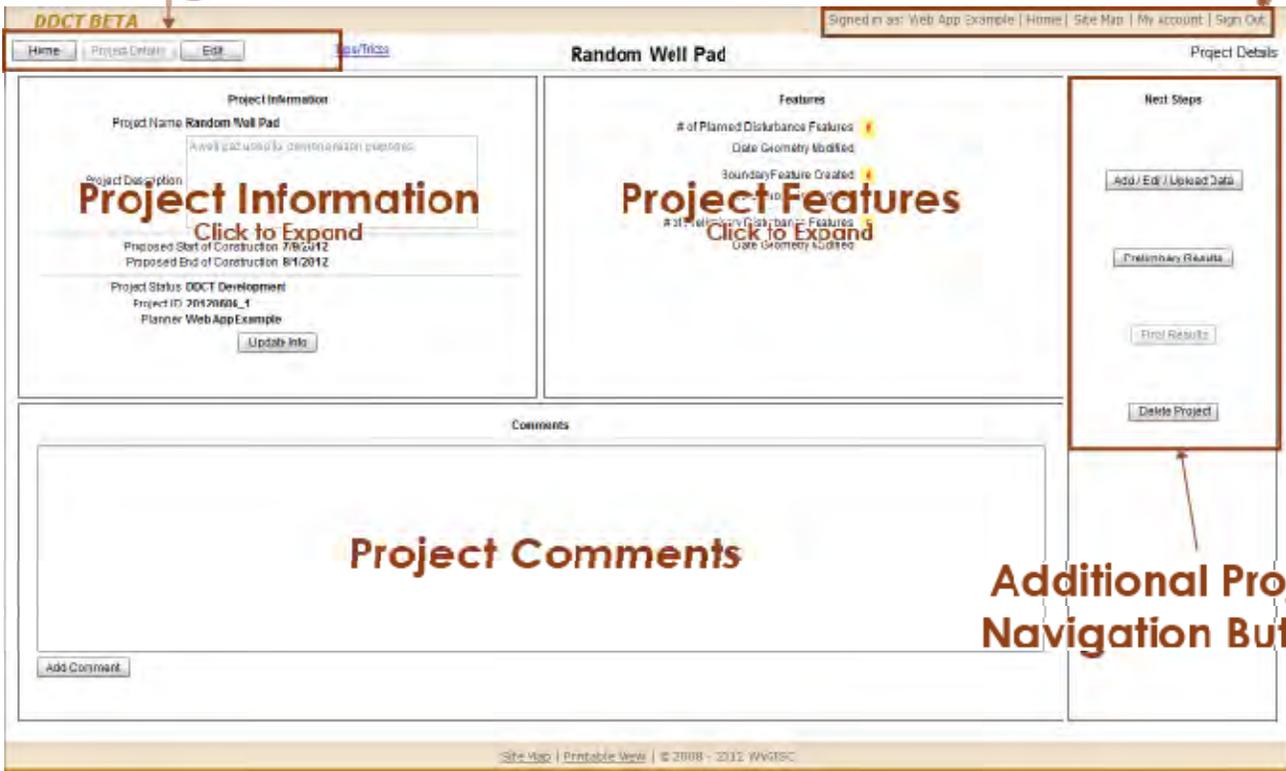
- ➔ Map Layer – Opens new window with Map Layer Information
- ➔ Measure – Opens the measure tool
- ➔ Identify – Opens the identify tool
- ➔ Zoom to State – Zooms to the full extent of Wyoming
- ➔ Zoom to previous extent – Zoom to the last extent – can be used multiple times
- ➔ Zoom forward to next extent – Only available after the use of the Zoom to previous extent tool – can be used multiple times
- ➔ Zoom in – Zooms in to a window drawn on the screen
- ➔ Zoom out – Zoom out using a window drawn on the screen
- ➔ Pan – Opens the pan tool
- ➔ Arrow – Opens the arrow tool



Project Details

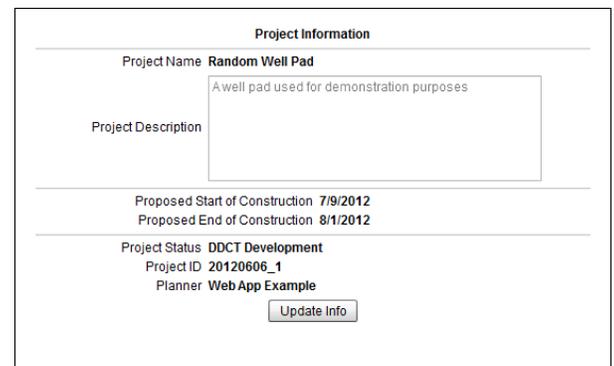
Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links



● Project Information

- Features of the Project Information area
 - ➔ Contains a summary of the project information
 - Project Name
 - Project Description
 - Start of Construction
 - End of Construction
 - Project Status
 - Project ID
 - Planner
 - ➔ The information can be edited by clicking the **Update Info** button



● Project Features

➤ Features of the Project Features area

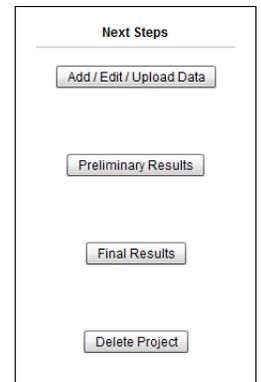
- Contains a summary of the project Features
- Number of Planned Disturbances
 - Proposed Project Area
 - Data last updated
- Project Boundary
 - Number of boundary features
 - Date last updated
- Number of Preliminary Disturbance Features
 - User entered existing disturbances
 - Date last updated

Features	
# of Planned Disturbance Features	1
Date Geometry Modified	06/07/2012
<hr/>	
Boundary Feature Created	1
Date Geometry Modified	06/13/2012
<hr/>	
# of Preliminary Disturbance Features	13
Date Geometry Modified	06/18/2012

● Additional Project Navigation Buttons

➤ Edit Existing Projects , Go to the Preliminary Results Screen, Go to the Final Results Screen, and Delete Existing Projects

- **Add/Edit/Upload Data** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Project Edit Screen**
 - Only available during the DDCT Development Phase
- **Preliminary Results** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Preliminary Results** Tab on the Project Edit Screen
 - Always available
- **Final Results** button
 - Takes the user to the to the **Final Results** Screen
 - Only available during the Technical Review Complete Phase
- **Delete Project** button
 - Deletes the project
 - Always available



Project Edit

Project Navigation Buttons

Website Links

Edit Tabs

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePc

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePc

Map Tabs

Map Layers x

Basedata

- Basedata
- Land Management Transparency

Background

None Terrain Quads NAIP 06 NAIP 09

Additional Data

Disturbance Layers Transparency

▼ **DDCT Project Data**

- Proposed Disturbance
- Statewide Disturbance And Disruption
- Statewide Disturbance Only
- Statewide Existing Disturbance (Exempt)
- Preliminary Disturbance And Disruption
- Preliminary Disturbance Only
- Preliminary Disturbance (Exempt)
- DDCTBoundary
- Map Grids

▼ **PLSS**

- Townships
- Sections
- Quarter/Quarter

▼ **Sage Grouse**

- Occupied Leks - Core or Connect Only
- Occupied Leks - 4mi Buffered Clipped to Core or Connect Only
- Sage-grouse Connectivity Areas
- Sage-grouse Core Areas v3

▼ **WOGCC IMS Data**

- Wells
- Units

Map Layers Tab

Map Layers **Locate Tools** **Overview Map**

Township or Section

Township N

Range W

Section

UTM

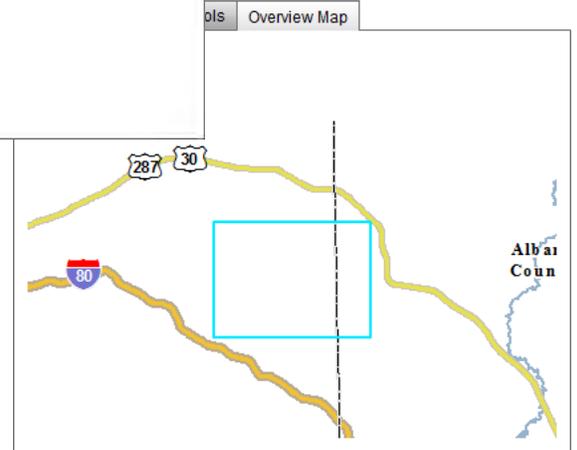
Easting

Northing

Zone

Locate Tools Tab

Tools **Overview Map**

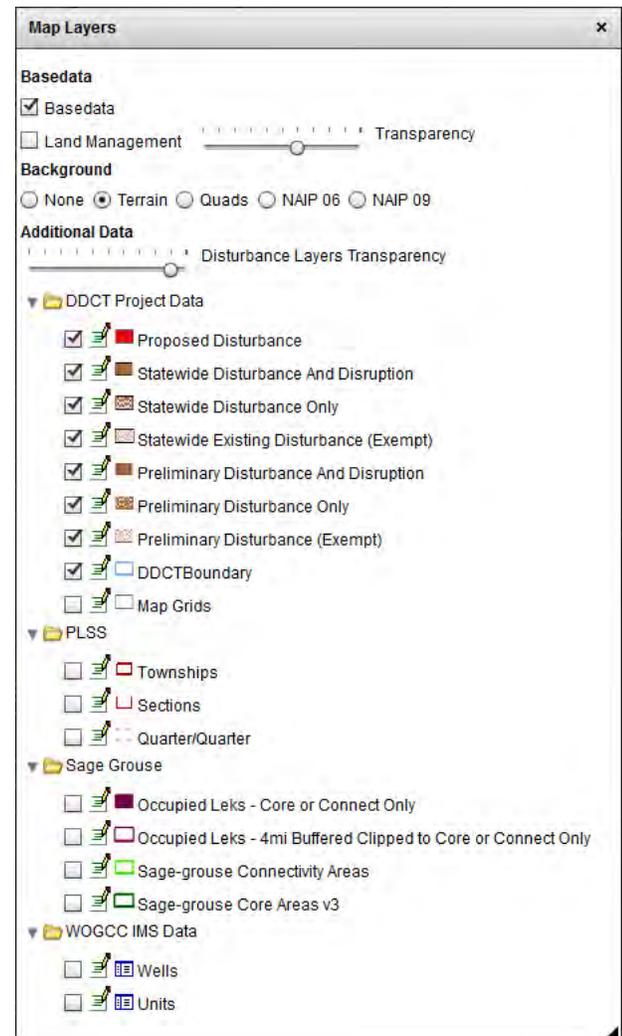


Overview Map Tab

Project Map Layers

DDCT Project Data

- Proposed Disturbance
 - Polygon (area) feature covering the total proposed project extent
 - Entered by the user, visible to only the user that entered the data
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Statewide Existing Disturbance
 - Polygon (area) feature covering existing surface disturbances throughout the state
 - Maintained by the DDCT Data and Application Steward
 - Visible to all users
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Preliminary Disturbances
 - Polygon (area) feature covering existing surface disturbances in the assessment area not already in the Statewide Disturbance Layer
 - Entered by the user, visible to only the user that entered the data
 - Moved to Statewide Disturbance Layer after the Technical Review is complete
 - Used only in preliminary calculations
- DDCT Boundary
 - Polygon (area) feature generated by the DDCT and used as the assessment area
 - Visible to only the user that generated the area
 - Used in preliminary and final calculations
- Map Grids
 - Polygon (area) feature that grids off the DDCT assessment area
 - Used to create PDF maps for technical review
 - Visible to only the user that generated the area
 - Not used in calculations



Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Project Development

Create New Project

● Create the Project

- From the **Application Home** Screen
 1. Enter the Project Name
 2. Enter the Project Description
 3. Enter the Proposed Start of Construction
 4. Enter the Proposed End of Construction
 5. Click **Add Project** button

Create New Project

Project Name

Project Description

Proposed Start of Construction

Proposed End of Construction

Project ID

Project Status

Planner

● The Next Steps

- Move onto the Add/Edit/Upload Stage
 1. Select the **Add/Edit/Upload** radio button
 2. Press the **Go** button

Next Steps

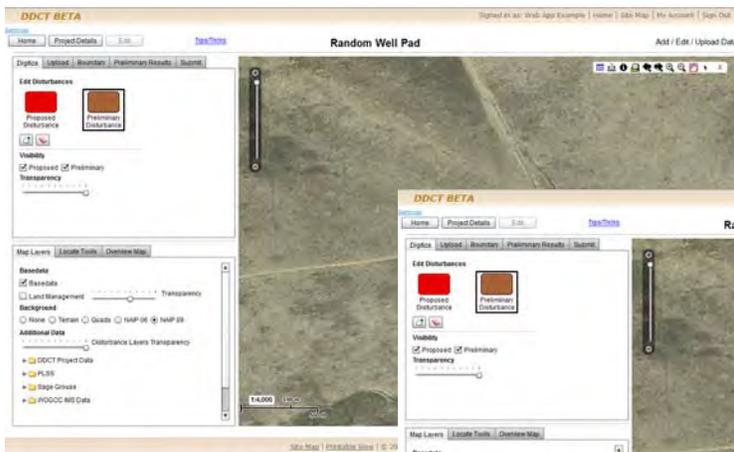
Add/Edit/Upload Data

Some Other Time

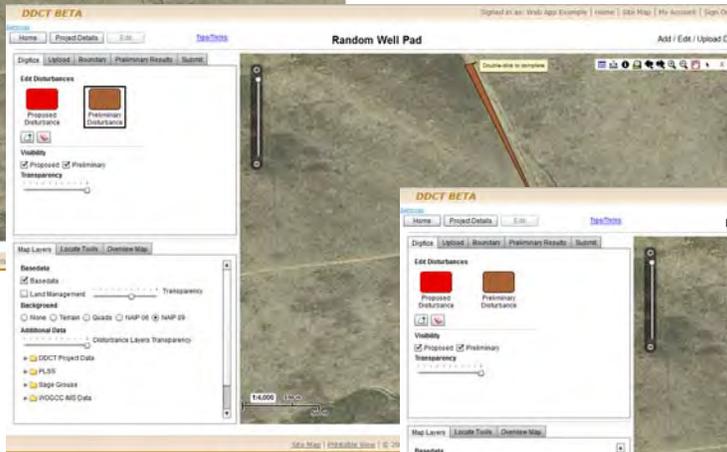
Create and Edit Features Using the Online Tool

Digitizing Features using the Online Tool

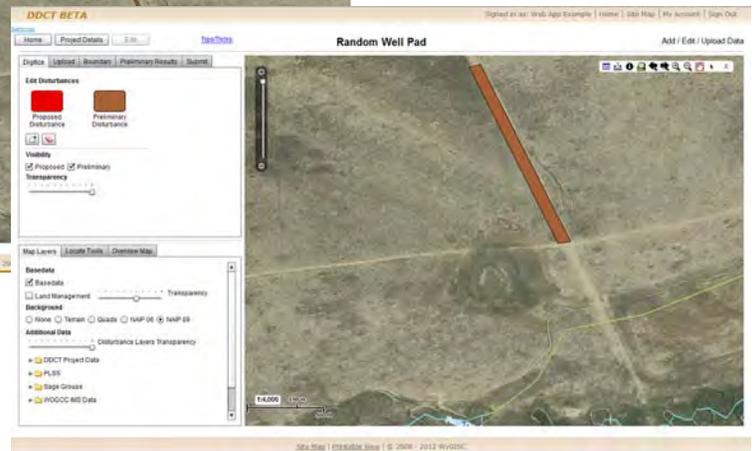
With the **Digitize** tab selected



1. Zoom into area of interest
2. Select either **Proposed Disturbance** or **Preliminary Disturbance**
3. In the map view window, click on one edge of the feature you want to digitized to start the process



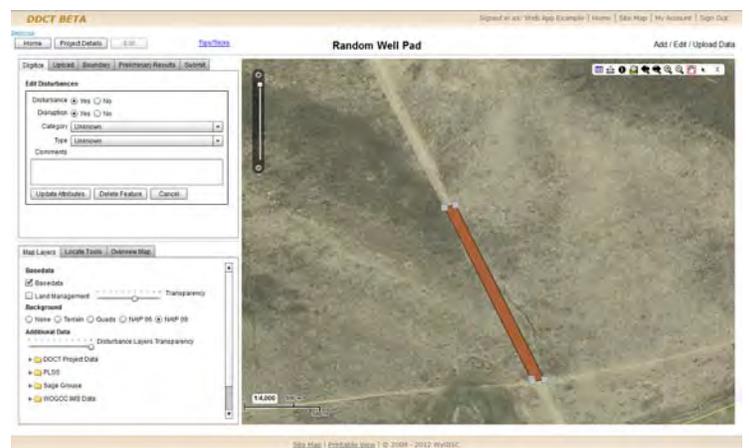
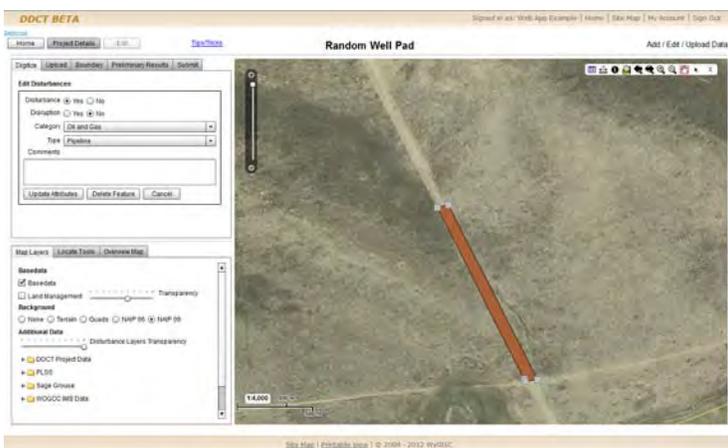
4. Keep clicking along the edge of the feature until the entire outline is created
5. Double click to finish the process



Editing Features using the Online Tool

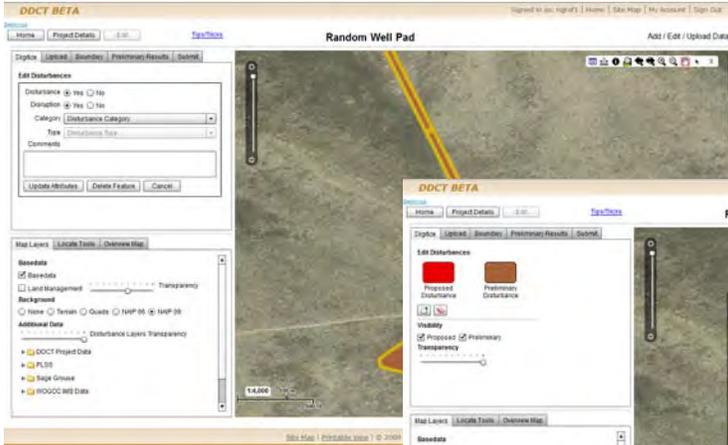
With the **Digitize** tab selected

1. Select either **Proposed Disturbance** or **Preliminary Disturbance**
2. In the map view window, click on the feature you want to edit to open the **Edit Disturbances** sub-tab
3. Select whether the feature is a Disturbance and/or Disruption
4. Select the Category and Type of disturbance
5. Enter any comments in the comments box (optional)
6. Click the **Update Feature** button to finish the process

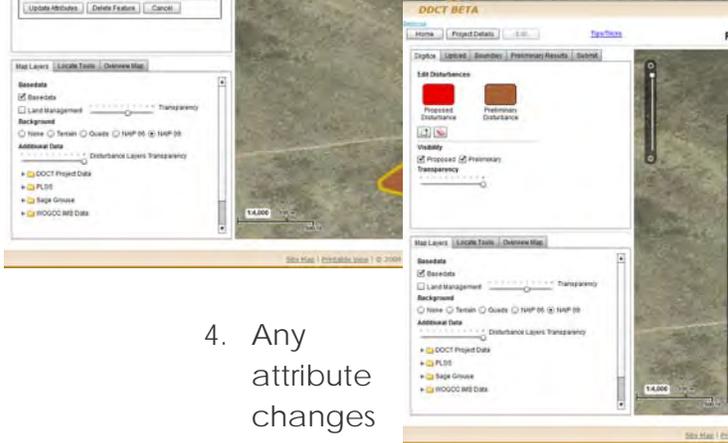


● **Selecting Multiple Features using the Online Tool**

➤ With the **Digitize** tab selected

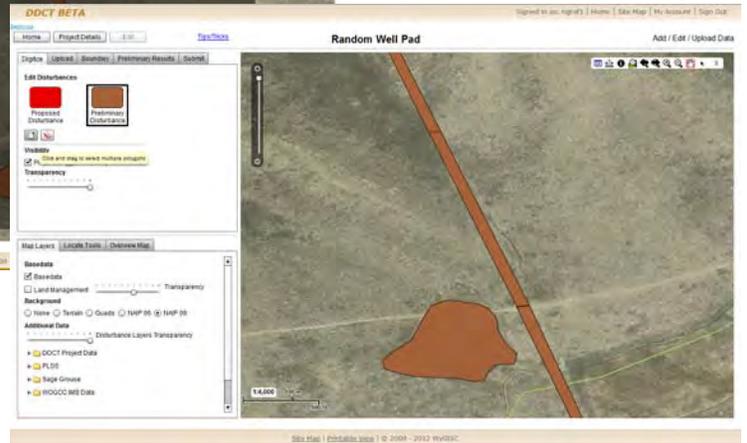


1. Click on the **Select Multiple Feature** tool
2. Use the mouse to draw a box around the features desired for selection



3. The selected features will have a yellow inner glow

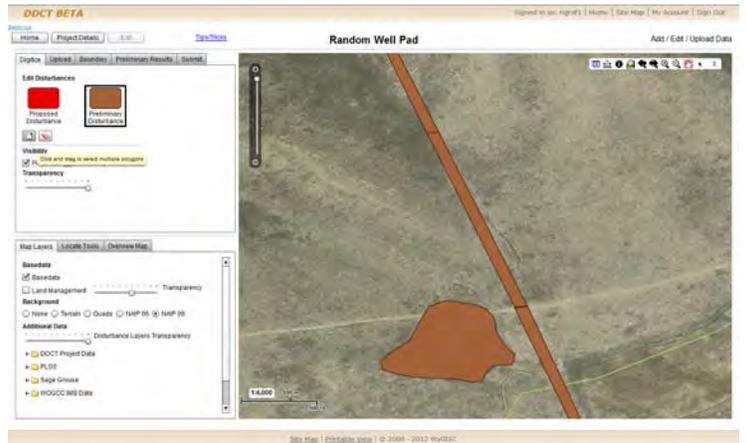
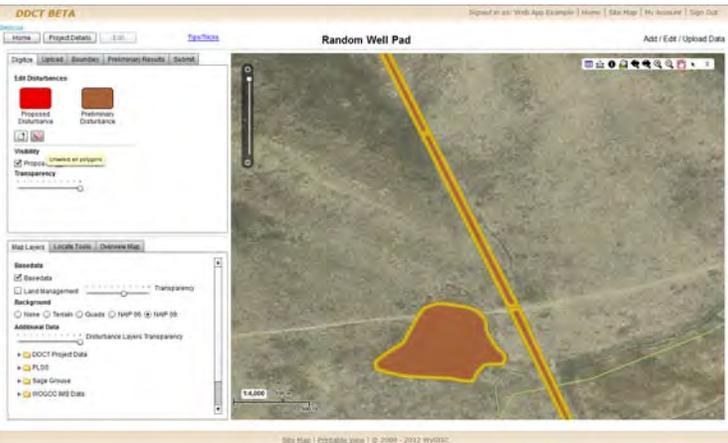
4. Any attribute changes or deleting of features will apply to all selected features



● **Clearing a Multiple Selection**

➤ With the **Digitize** tab selected

➔ Click on the **Clear Selected Features** button



Create Features Using the Upload Tool

Upload Proposed Project Area or Disturbance(s)

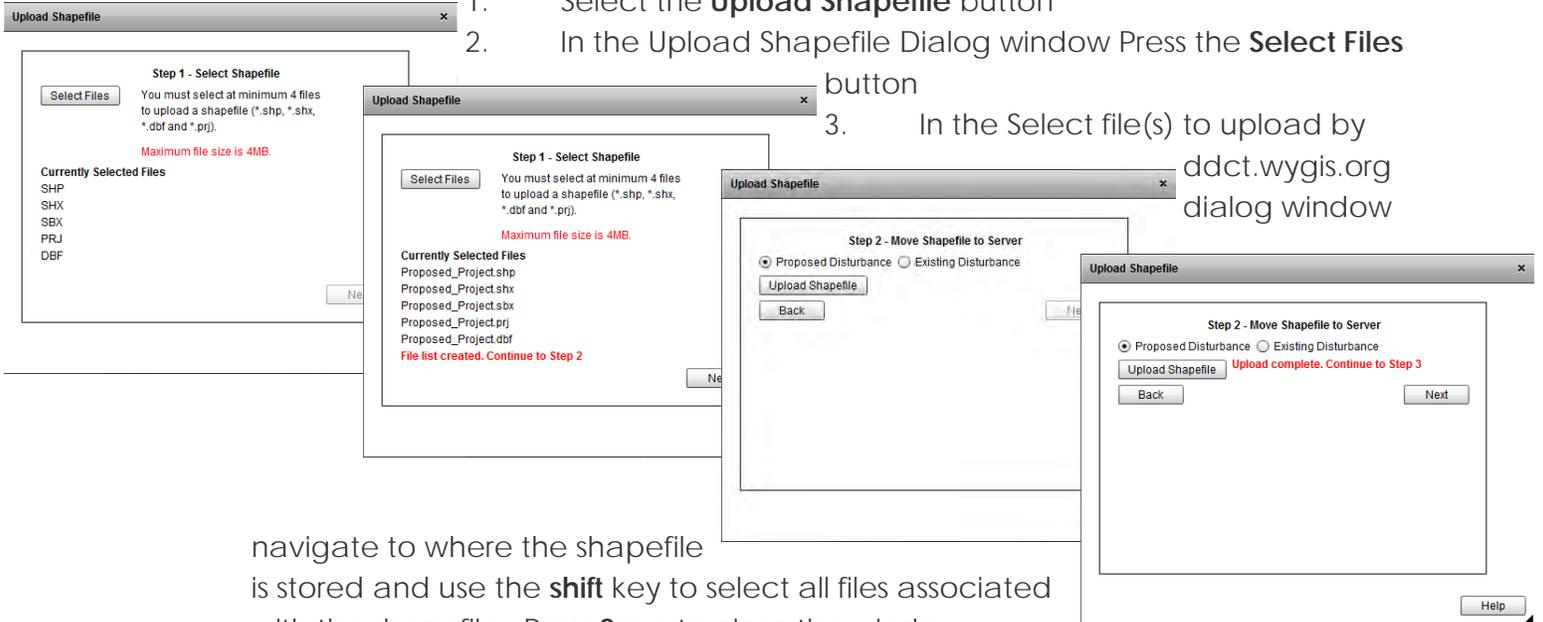
➤ With the **Upload** tab selected

1. Select the **Upload Shapefile** button

2. In the Upload Shapefile Dialog window Press the **Select Files** button

3. In the Select file(s) to upload by

ddct.wygis.org
dialog window



navigate to where the shapefile is stored and use the **shift** key to select all files associated with the shapefile. Press **Save** to close the window

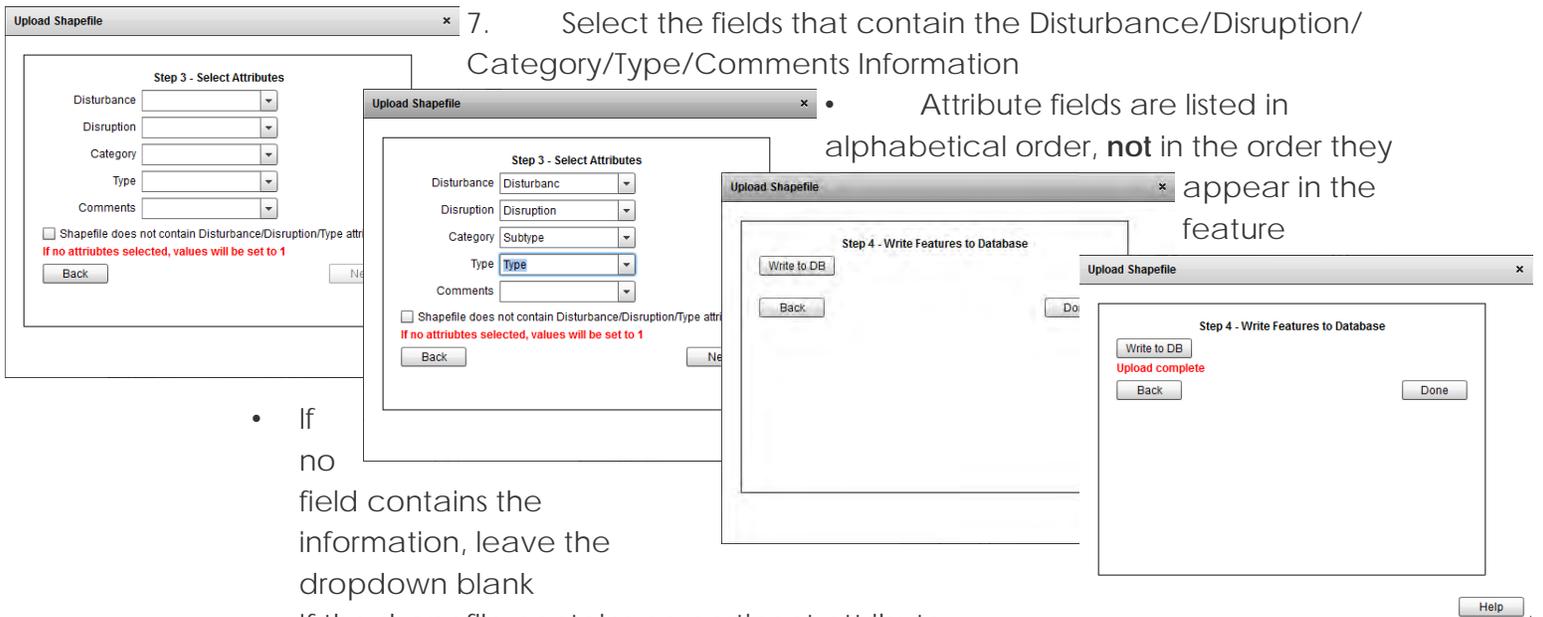
4. Press the **Next** button

5. Select whether the shapefile is a **Proposed Disturbance** or **Existing Disturbance** and click the **Upload Shapefile** button

6. When red text that says "upload complete. Continue to Step 3" appears, the upload has been successful, press the **Next** button

7. Select the fields that contain the Disturbance/Disruption/Category/Type/Comments Information

• Attribute fields are listed in alphabetical order, **not** in the order they appear in the feature



- If no field contains the information, leave the dropdown blank
- If the shapefile contains no pertinent attribute information select the check box at the bottom

8. Press the **Next** button

9. Press the **Write to DB** button to finalize the upload

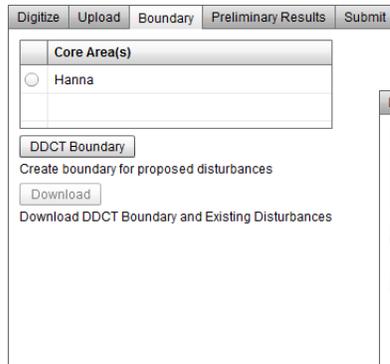
10. Press the **Done** button to finish the process

DDCT Assessment Area

Generate the boundary

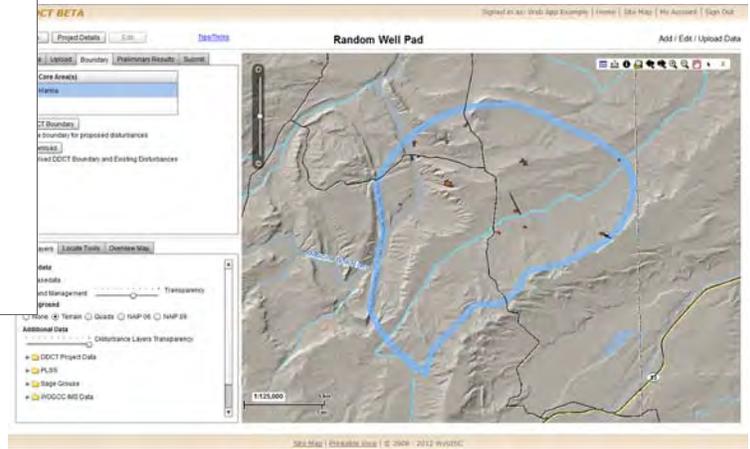
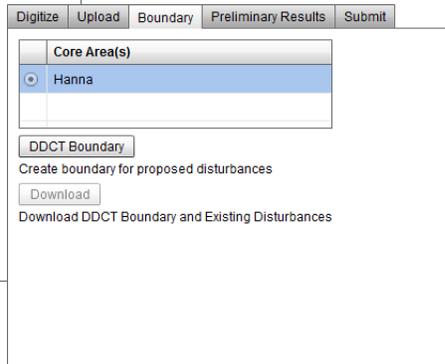
With the **Boundary** tab selected

1. Select the radio button next to the name of the **Core Area(s)** to be used in the DDCT process



2. Press the **DDCT Boundary** button

3. Wait until the boundary generation process has run, the screen will refresh when the process is complete



Download the boundary (If desired)

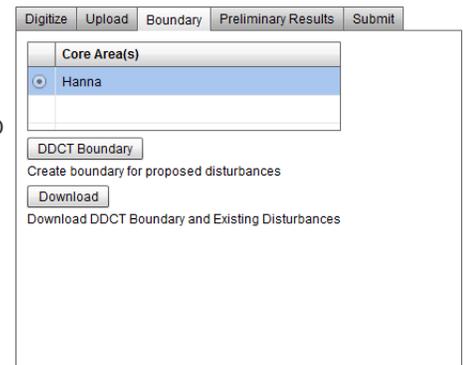
With the **Boundary** tab selected

1. Click the **Download** button

2. The download will be emailed to email address on file for the user and contain an attachment called WyGISC.zip

3. The WyGISC.zip contains an esri® File Geodatabase that contains the following features:

- ddctBoundary – The DDCT boundary
- ExistingDisturbance – Statewide Disturbance clipped to the DDCT boundary
- MapGrids – Grid covering the DDCT boundary used to create a Mapbook for the project
- PrelimDisturbance* – Preliminary Disturbance for the project area, entered by the user
- ProposedDisturbance – The proposed project boundary entered by the user



*if no Preliminary Disturbances have been created or uploaded, no PrelimDisturbance layer is included in the download

Preliminary Results

Calculate Results Using Both Preliminary and Statewide Disturbance Data

- With the **Preliminary Results** tab selected
 1. Select the Core Area for the calculation
 2. Click the **Calculate Results** button

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **OVERLAP - Calculate Results**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

Save as PDF

3. Wait until the preliminary calculation process has run, the tables will populate with data when the process is complete

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **DDCT Preliminary Calculation**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct

Save as PDF

4. These results are **not** stored in the database, and are **only for informative purposes**

Home Project Details Edit [Tips/Tricks](#)

Proposed Disturbances overlap with the following Core Area(s)
 These Results Include Your Preliminary Disturbance

Core Area(s)
 Hanna

Calculate Results **Done**

Proposed Existing Boundary

Category	Acres	Percent
Overall DDCT Boundary	27,270.47	100
Total Disturbed	254.12	0.93
Total Undisturbed	27,016.35	99.07
Disturbed - Project Only	1.98	0.01
Disturbed - Preliminary Only	191.84	0.70
Disturbed - Existing Only	60.30	0.22
Disruptions	0.07 Dis/640 Ac	

Owner	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct
Bureau of I	2,077.11	8.02	0.39	8.02	0.39
Private	23,174.59	171.47	0.74	173.45	0.75
State	1,958.75	11.22	0.57	11.22	0.57
Water	60.03	0.19	0.32	0.19	0.32

LekID	TotalAc	PreAc	PrePct	PostAc	PostPct
22-207809	21,691.63	160.21	0.74	162.19	0.75
22-217731	15,882.30	80.70	0.51	82.68	0.52

Save as PDF

Saving a copy of the Preliminary Results

- With the **Preliminary Results** tab selected
 1. Click the **Save as PDF** button
 2. Give the results a name and select the location to save the PDF

Submit for Technical Review

Submit a Project for Technical Review and to have Preliminary Data Included in the Statewide Disturbance Dataset

- With the **Submit** tab selected
 1. Press the **Submit** button
 2. An email will be sent to the DDCT Data and Application Steward indicating that the project is ready for review
 3. Proponents will be contacted with the results of the technical review

Digitize Upload Boundary Preliminary Results **Submit**

Submit Preliminary Disturbances to Steward for inclusion into Statewide database

Submit

Wyoming Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool

Technical Review

● Overview of the Technical Review Process

- After the project has been submitted for Technical Review
 1. Project is reviewed by the Data and Application Steward to ensure that all disturbances have been accounted for
 2. There are two possible results of the technical review
 - Disturbances need revision
 - All disturbances are accounted for and mapped correctly

● Revision Process

- Overview of Revision Process
 - ➔ Project is moved back to the **DDCT Development** stage
 - ➔ Proponent receives a series of PDF maps highlighting the areas of concern
 - ➔ Proponent can either manually correct the problems using the online tool, or upload corrected disturbance data
 - ➔ Once the concerns have been addressed the project is then re-submitted for **Technical Review**

● All Disturbances Mapped Correctly

- Overview of the Technical to Policy Review transition
 - ➔ Role of the Data and Application Steward:
 - Take the disturbances from the Preliminary layer and incorporate them into the Statewide Disturbance Data layer
 - Change the project status to Technical Review Complete
 - Notify the proponent that the Technical Review is complete
 - ➔ Role of the Proponent

1 **Appendix J – Mitigation**

2
3 **Part I – Regional Mitigation Strategy**

4
5 The BLM/USFS will achieve no net unmitigated loss for authorized land uses within greater
6 sage-grouse priority and general habitat. No net unmitigated loss means that impacts from
7 authorized land uses will be fully offset to benefit the species. Mitigation will follow the
8 regulations from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20;
9 e.g. avoid, minimize, and compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If
10 impacts to greater sage-grouse or its habitat from authorized land uses remain after applying
11 avoidance and minimization measures (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation
12 projects will be used to fully offset those residual impacts in order to achieve the no net
13 unmitigated loss standard. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition
14 to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see glossary).

15
16 The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team,
17 will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy that will inform the
18 NEPA decision making process including the application of the mitigation hierarchy to address
19 impacts within that Zone. A robust and transparent Regional Mitigation Strategy will contribute
20 to greater sage-grouse habitat conservation by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats and
21 compensating for residual impacts to greater sage-grouse and its habitat.

22
23 The BLM’s Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 serves as a framework for developing and
24 implementing a Regional Mitigation Strategy. The following sections provide additional
25 guidance specific to the development and implementation of a WAFWA Management Zone
26 Regional Mitigation Strategy.

27
28 Developing a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy

29
30 The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team,
31 will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy to guide the
32 application of the mitigation hierarchy to address impacts within that Zone. The Strategy should
33 consider any State-level greater sage-grouse mitigation guidance that is consistent with the
34 requirements identified in this Appendix. The Regional Mitigation Strategy should be developed
35 in a transparent manner, based on the best science available and standardized metrics.

36
37 As described in Chapter 2, the BLM/USFS will establish a WAFWA Management Zone Greater
38 Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide the conservation of greater
39 sage-grouse, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The Strategy will be
40 developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision.

41
42 The Regional Mitigation Strategy should include mitigation guidance on avoidance,
43 minimization, and compensation, as follows:

- 44
45 • Avoidance

- 46 ○ Include avoidance areas (e.g. right-of-way avoidance/exclusion areas, no surface
47 occupancy areas) already included in laws, regulations, policies, and/or land use plans
48 (e.g. Resource Management Plans, Forest Plans, State Plans); and,
- 49 ○ Include any potential, additional avoidance actions (e.g. additional avoidance best
50 management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- 51 ● Minimization
 - 52 ○ Include minimization actions (e.g. required design features, best management
53 practices) already included in laws, regulations, policies, land use plans, and/or land-
54 use authorizations; and,
 - 55 ○ Include any potential, additional minimization actions (e.g. additional minimization
56 best management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- 57 ● Compensation
 - 58 ○ Include discussion of impact/project valuation, compensatory mitigation options,
59 siting, compensatory project types and costs, monitoring, reporting, and program
60 administration. Each of these topics is discussed in more detail below.
 - 61 ■ Residual Impact and Compensatory Mitigation Project Valuation Guidance
 - 62 ○ A common standardized method should be identified for estimating
63 the value of the residual impacts and value of the compensatory
64 mitigation projects.
 - 65 ○ This method should consider the quality of habitat, scarcity of the
66 habitat, and the size of the impact/project.
 - 67 ○ For compensatory mitigation projects, consideration of durability (see
68 glossary), timeliness (see glossary), and the potential for failure may
69 require an upward adjustment of the valuation.
 - 70 ○ The resultant compensatory mitigation project will, after application of the
71 above guidance, result in proactive conservation measures for Greater Sage-
72 grouse (consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species
73 Management, section .02).
 - 74 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Options
 - 75 ○ Options for implementing compensatory mitigation should be
76 identified, such as:
 - 77 ■ Utilizing certified mitigation/conservation bank or credit
78 exchanges.
 - 79 ■ Contributing to an existing mitigation/conservation fund.
 - 80 ■ Authorized-user conducted mitigation projects.
 - 81 ○ For any compensatory mitigation project, the investment must be
82 additional (i.e. additionality: the conservation benefits of
83 compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and would not have
84 resulted without the compensatory mitigation project).
 - 85 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Siting
 - 86 ○ Sites should be in areas that have the potential to yield the greatest
87 conservation benefit to the greater sage-grouse, regardless of land
88 ownership.
 - 89 ○ Sites should be durable (see glossary).
 - 90 ○ Sites identified by existing plans and strategies (e.g. fire restoration
91 plans, invasive species strategies, healthy land focal areas) should be

92 considered, if those sites have the potential to yield the greatest benefit
93 to greater sage-grouse and are durable.

- 94 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Project Types and Costs
 - 95 ○ Project types should be identified that help reduce threats to greater
 - 96 sage-grouse (e.g. protection, conservation, and restoration projects).
 - 97 ○ Each project type should have a goal and measurable objectives.
 - 98 ○ Each project type should have associated monitoring and maintenance
 - 99 requirements, for the duration of the impact.
 - 100 ○ To inform contributions to a mitigation/conservation fund, expected
 - 101 costs for these project types (and their monitoring and maintenance),
 - 102 within the WAFWA Management Zone, should be identified.
- 103 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Compliance and Monitoring
 - 104 ○ Mitigation projects should be inspected to ensure they are
 - 105 implemented as designed, and if not, there should be methods to
 - 106 enforce compliance.
 - 107 ○ Mitigation projects should be monitored to ensure that the goals and
 - 108 objectives are met and that the benefits are effective for the duration of
 - 109 the impact.
- 110 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Reporting
 - 111 ○ Standardized, transparent, scalable, and scientifically-defensible
 - 112 reporting requirements should be identified for mitigation projects.
 - 113 ○ Reports should be compiled, summarized, and reviewed in the
 - 114 WAFWA Management Zone in order to determine if greater sage-
 - 115 grouse conservation has been achieved and/or to support adaptive
 - 116 management recommendations.
- 117 ■ Compensatory Mitigation Program Implementation Guidelines
 - 118 ○ Guidelines for implementing the State-level compensatory mitigation
 - 119 program should include holding and applying compensatory mitigation
 - 120 funds, operating a transparent and credible accounting system,
 - 121 certifying mitigation credits, and managing reporting requirements.
 - 122

123 Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into Land Use Authorization Analyses

124
125 The BLM/USFS will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations
126 from the Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for
127 authorized land uses that may impact greater sage-grouse or its habitat.

128 129 Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program

130
131 The BLM/USFS need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically implemented to
132 achieve the greatest conservation benefit, as identified in the Regional Mitigation Strategy. In
133 order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this compensatory mitigation
134 program will be managed at a State-level (as opposed to a WAFWA Management Zone, a Field
135 Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

136

137 To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the
138 BLM/USFS will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help manage the State-
139 level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision.
140 The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator will conform to all
141 relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM/USFS will remain responsible for making
142 decisions that affect Federal lands.

143

144 **Glossary Terms**

145

146 **Additionality:** The conservation benefits of compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and
147 would not have resulted without the compensatory mitigation project. (BLM Manual Section
148 1794).

149

150 **Avoidance mitigation:** Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of
151 an action. (40 CFR 1508.20(a)) (e.g. may also include avoiding the impact by moving the
152 proposed action to a different time or location.)

153

154 **Compensatory mitigation:** Compensating for the (residual) impact by replacing or providing
155 substitute resources or environments. (40 CFR 1508.20)

156

157 **Compensatory mitigation projects:** Specific, on-the-ground actions to improve and/or protect
158 habitats (e.g. chemical vegetation treatments, land acquisitions, conservation easements).

159

160 **Compensatory mitigation sites:** The durable areas where compensatory mitigation projects will
161 occur.

162

163 **Durability (protective and ecological):** The administrative, legal, and financial assurances that
164 secure and protect the conservation status of a compensatory mitigation site, and the ecological
165 benefits of a compensatory mitigation project, for at least as long as the associated impacts
166 persist. (BLM Manual Section 1794).

167

168 **Minimization mitigation:** Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action
169 and its implementation. (40 CFR 1508.20 (b))

170

171 **Residual impacts:** Impacts from an authorized land use that remain after applying avoidance
172 and minimization mitigation; also referred to as unavoidable impacts.

173

174 **Timeliness:** The conservation benefits from compensatory mitigation accruing as early as
175 possible or before impacts have begun. (BLM Manual Section 1794).

176

177

178 **Part II – Idaho Mitigation Framework**

179
180 **FRAMEWORK FOR MITIGATION OF IMPACTS FROM INFRASTRUCTURE**
181 **PROJECTS ON SAGE-GROUSE AND THEIR HABITATS**

182
183 **Sage-Grouse Mitigation Subcommittee of the Idaho Sage-Grouse State Advisory**
184 **Committee¹**
185 **December 6, 2010**

186
187 **INTRODUCTION**

188
189 The Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee
190 2006; as amended in 2009) calls for the development of a “proposal for a mitigation and crediting
191 program for sagebrush steppe habitats in Idaho and recommendations for policy consideration”
192 (Measure 6.2.4). In early 2010, the Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee (SAC) established the
193 Mitigation Subcommittee to complete this task.¹ The Mitigation Subcommittee met several times
194 from the late spring, through the fall of 2010 and found broad areas of agreement among its diverse
195 participants.

196
197 This report presents the Mitigation Subcommittee’s consensus recommendations for the creation of
198 an Idaho-based program to compensate for the impacts of infrastructure projects on sagegrouse and
199 their habitats. This program – called the Mitigation Framework – would serve as a science-based
200 “mitigation module” that project developers and government regulators could use to achieve
201 compensatory mitigation objectives called for in project plans and permits. While compensatory
202 mitigation may help offset certain impacts arising from infrastructure projects, mitigation should not
203 be considered a substitute for first avoiding and then minimizing impacts.

204
205 In addition, it is important to recognize that federal and state regulatory or land-management
206 agencies, and county or local governments may also require additional stipulations, conditions of
207 approval or other requirements as well as on-site mitigation, in accordance with applicable law,
208 regulation or policy.

209
210 This document proposes a general outline or “skeleton” of policies and procedures for such a
211 program. The Mitigation Framework is designed to be transparent, inclusive, and accountable to
212 defined objectives. The Subcommittee’s purpose is to describe the program in enough detail to
213 foster a dialogue among SAC members, spot important issues and points of agreement, and assess
214 the level of support for developing a functioning mitigation program for Idaho sagegrouse and their
215 habitats.

¹ Subcommittee participants: John Robison and Lara Rozzelle, Idaho Conservation League; Brett Dumas, Idaho Power Company; Paul Makela and Tom Rinkes, BLM; Don Kemner, Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Will Whelan and Trish Klahr, The Nature Conservancy; Rich Rayhill, Ridgeline Energy, LLC; Lisa LaBolle and Kirsten Sikes, Idaho Office of Energy Resources; Nate Fisher, Idaho Office of Species Conservation; John Romero, Citizen at Large.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The state of Idaho is seeing an increasing number of infrastructure projects, such as transmission lines and wind energy facilities, proposed in the state’s sagebrush steppe ecosystems. Where federal permits are required, the environmental review process for these projects will analyze how these projects affect sage-grouse and will consider a range of potential mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or offset any impacts. It is likely that the environmental review process will lead at least some developers and agencies to implement compensatory mitigation.

Compensatory mitigation consists of compensating for residual project impacts that are not avoided or minimized by providing substitute resources or habitats, often at a different location than the project area. For sage-grouse, this would include, among other things, protecting and restoring sagebrush habitats to offset habitat losses and other effects of infrastructure projects.

This framework describes the general outline for a sage-grouse compensatory mitigation program in Idaho. This program would employ an “in-lieu fee” approach to compensatory mitigation through which a project developer would pay funds into an account managed by the mitigation program for performance of mitigation actions that provide measureable benefits for sage-grouse and their habitats within Idaho.

The Mitigation Framework does not alter the legal standards or procedures for review and approval of infrastructure projects. Rather, it offers an option that project developers and/or regulators may choose for implementing mitigation plans and agency permit conditions. It should be emphasized that this program would not relieve project developers and permitting agencies of their obligation to avoid and minimize environmental impacts through appropriate project siting, design and implementation.

Although the initial focus is on sage-grouse, the Mitigation Framework can be readily adapted to provide compensatory mitigation for other sagebrush obligate and associated species. The suitability of the Framework for other species and natural features has not been evaluated.

The objectives of the Mitigation Framework include:

- Provide a credible, efficient, transparent, and flexible mechanism to implement compensatory mitigation;
- Ensure that sage-grouse impacts are offset by actions that benefit the affected species and habitats;
- Provide increased certainty for developers and agencies;
- Involve private and public partners in crafting solutions;
- Provide developers the opportunity to offset the impacts of project development and operation on sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat, and provide a consistent mechanism to offset impacts to the species that can be evaluated in future reviews of the species’ status; and
- Evaluate issues based on best available scientific information, while acknowledging and responding to scientific uncertainty.

262 The Mitigation Framework would be established through a memorandum of agreement (MOA)
263 among entities that have the capacity and commitment to assist in its implementation. Such parties
264 may include land and wildlife management agencies, counties, tribes, participating private
265 infrastructure development companies, and non-governmental organizations. The MOA would
266 define the specific roles and responsibilities, procedures, and tasks needed to operate an Idaho-based
267 compensatory mitigation program.
268

269 The Mitigation Framework envisions a program with the following attributes: (1) a Mitigation Team
270 and program administrator to steer the mitigation program and ensure strong oversight; (2)
271 technically sound and transparent guidelines for estimating compensatory mitigation costs; (3) a
272 science-based statewide strategy to guide the selection of mitigation actions that will receive funding;
273 (4) provisions that the costs of operating the program will be borne by infrastructure developers that
274 use the Mitigation Framework to deliver compensatory mitigation; (5) monitoring the
275 implementation and effectiveness of mitigation actions funded by the Mitigation Framework
276 program; (6) a system to track benefits provided by the Mitigation Framework to sage-grouse habitat
277 in Idaho; and (7) periodic evaluation and adaptation of the Mitigation Framework program.
278

279 This framework provides only a general outline of a proposed Idaho-based compensatory mitigation
280 program. It is intended to assess the level of support for crafting the agreements and completing the
281 technical tasks needed to bring the Mitigation Framework into being.
282

283 **DISCUSSION**

284
285 I. The Role of Compensatory Mitigation in Infrastructure Development and Sage-grouse
286 Conservation

287
288 **A. Mitigation Basics**

289
290 Broadly defined, “mitigation” refers to a wide range of measures that are taken to avoid,
291 minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for the adverse impacts of actions affecting the
292 environment. See 40 C.F.R. § 1508.20 (definition of “mitigation” in National Environmental
293 Policy Act (NEPA) rules). In this general sense, mitigation should be an integral part of all
294 phases of project planning and implementation.
295

296 The focus of this report is on compensatory mitigation – also known as “biodiversity
297 offsets” or “offsite mitigation.” Compensatory mitigation consists of compensating for
298 residual project impacts that are not avoided or minimized by providing substitute resources
299 or habitats, often at a different location than the project area. For instance, a project
300 developer may fund the restoration of a particular type of habitat in order to replace or
301 “offset” similar habitat that is lost as a result of project construction.
302

303 This Framework adopts an “in-lieu fee” approach to compensatory mitigation. Under this
304 approach, a project developer provides funding to a compensatory mitigation program
305 administrator who then distributes the funds to the appropriate government agency,
306 foundation or other organization for performance of mitigation actions. In an in-lieu fee
307 program, the responsibility for actually delivering the compensatory mitigation is transferred
308 from the developer to the program administrator once the developer provides the necessary
309 funds to the in-lieu fee program. It is important to emphasize that compensatory mitigation

310 does not relieve project developers and permitting agencies of their obligation to avoid and
311 minimize environmental impacts. This Framework endorses the principle known as the
312 “mitigation hierarchy,” which holds that decision makers should consider the elements of
313 environmental mitigation in the following order of priority:

- 314 1. Avoid environmental impacts through project siting and design;
- 315 2. Minimize the impacts during construction, operation, maintenance, and
316 decommissioning by implementing appropriate conservation measures related to
317 timing and conduct of project activities;
- 318 3. Restore areas that have been disturbed or otherwise rectify on-site project-related
319 impacts to the greatest extent practicable; and
- 320 4. Compensate for residual impacts (direct and indirect effects that are not mitigated
321 on-site) by providing replacement habitats or other benefits.
322

323 This means that compensatory mitigation is addressed only after efforts to avoid, minimize,
324 and mitigate the impacts have been addressed. It also should be noted that significant
325 impacts to habitat areas that support special functions and values for sage-grouse may simply
326 not be replaceable through mitigation and therefore the best course may be to avoid those
327 areas altogether.
328

329 **B. Need for an Idaho Compensatory Mitigation Program**

330 In recent years, the state of Idaho has seen an increase in the number of major infrastructure
331 projects proposed in the state’s sagebrush steppe ecosystems. Several current proposals
332 involve high voltage transmission lines that would cross over hundreds of miles of sage-
333 grouse habitat. Large scale energy infrastructure projects such as wind farms may also affect
334 large areas of sagegrouse habitat. Where these projects are located at least partially on
335 federally managed public lands they will be required by federal law to go through an
336 extensive environmental review process under NEPA before relevant federal permits are
337 issued. The NEPA process requires the permitting agencies to consider the projects’
338 environmental effects (both positive and negative), alternatives, and potential mitigation
339 measures. Impacts on sage-grouse will be one of the topics analyzed in the NEPA process.
340

341 Even after efforts are taken to avoid and minimize impacts, it is possible that some of these
342 infrastructure projects will degrade some sage-grouse habitat, cause direct sage-grouse
343 mortality, or lead to indirect effects such as avoidance of previously occupied habitat. The
344 extent to which project developers and regulators adopt compensatory mitigation as a means
345 to offset these impacts is not fully known. However, it is likely that at least some developers
346 and regulators will seek to implement compensatory mitigation to benefit sage-grouse and
347 their habitats. Energy companies and other developers face daunting challenges in carrying
348 out compensatory mitigation for sage-grouse habitat. Just identifying specific mitigation
349 actions requires a major effort. Actually implementing sagebrush restoration and
350 enhancement projects is even more difficult and expensive – typically involving years of
351 effort and a significant risk of failure. Delivering this type of technically complex
352 environmental mitigation may be well outside the core business of many infrastructure
353 developers.
354

355 **C. Advantages of the Mitigation Framework**

358
359 The Mitigation Framework proposes to respond to these challenges by creating a statewide
360 program to deliver scientifically sound compensatory mitigation for multiple projects.
361 Project developers and regulators would no longer have to design, fund and implement their
362 own mitigation programs. Instead, they would have the option of contributing money to a
363 central fund overseen by agencies with expertise in habitat management and non-
364 governmental partners with similar experience. This approach to compensatory mitigation
365 offers three major advantages. The first advantage stems from the increased efficiency of an
366 Idaho-wide mitigation program compared with fragmented, project-by-project mitigation
367 programs. Mitigation efforts require a significant investment in planning, administration,
368 project oversight, and monitoring. The Mitigation Framework would consolidate these
369 functions, thus avoiding needless duplication. The second advantage is that a state mitigation
370 fund can be used for sage-grouse conservation more strategically and at a greater scale than
371 project-by-project mitigation. As described in more detail below, the Mitigation Framework
372 would fund sage-grouse habitat protection and restoration projects in accordance with a
373 statewide strategy that uses landscape-scale analyses to identify the specific measures and
374 habitats that will provide the greatest benefit for Idaho sagegrouse populations. This Idaho-
375 based mitigation strategy will be integrated with other conservation strategies throughout the
376 range of sage-grouse to ensure that actions taken in Idaho benefit the species as a whole.
377 Third, this method can engage the capacity and competence of natural resources agencies,
378 local governments, private companies, and non-governmental organizations. The Mitigation
379 Framework proposes to enlist these entities in shaping Idaho’s strategy, developing criteria
380 for use of the fund, and proposing and implementing habitat protection and restoration
381 projects. The benefits of the Mitigation Framework can be summarized as follows:

382
383 *Benefits for Project Developers:*

384
385 An efficient and reliable mechanism for meeting compensatory mitigation objectives and
386 permit conditions; and Increased certainty regarding project costs.

387
388 *Benefits for Regulatory Agencies:*

389
390 Increased certainty that in-lieu fees will result in strategic “on-the-ground” mitigation actions
391 that benefit sage-grouse.

392
393 *Benefits for Sage-Grouse:*

394
395 Increased certainty that scientifically sound mitigation actions that benefit sage-grouse and
396 offset impacts and habitat losses associated with infrastructure development will be
397 implemented.

398
399 **D. Ensuring Accountability**

400
401 In-lieu fee compensatory mitigation does pose one potentially significant drawback that must
402 be acknowledged and addressed: a poorly designed program may lack accountability for
403 delivering meaningful on-the-ground benefits for sage-grouse. Simply having a project
404 developer contribute to an in-lieu fee mitigation account does not by itself compensate for
405 the sage-grouse impacts caused by the project. Actual mitigation is possible only after well-

406 conceived habitat protection and restoration projects are planned, funded, implemented,
407 monitored, and successful in achieving stated objectives. The Mitigation Framework seeks to
408 ensure accountability by adopting a series of rigorous and transparent procedures. As
409 described below, the Framework would: (1) ensure that program administration and
410 monitoring functions are adequately funded; (2) provide technically sound guidelines for
411 estimating the costs of delivering compensatory mitigation; (3) establish a sciencebased
412 statewide strategy to guide the program; (4) develop project selection criteria and a request
413 for proposals based on the strategy; (5) require monitoring of the implementation and
414 effectiveness of mitigation actions funded by the program; (6) track benefits the Mitigation
415

416 Framework program provides to sage-grouse in Idaho; and (7) require periodic evaluation of
417 the program. Taken together, these procedures provide a high degree of certainty that the
418 Mitigation Framework will be able to turn in-lieu fee payments into tangible, lasting
419 compensatory mitigation for sage-grouse. As described in greater detail in Section E, below,
420 project developers that seek to use the Mitigation Framework will need to show two things.
421 First, they will need to show that their projects' impacts on sage-grouse and their habitats
422 have been evaluated using a scientifically sound process. Second, they will need to show that
423 their contributions to the mitigation fund reflect the Mitigation Framework's compensation
424 guidelines to ensure that funding will be adequate to offset project impacts. Having
425 demonstrated those things, the project developers should then be able to rely on their in-lieu
426 fee contribution to the mitigation account as satisfying their compensatory mitigation
427 objectives or obligations.
428

429 **II. Core Elements of Idaho Sage-Grouse Mitigation Program**

430 **A. Program Objectives**

- 431 • Provide a credible, efficient, transparent, and flexible mechanism to implement
- 432 compensatory mitigation;
- 433 • Ensure that sage-grouse impacts are offset by mitigation actions that benefit the sage-
- 434 grouse and their habitats;
- 435 • Provide increased certainty for developers and agencies;
- 436 • Involve private and public partners in crafting solutions;
- 437 • Provide developers the opportunity to offset project impacts on sage-grouse and sage-
- 438 grouse habitat, and provide a consistent mitigation mechanism that can be evaluated in
- 439 future reviews of the species' status; and
- 440 • Evaluate issues based on best available scientific information while acknowledging and
- 441 responding to scientific uncertainty.
- 442
- 443
- 444

445 **B. Scope**

446 The Mitigation Framework proposes to mitigate for impacts to Idaho sage-grouse and their
447 habitats in Idaho. The initial focus of the Mitigation Framework is on sage-grouse. However,
448 this program can be readily adapted to provide compensatory mitigation for other sagebrush
449 obligate and associate species, such as pygmy rabbits, if project developers and regulators call for
450 such mitigation.
451
452

453 Whether this Framework is suited for mitigation of impacts to a broader suite of species or
454 natural features has not been evaluated. It should be noted that some subcommittee members
455 expect to advocate in other forums that compensatory mitigation should extend beyond
456 sagegrouse. The Mitigation Framework focuses on infrastructure projects because this type of
457 development is the most likely to give rise to compensatory mitigation under existing
458 environmental policies. As used here, the term “infrastructure” refers to building structures that
459 significantly disturb sage-grouse habitat, including but not limited to projects for electricity
460 transmission, energy generation, pipeline conveyance, transportation, communications, and
461 similar purposes. The Mitigation Framework is not intended to apply to existing projects that are
462 not changing in scope or to the renewal of on-going activities, such as grazing permits. In
463 addition, the Framework is not suited to projects with minor impacts because their contributions
464 to the mitigation program would be too small to justify the effort needed to establish and
465 administer inlieu fee payments.

466
467 **C. Integration with Environmental Review Procedures**

468
469 The Mitigation Framework does not alter the legal standards or procedures for review and
470 approval of infrastructure projects. Rather, the Framework offers an option that project
471 developers and/or regulators may choose for implementing mitigation plans and agency permit
472 conditions. The Mitigation Framework is intended to complement the environmental review
473 process conducted pursuant to NEPA and other federal environmental laws as well as county
474 land use planning authorities. Many energy and other infrastructure projects undergo review and
475 approval at the county level. The issues examined and the level of environmental analysis varies
476 widely among individual counties and individual developers. If a county or developer decides to
477 address sage-grouse impacts, it will be able to use the Mitigation Framework as a mechanism for
478 meeting compensatory mitigation objectives that may arise from the county permitting process.

479
480 **D. Mitigation Strategy**

481
482 The next step focuses on the Mitigation Team’s task of developing a statewide, science-based
483 strategy that will guide the use of the mitigation fund. The mitigation program strategy would
484 establish priorities for the use of compensatory mitigation funding based on factors/risks
485 identified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List Greater
486 Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered (USFWS 2010) and in the
487 Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (2006). The strategy sets mitigation
488 priorities with a landscape view of sage-grouse needs and highlights mitigation opportunities in
489 Idaho based on best available science. In setting priorities, the strategy considers species and
490 community size, landscape condition, and regional context. The strategy is responsive to the
491 threats and risks described in the sage-grouse 12- month findings. The strategy will also generally
492 describe the types of mitigation actions, project specifications, and best practices that are likely
493 to produce measureable benefits for sage-grouse habitat. Finally, the strategy addresses both
494 implementation and effectiveness monitoring requirements for mitigation actions funded
495 through the program. The Mitigation Framework’s strategy will draw heavily from the State of
496 Idaho’s sage-grouse conservation plan but has a narrower focus. It is intended to provide the
497 specific guidance on program priorities, accepted mitigation measures, and geographic areas of
498 emphasis that potential mitigation project sponsors will need to know when they apply for
499 funds. The strategy plays a crucial role in steering mitigation funding to those activities and
500 places that can provide the most effective benefits for Idaho sage-grouse populations consistent

501 with strategies to increase the viability of the species throughout its range. To this end, the
502 strategy will address one of the major policy questions that arise in the design of compensatory
503 mitigation systems: how closely should the mitigation actions be linked to the type and location
504 of the habitat that was originally affected by the infrastructure project. Stated in the alternative,
505 does removal of the mitigation action from the area of impact improve the effectiveness of or
506 benefit from the action. Some compensatory mitigation systems place a heavy emphasis on this
507 link by favoring “in-kind” and “on-site” compensatory mitigation over “out-of-kind” and “off-
508 site” compensatory mitigation. The subcommittee members generally favor an approach that
509 allows funding to flow to the projects and locations within Idaho that will provide the greatest
510 overall positive impact on sage-grouse populations. The Mitigation Framework calls for a
511 monitoring program that would assess habitat gains provided by mitigation actions and compare
512 them with the mitigation objectives of the participating infrastructure projects. The nature and
513 purpose of this monitoring is described more fully in Mitigation Program Step 4, below.

514
515 Once the strategy is complete, the Mitigation Team will develop project ranking criteria and
516 procedures that will guide the selection of the mitigation actions that will receive funding. The
517 goal is to fund projects that provide high quality, lasting benefits based on landscape scale
518 analyses that actually compensate for project impacts.

519
520 **E. Compensation Guidelines**

521
522 The Mitigation Framework Program will develop guidelines that may be used by developers
523 and/or regulators to determine the cost of meeting their compensatory mitigation objectives.
524 These compensatory mitigation objectives determine the extent of compensatory mitigation for
525 each project and are generally incorporated into project plans or permits. The compensation
526 guidelines will provide transparent, technically sound principles for determining how much it
527 costs to deliver habitat mitigation for sage-grouse. In other words, the guidelines will represent
528 best estimates of the true cost of implementing the mitigation actions needed to meet each
529 project’s compensatory mitigation objectives. The guidelines may be used by the project
530 developer and the Mitigation Framework Program Administrator to establish the in-lieu fee that
531 the developer will contribute to the mitigation fund. Specific valuation methods will be
532 developed at a later time and will likely draw from compensatory mitigation systems used
533 elsewhere in the West. Although the details have yet to be worked out, the following outline
534 illustrates the core concepts and principles (shown in bold lettering) that are likely to be
535 employed by the MOA parties in setting the Mitigation Framework’s in-lieu fee structure.

- 536 • A common unit of measurement would be established for describing and tracking both the
537 project impacts and the benefits of any compensatory mitigation actions. This unit of
538 measurement can be a physical unit such as “acres impacted” or more specifically “acres of
539 summer brood rearing habitat impacted” or “habitat units” lost.
- 540 • While the “common unit of measurement” noted above addresses the area of habitat
541 impacted and mitigated, habitat compensation ratios are used to address the quality of the
542 habitat affected by the infrastructure project. These ratios could specify the number of acres
543 of mitigation required per acre of impacted habitat based on the size, habitat
544 quality/condition and function of the impacted habitat; for more critical or important
545 habitat, more mitigation acres might be required. Thus, habitats with higher quality and
546 importance could have higher compensation ratios.

- 547 • Several factors are taken into account in calculating how much it will cost to actually
548 compensate for the acres or habitat units. The recommended approach is to evaluate on the
549 costs of implementing a conceptual portfolio of potential mitigation actions or offset
550 activities that provide benefits for sage-grouse. This portfolio of model projects would
551 include a balanced mix of accepted habitat protection and restoration measures reflecting the
552 types of projects expected to be funded by the mitigation program (in accordance with the
553 strategy discussed above). Examples of projects in this portfolio may include such actions as
554 restoring sagebrush canopy and a native understory on recently burned land, improving
555 riparian areas and wet meadows in early brood-rearing habitat, conservation easements to
556 prevent habitat loss, and land management practices that improve sage-grouse habitat.
557 Project costs include the full range of expenses needed to complete all phases of the
558 mitigation action, including administration and monitoring. The average costs of these
559 model mitigation actions per acre or habitat unit is the foundation of the in-lieu fee
560 calculation.
- 561 • In addition, the in-lieu fee should also be adjusted to take into consideration the issue of lag
562 time –the time between when habitat is lost at the impacted site relative to when habitat
563 functions are gained at the compensation site.
- 564 • The fee also needs to account for contingencies associated with delivering compensatory
565 mitigation, including an estimate of the risk of failure (i.e., the probability that offsite
566 mitigation will not result in any measureable conservation outcomes) for each mitigation site
567 or project.
- 568 • In addition to the fee calculated above, costs for establishing and operating the program,
569 including travel, technical consultation and monitoring of program effectiveness must be
570 included. This overhead fee could range from 5-15% depending on the size and complexity
571 of the proposed mitigation program.

572
573 **F. Program Structure and Oversight**

574
575 The Mitigation Framework would be established through a memorandum of agreement (MOA)
576 among the entities that would participate in its implementation. The MOA would define the
577 specific roles and responsibilities, procedures, and tasks needed to operate an Idaho-based
578 compensatory mitigation program. The MOA would serve as a joint powers agreement for state
579 and local government parties. The MOA would establish the following administrative structure
580 for the Mitigation Framework:

- 581
582 1. Core Team: A core group would oversee the Mitigation Framework program and provide
583 policy-level guidance for the Science Team and Fund Administrator, described below. The
584 Core Team would be composed of three to seven representatives of diverse perspectives
585 among the MOA signatories.
- 586
587 2. Science Team: A team of experts drawn from MOA signatories and other targeted
588 organizations will administer the science-based and technical aspects of the program. The
589 Science Team would consist of several individuals with expertise in relevant areas such as
590 habitat protection and restoration, landscape ecology/spatial analysis, wildlife biology, sage-
591 grouse ecology, project development, and mitigation policy.

593 The Team would focus on developing the policies and statewide strategy that will guide the
594 program, making requests for mitigation project proposals (RFPs), ranking mitigation
595 proposals that will receive funding, tracking monitoring reports and project benefits, and
596 evaluating program success.

597
598 3. Program Administrator: A program administrator will be responsible for fund
599 management and administrative tasks. The program administrator will provide administrative
600 support for the Mitigation Team, manage the mitigation account, and administer grants,
601 contracts, and other agreements.

602 4. Advisory Committee: A broader advisory committee consisting of agencies, companies
603 and organizations with the skills and commitment that will provide useful advice to the Core
604 Team regarding the implementation of the Mitigation Framework. The specific make up of
605 each of these groups will be determined at a later time. Potential participants in the
606 Mitigation Framework include but are not limited to representatives of:

607
608 **State of Idaho:**

United States:

609
610 Department of Fish and Game
611 Management
612 Office of Energy Resources
613 Office of Species Conservation
614 Idaho Department of Lands
615 Service

Bureau of Land
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Natural Resources Cons.

616
617 **Energy Companies:**

Non-Governmental Organizations:

618
619 Idaho Power
620 Ridgeline Energy
621 Conservancy
622
623 Idaho Tribes
624 Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee
625 interests)
626 Sage-Grouse Local Working Groups

Idaho Conservation League
The Nature

Idaho Counties
Public Land Users (e.g., grazing

627
628 **G. Funding the Mitigation Program**

629
630 The costs of administering the program will be sustained by the project developers that seek
631 compensatory mitigation. Therefore, a portion of the in-lieu fee that project developers
632 contribute to the mitigation account will be applied for program administration. As noted
633 above, protecting and restoring sagebrush habitats are time consuming and expensive
634 undertakings. Ensuring that these activities are conducted with strong oversight should be
635 viewed as an exceptionally wise investment.

636
637 **III. Mitigation Program Steps**

638
639 The Mitigation Framework envisions a five-step process for developing, implementing, and
640 monitoring compensatory mitigation.

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A. Step 1 – Assessment of Project Impacts and Development of Mitigation Objectives

Assessment of project impacts should be undertaken by the project developers proposing new infrastructure projects and the government agencies that conduct environmental reviews of those projects. Although the Mitigation Framework process is not responsible for this step, it is nevertheless crucial to the integrity of the mitigation program. Specifically, the Framework’s success in achieving its goal of offsetting major infrastructure project impacts on sage-grouse depends on an accurate accounting of those impacts. For many projects, this analysis will be done as part of the environmental review procedures required by NEPA. As noted above, NEPA requires federal agencies to address the full range of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project, alternatives to the proposed action, and potential mitigation before they act on permit applications. Once impacts have been assessed and compensatory mitigation objectives set, the project developer is ready to engage the Mitigation Framework, starting with determining the developer’s in-lieu fee contribution.

B. Step 2 – Determine the In-lieu Fee Contribution

The goal of Step 2 is to use valuation techniques, such as the guidelines presented above, to convert the complex range of project impacts, including direct, indirect and cumulative impacts, into monetary terms that become the basis for the in-lieu fee payment. The accepted in-lieu fee compensatory mitigation plan could be a condition of the instrument approving the project (FONSI, ROD, right-of-way grant, conditional use permit, etc.) and thus legally requires the project developer comply with the approved mitigation plan.

C. Step 3 – Commitment of Mitigation Funds by Project Developer

Infrastructure project developers can employ the Mitigation Framework by entering into an agreement with the program administrator with regard to a specific infrastructure project. This project agreement sets forth the parties’ respective responsibilities, including the project developer’s commitment to pay the in-lieu fee. Importantly, the agreement provides that the project developer’s funds can only be used for the purposes set forth in the Mitigation Framework. The agreement may also include “conditions” as requested by regulatory agencies or project developers. For instance, the agreement might provide that the in lieu fee will be used to fund mitigation actions in specific geographic areas in order to meet permit requirements. The program administrator, based on consultation with the MOA parties, may decline to enter into an agreement that is inconsistent with the Mitigation Framework principles or includes conditions that are burdensome or unworkable. Once the agreement specifying the payment structure and schedule is signed, the project developer makes the required in-lieu fee deposits to an interest bearing account managed by the program administrator. After the completion of this step, the project developer is no longer engaged in the Mitigation Framework – unless it has decided to participate as a MOA party.

D. Step 4 – Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) and Select, Implement, and Monitor Mitigation Actions

688 At least at annual intervals, the Mitigation Team will issue an RFP that invite private
689 companies, non-governmental organizations, and agencies to submit proposals for sage-
690 grouse habitat protection, restoration, and/or enhancement actions. The RFP will provide
691 guidance to mitigation project sponsors on program priorities and criteria. These priorities
692 and criteria will be drawn from the mitigation program strategy including identification of
693 geographic areas where mitigation might provide the greatest benefits as well as
694 identification of the threats that present the highest risk to the species or its core habitat.
695 The Mitigation Team should also reach out to federal, state, and local agencies, non-
696 governmental organizations and the general public in order to facilitate discussion, engage
697 stakeholders, raise awareness of the program and generate responses to the RFP. The RFP
698 will solicit project proposals that contain an operation or implementation plan and address at
699 least the following elements:

- 700
- 701 • Geographic area;
 - 702 • Threats addressed and how the mitigation action project will offset impacts resulting
703 from those threats;
 - 704 • An analysis of current sage-grouse conditions in the area;
 - 705 • Resource goals and objectives the mitigation action project will seek to provide;
 - 706 • A description of any coordination with federal, state, tribal and local resource
707 management and regulatory authorities or other stakeholder involvement required to
708 complete the mitigation action (e.g., requirement for NEPA compliance or county
709 permit);
 - 710 • A description of recent or proposed projects and events in the vicinity of the
711 proposed project, if any, such as fire rehabilitation treatments, restoration or
712 enhancement treatments or other activities that complement the effectiveness or
713 intent of the proposed, mitigation action;
 - 714 • A description of the long term protection, management, stewardship for the project
715 being implemented, and the entity responsible for these activities; and
 - 716 • A commitment to periodic evaluation and reporting on the progress of the project in
717 meeting stated goals and objectives, including a process for adaptively redirecting the
718 project if necessary.
- 719

720 When selecting projects, the Mitigation Team will estimate the biological benefits of the
721 projects activities, the likely success of those activities, the duration of benefit expected and
722 measure those benefits in relation to the strategy and RFP objectives. Mitigation Team and
723 the program administrator will work together on continuing program administration and
724 oversight including annual reporting of program activities, expenditures, and benefits. An
725 annual program report will describe program activities, budget, and assessment of whether
726 the mitigation strategy and associated projects are benefitting sage-grouse and at what level
727 or scale. The Mitigation Team and/or Program Administrator should implement a
728 monitoring program to measure and validate whether project-specific objectives have been
729 met. Monitoring is required of all compensatory mitigation actions to determine if the
730 project is meeting its performance standards and objectives. As mentioned above, at regular
731 intervals, the total habitat and/or population gains provided by the programs will be
732 compared with the habitat/population losses associated with the participating infrastructure
733 projects. The purpose of this comparison is to evaluate the mitigation program and make

734 any necessary program adjustments – particularly if the monitoring shows that the mitigation
735 benefits are not compensating for habitat losses. This comparison will not be a basis for
736 imposing new, unexpected requirements on the infrastructure project developers.
737

738 **CONCLUSION**

739
740 The framework of policies, principles and procedures outlined above are meant to start a dialogue
741 among parties engaged in sage-grouse conservation and infrastructure development. If these parties
742 agree with the Mitigation Subcommittee that there is great value in establishing an Idaho-based
743 compensatory mitigation program, then this framework will mark the beginning of an inclusive
744 effort to fill in the details and complete the tasks needed to bring such a program into being. We
745 have confidence in our collective ability to create a compensatory mitigation program that will
746 benefit infrastructure developers, agencies, conservation interests, and – not least – Idaho’s sage-
747 grouse.
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751 **Part III –**

752

753 **IDAHO AND SOUTHWESTERN MONTANA SUBREGION-NO NET**
754 **UNMITIGATED LOSS PROCESS**

755

756 **Introduction**

757

758 The No Net Unmitigated Loss strategy is a means of assuring that proposed anthropogenic
759 activities, when approved and implemented will not result in long-term degradation of Greater
760 Sage-Grouse habitat or population and will have a net conservation benefit to the species. The
761 attached ‘flow chart’ identifies a screening process for review of proposed anthropogenic
762 activities. The goal of the process is to provide a consistent approach regardless of the
763 administrative location of the project and to ensure that authorization of these projects will not
764 contribute to the decline of the species. Though the initial Steps (1-6) are done prior to initiating
765 the NEPA process, the authorized officer must ensure that appropriate documentation regarding
766 the rationale and conclusion for each is included in the administrative record.

767

768 The flow chart provides for a sequential screening of proposals. However, Steps 2-6 can be done
769 concurrently. Steps 7-12 are related to project implementation.

770

771 **Step 1**

772

773 This screening process is initiated upon formal submittal of a proposal for authorization for use
774 of federal lands (BLM or Forest Service). The actual documentation would include, at a
775 minimum, a description of the location, scale of the project, and timing of the disturbance and
776 would be consistent with existing protocol and procedures for the specific type of use. It is
777 anticipated that the proposals would be submitted by a third party.

778

779 **Step 2**

780

781 This initial review would evaluate whether the proposal would be allowed as prescribed in the
782 Greater-Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment. For example, certain activities are prohibited
783 in suitable habitat, such as wind or solar energy development. If the proposal is an activity that is
784 specific prohibited, the submitter would be informed that the proposal is being rejected since it
785 would not be consistent with the Land Use Plan, regardless of the design of the project.

786

787 In addition to consistency with program allocations, the Land Use Plan identifies a limit on the
788 amount of disturbance that is allowed within a ‘biological significant unit’ (BSU). If current
789 disturbance within the affected unit exceeds this threshold, the project should be deferred until
790 such time as the amount of disturbance within the area has been reduced, through restoration or
791 other management actions.

792

793 **Step 3**

794

795 In reviewing a proposal, determine if the project will have a direct or indirect impact on
796 population or habitat (PPH or PGH). This can be done by:

- 797 1. Reviewing Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat maps.
798 2. Reviewing the 'Base Line Environment Report' (USGS) which identifies the area of
799 direct and indirect effects for various anthropogenic activities.
800 3. Consultation with agency, Fish and Wildlife Service, or State Agency wildlife
801 biologist.
802 4. Reviewing the standard and guidelines in the plan amendments (such as buffer
803 distances for the proposed activity).
804 5. Other methods
805

806 If the proposal will not have a direct or indirect impact on either the habitat or population,
807 proceed with the appropriate process for review, decision, and implementation of the project.
808

809 **Step 4**

810
811 If the project could have a direct or indirect impact of sage-grouse habitat or population, evaluate
812 whether the proposal can be relocated so as to not have the indirect or direct impact and still
813 achieve the intent of the proposal. This Step does not consider redesign of the project as a means
814 of not having direct or indirect impacts but rather authorization of the project in a physical
815 location that will not impact Greater Sage-grouse. If the project can be relocated so as to not
816 have an impact on sage-grouse and still achieve objectives of the proposal, inform applicant and
817 proceed with the appropriate process for review, decision, and implementation of the relocated
818 project.
819

820 **Step 5**

821
822 If the preliminary review of the proposal concludes that there may be impacts to sage-grouse
823 habitat and/or population, and the project cannot be effectively relocated to eliminate these
824 impacts; evaluate whether the agency has the authority to modified or deny the project. If the
825 agency does NOT have the discretionary authority to modify or deny the proposal, proceed with
826 the authorization process (NEPA) and include appropriate mitigation requirements that minimize
827 impacts to sage-grouse habitat and populations. Mitigations could include a combination of
828 actions such as timing of disturbance, design modifications of the proposal, site disturbance
829 restoration, and compensatory mitigation actions.
830

831 **Step 6**

832
833 If the agency has the discretionary authority to deny the project and after careful screening of the
834 proposal (Steps 1-4) has determined that direct and indirect cannot be eliminated, evaluate the
835 proposal to determine if the adverse impacts can be mitigated. If the impacts cannot be
836 effectively mitigated within the BSU, reject or defer the proposal. The criteria for determining
837 this situation would include but not limited to:

- 838 • Natural disturbance within the BSU is significant and additional activities within the area
839 would adversely impact the species.
840
841 • The current trend within the BSU is down and additional impacts, whether mitigated or
842 not, could lead to further decline of the species or habitat.

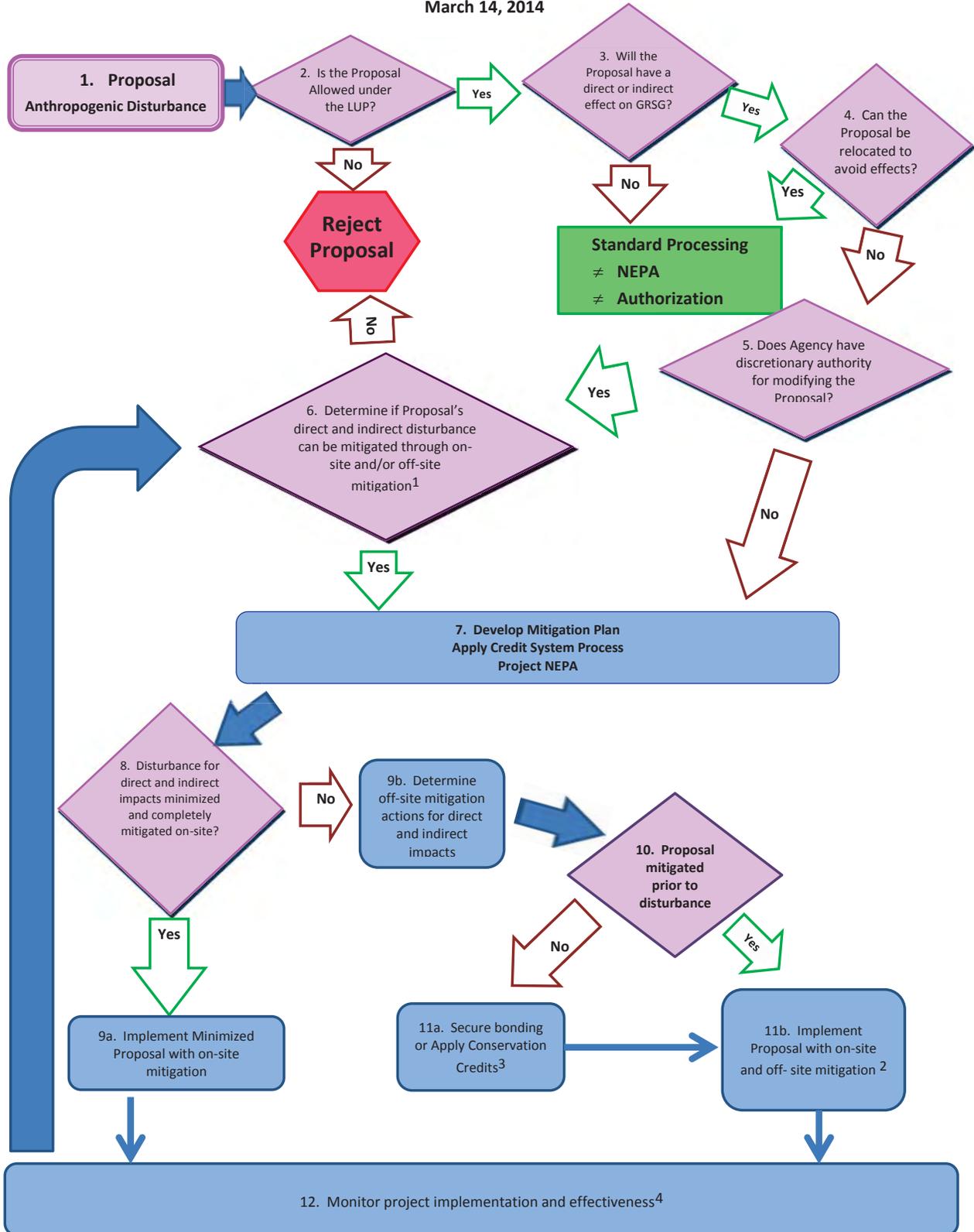
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- The proposed mitigation has proven to be ineffective or is unproven in terms of science based approach.
- The additional impacts, after applying effective mitigation, would exceed the disturbance threshold for the BSU.
- The project would impact habitat that has been determined, through monitoring, to be a limiting factor for species sustainability within the BSU.
- Other site specific criteria that determined the project would lead to a downward trend to the current species population or habitat with the BSU.

If the project can be mitigated to provide for a net conservation benefit to the species, proceed with the design of the mitigation plan and authorization (NEPA) of the Project. The authorization process could identify issues that may require additional mitigation or denial/deferring of the project based on site specific impacts to the Greater Sage-grouse.

DRAFT

**No Net Unmitigated Loss
Draft Decision Flow Chart
March 14, 2014**



¹ In determining if the Proposal disturbance can be mitigated, the result of the mitigation action has to produce a net beneficial conservation value for sage-grouse. Additional process details are being developed for this step in coordination with the FWS and SETT in Nevada.

² Off-site mitigation projects mitigate by:
 ≠ Protective actions for future natural disturbance (i.e. fuel breaks, green strips) and/or
 ≠ restoration of legacy natural or anthropogenic disturbances

³ Process to coordinate with the State on application of Conservation Credits is in process.

⁴ All Monitor is done in accordance with established protocols and incorporated into future Mitigation Plans. Results will feedback into the determination on whether future proposals can be mitigated in Step 6.

Appendix L – Travel Management Planning Guidelines:

- Among other designation criteria from 43 CFR 8342.1(b), “areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats.
- During subsequent travel management planning, all routes would undergo a route evaluation to determine its purpose and need and the potential resource and/or user conflicts from motorized travel. Where resource and/or user conflicts outweigh the purpose and need for the route, the route would be considered for closure or considered for relocation outside of sensitive GRSG habitat.
- During implementation-level travel planning, threats to GRSG and their habitat would be considered when evaluating route designations and/or closures.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes that do not have a purpose or need would be considered for closure.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes that are duplicative, parallel, or redundant would be considered for closure.
- During subsequent travel management planning, seasonal restrictions on OHV use would be considered in important seasonal habitats where OHV use is a threat.
- During subsequent travel management planning, OHV timing limitations would be considered in important seasonal habitats where OHV use is a threat.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider limiting over snow vehicle (OSV) travel to designated routes, consider seasonal closures in GRSG wintering areas from November 1 through March 31 or define Designation Criteria (i.e. minimization criteria) to regulate over snow vehicle traffic.
- During subsequent travel management planning, routes not required for public access or recreation with a current administrative/agency purpose or need would be evaluated for administrative access only.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider prioritizing restoration of routes not designated in a Travel Management Plan.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider using seed mixes or transplant techniques that will maintain or enhance GRSG habitat when rehabilitating linear disturbances.
- During subsequent travel management planning, consider scheduling road maintenance to avoid disturbance during sensitive periods and times to the extent practicable. Consider using time of day limits (After 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM) to reduce impacts on GRSG during breeding and nesting periods.

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Over-snow vehicle – a motor vehicle that is designed for use over snow and that runs on a track or tracks and/or a ski or skis, while in use over snow.

DRAFT

1 **Idaho and Southwestern Montana**
2 **Recommendation for Proposed Plan Amendment**

3
4 **1. Summary Description of Plan**

- 5 1.1. Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of GRSG by
6 conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain resilient populations
7 by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG habitats.
- 8 1.2. Comply with existing laws, regulations and policies.
- 9 1.3. Recognize valid existing rights.
- 10 1.4. BLM and FS would coordinate with the States of Idaho and Montana, as
11 appropriate, during implementation activities including the evaluation of
12 disturbance threshold, adaptive management triggers and mitigation.
- 13 1.5. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region would be divided into 5
14 Conservation Areas over which the disturbance threshold and adaptive management
15 triggers would apply. These areas are the West Owyhee, Desert, Mountain Valleys,
16 Southern and Southwestern Montana (Map 1).
- 17 1.6. The Conservation Areas would be categorized into management zones – Core,
18 Important and General, with the exception of the Southwestern Montana
19 Conservation Area which does not contain Important Management Zones (Map 2).
- 20 1.7. Adaptive Management: Idaho: actions would engage when population decline by 10
21 percent or a combined 10 percent loss nesting and/or wintering habitat within Core
22 or Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area is lost (Soft Trigger),
23 and when 20 percent of the population or nesting and wintering habitat within Core
24 or Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area is lost (Hard Trigger)
25 Montana: Adaptive management in Montana is linked with the state evaluation
26 framework.
- 27 1.8. Additional anthropogenic disturbance (AD-1) would be significantly limited in Core
28 Management Zones with specific exceptions (AD-3 & AD-4); it would be limited
29 unless consistent with specific criteria in Important Management Zones (AD-4) and
30 would be avoided in General Management Zones.
- 31 1.9. Anthropogenic disturbance (AD-1) would be contained within a 3 percent total
32 disturbance cap as applied to the biologically significant unit (the biologically
33 significant unit (BSU) is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core
34 and Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area), including existing
35 anthropogenic disturbance. In Montana surface disturbance will be calculated
36 through the state surface disturbance analysis process on a project by project basis.
- 37 1.10. Mitigation would be required for all anthropogenic disturbance activities within
38 GRSG habitat. Within Core Management Zones a standard of no net unmitigated
39 loss would be required.
- 40 1.11. BLM and Forest Service would set up a Mitigation Board at the State level with state
41 involvement to develop a Mitigation Strategy and oversee the application of
42 mitigation at the site-specific level.
- 43 1.12. BLM and Forest Service would complete Wildfire and Invasive Species
44 Assessments at the local level to identify priority areas of habitat, and wildfire and
45 invasive species concern. These assessments would support and include the
46 development of fuels, restoration and rehabilitation strategies to use during
47 implementation level activities.

48 **Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG EIS – Land Allocation Decisions Summary¹**

Solar/Wind/Nuclear/Hydropower		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-2)	Avoidance (LR-2)	Open (LR-2)
Commercial Service Airports		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-3)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Landfills		
Core	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-4)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Utility Corridors		
Core	Important	General
Existing designated corridors which are land use plan designations (and include Section 368 Corridors), will remain “open” (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement) and can provide an opportunity to be modified with mitigation. Any new disturbance within these corridors would count towards the disturbance cap. All new, modified, or deleted corridors will require a land use plan amendment. (LR-7)	Same as Core (LR-7)	Same as Core (LR-7)
High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs		
Core	Important	General
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits		

¹ The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion includes portions of Idaho, Montana and Utah. Where differences exist between direction for Idaho and Montana those are noted in the table and within the management action section. The lands within Utah are part of the Sawtooth National Forest and are managed as such; therefore direction for these lands in Utah is the same as that described for the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho.

Core	Important	General
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Land Tenure Adjustments		
Core	Important	General
Retention with exceptions for exchange; available for exchange with no net loss of GRSG within Core and Important. Not available for disposal. (LR-13)	Same as Core (LR-13)	Available for exchange subject to existing land use plan conformance (No Action)
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Includes Geothermal)		
Core	Important	General
Idaho: Low or no potential areas Closed Moderate to High potential areas Open subject to No Surface Occupancy Montana: Open subject to NSO. (FLM-1)	Idaho: Open subject to No Surface Occupancy Montana: Not Applicable (FLM-1)	Idaho and Montana: Open subject to CSU (FLM-1)
Non-Energy Leasables		
Core	Important	General
Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) are Open – Not Applicable, No KPLAs in Core Closed to leasing outside KPLAs (NEL-1)	KPLAs are Open Open with standard and additional stipulations for leasing outside KPLAs. (NEL-1)	KPLAs are Open to leasing with standard stipulations (NEL-1)
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)		
Core	Important	General
Closed to new site authorizations. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to criteria. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)
Travel Management		
Core	Important	General

Limited (TM-1)	Limited (TM-1)	Limited (TM-1)
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REVIEW

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2. Goals and Objectives

- 2.1. GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of GRSG by conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain resilient populations by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG habitats.
- 2.2. GOAL-2: Provide for the needs of GRSG and their habitat while also providing for resource uses in accordance with the agencies' direction for multiple use and sustained yield as described in FLPMA and the NFMA.
- 2.3. GOAL-3: Manage anthropogenic development and human disturbance in to minimize the likelihood of adverse population level effects on GRSG.
- 2.4. GOAL-4: Reduce the risk of West Nile Virus or other disease outbreaks from BLM and USFS management actions.
- 2.5. Management Area (MA) - Objective (OBJ)-1: Maintain a resilient population of GRSG in Idaho and Southwestern Montana.
- 2.6. MA-OBJ-2: Designate GRSG management zones and associated management to maintain a resilient population and to designate strategically located adjacent zones to provide a buffer from unpredictable habitat loss such as wildfire to the resilient population areas.
- 2.7. MA-OBJ-3: Identify and strategically protect larger in-tact sagebrush areas and areas of lower fragmentation to maintain GRSG population persistence.
- 2.8. Vegetation (VEG)-OBJ-1: Reconnect and expand areas of higher native plant community integrity/rangeland health to increase the extent of high quality habitat and, where possible, to accommodate the future effects of climate change.
- 2.9. VEG-OBJ-2: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:
 - a. Increasing canopy cover and average patch size of sagebrush in perennial grasslands.
 - b. Increasing the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal habitats.
 - c. Protecting or improving GRSG migration/movement corridors.
 - d. Reducing conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats.
 - e. Improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.
 - f. Reducing the extent of annual grasslands adjacent to Core and Important Management Zones.
- Decadal treatment objectives by population area are identified in Table 1.
- 2.10. Habitat Management (HM)-OBJ-1: Maintain or make progress toward 70% of lands within CMZs and IMZs capable of producing sagebrush at 10-30% canopy cover and less than 10% conifer canopy cover.
- 2.11. HM-OBJ-2: Incorporate GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives (Table 2) into the design of projects or activities, as appropriate, based on site conditions and ecological potential, unless achievement of fuels management objectives require additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat and conserve habitat quality for the species.

93 Table 1. Acres of Treatment within a 10-Year Period to Achieve Vegetation Objectives²

Population Area	Mechanical Conifer Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Annual Grass Treatment
SW Idaho			
S Central Idaho			
Mountain Valleys			
N Snake River			
Bear Lake Plateau			
Montana			

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Table 2. Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for Greater Sage-Grouse

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATOR	DESIRED CONDITION
Lek Habitat	Proximity of trees ^{9,16}	<Trees (e.g. juniper) none to uncommon within 3 km of occupied leks
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks ¹⁶	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 100 m of an occupied lek ¹⁶
Nesting Habitat	Apply indicators to areas within 10 km of occupied leks, that have the ecological capability to provide sagebrush cover.	
	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>80% of the landscape in sagebrush cover
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,10,11,13}	15-25%
	Sagebrush height ¹⁰	
	Arid sites ³	12-31 inches (30-80cm)
	Mesic sites ⁴	16-31 inches (40-80cm)
	Predominant sagebrush shape ¹⁶	>50% in spreading shape ⁵
	Perennial grass cover ^{2,10}	
Arid sites ³	≥10%	
Mesic sites ⁴	≥15%	
Perennial grass height ^{10,11,13,16}	≥7 inches ¹⁰	
Perennial forb canopy cover ^{2,10}		
Arid sites ³	≥5%	
Mesic sites ⁴	≥10%	
BROOD-REARING/SUMMER¹ (July-October)¹ (Apply to all habitat outside of nesting/breeding and winter)		
Cover	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>40% of the landscape in sagebrush cover
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,10}	10-25%
	Sagebrush height ¹⁰	40-80cm
	Perennial grass canopy cover ^{2,10}	>15%
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ^{2,16}	Preferred forbs are common with several preferred species present ^{7,8}

² These acreage figures represent an objective for treatment over a ten-year (decadal) timeframe to support achievement or progress toward vegetation and habitat objectives. This accounts for variations in yearly funding availability and does not reflect a maximum acreage for treatment should funding and site specific conditions allow for more or less treatment than described in order to meet vegetation and habitat objectives.

	Riparian meadow habitat function	>80% relative composition ^a of riparian herbaceous species ⁹
WINTER¹ November-March¹ (Apply to areas of low snow accumulation)		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat needed ¹⁰	>80%
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow ^{2, 10}	>10%
	Sagebrush height above snow ¹⁰	>25cm

¹ Seasonal dates can be adjusted by local unit according to geographic region.
² Absolute cover is the actual recorded cover and can exceed 100% when recorded across all species and all layers. It is not relative cover, which is the proportions of each species, and equals 100%. Note that cover is reported for only those species (e.g., sagebrush, preferred forbs) that are sampled to determine suitability of habitat for sage-grouse. Overall cover at the site will be greater than that sampled for sage-grouse habitat, due to other species present.
³ 10 – 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).
⁴ ≥12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata vaseyana* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).
⁵ Sagebrush plants that are more tree or columnar-shaped do not provide the protective cover of sagebrush with a spreading shape (HAF 2014).
⁷ Preferred forbs are listed in HAF Table III-2 (HAF 2014). Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred in Table III-2.
⁸ Cover may be higher according to local riparian classifications.

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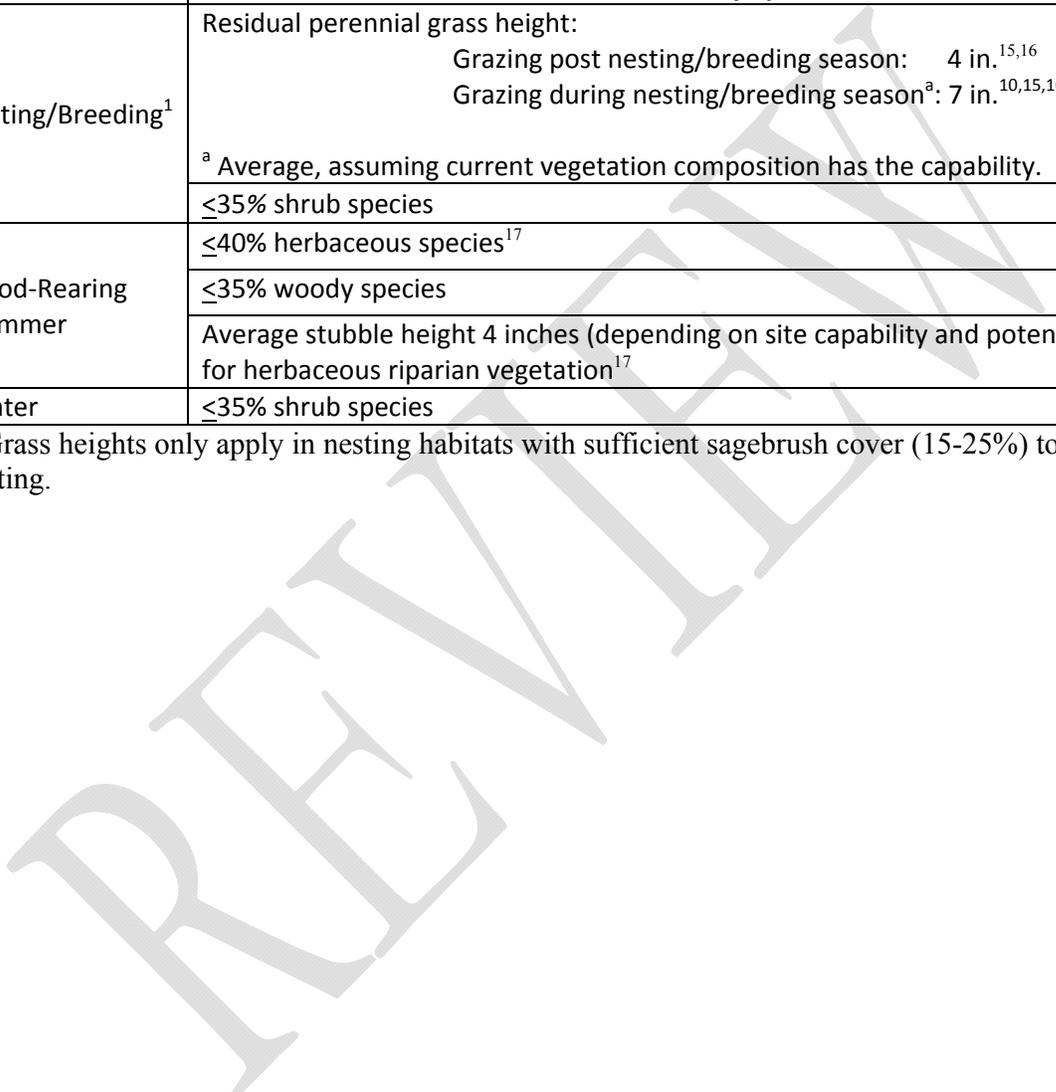
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Forest Service Maximum Allowable Use Levels for GRSG Habitat

Seasonal Habitat	Allowable Use of Key Species
Nesting/Breeding ¹	Residual perennial grass height: Grazing post nesting/breeding season: 4 in. ^{15,16} Grazing during nesting/breeding season ^a : 7 in. ^{10,15,16}
	^a Average, assuming current vegetation composition has the capability. ≤35% shrub species
Brood-Rearing /Summer	≤40% herbaceous species ¹⁷
	≤35% woody species
	Average stubble height 4 inches (depending on site capability and potential) for herbaceous riparian vegetation ¹⁷
Winter	≤35% shrub species

102 1-Grass heights only apply in nesting habitats with sufficient sagebrush cover (15-25%) to support
103 nesting.



- 104 **3. General Direction (GD)**
- 105 **3.1.** GD-1: Comply with state and federal laws, regulations, policies, and standards, including
- 106 FLPMA multiple use mandates and NFMA regulations.
- 107 **3.2.** GD-2: Implement actions (day-to-day management, monitoring, and administrative
- 108 functions) that stem directly from regulations, policy, and law, which are considered in
- 109 conformance with the LUPA that are not specifically addressed in the plan amendment.
- 110 **3.3.** GD-3: Preserve and recognize valid existing rights, which include any leases, claims, or
- 111 other use authorizations established before a new or modified authorization, change in land
- 112 designation, or new or modified regulation is approved. Activities on existing mineral leases
- 113 are managed through terms, conditions and stipulations on the leases, and through specific
- 114 operating conditions included in operating plan approvals for the duration of the lease.
- 115 **3.4.** GD-4: Allowable uses and management actions from the existing LUPs that remain valid
- 116 and do not require amending are carried forward.
- 117 **3.5.** GD-5: Sustain habitat in sufficient quantities and quality for resilient plant and wildlife
- 118 populations.
- 119 **3.6.** GD-6: Provide for human safety and property protection from wildfire.
- 120 **3.7.** GD-7: Ensure that existing utility corridors would remain unchanged.
- 121 **3.8.** GD-8: Limit all Forest Service-administered lands to designated routes.
- 122 **3.9.** GD-9: Existing requirements regarding site-specific environmental analysis, public
- 123 involvement, consultation with tribes and other agencies, or compliance with applicable
- 124 laws without waiver are maintained.
- 125 **3.10.** GD-10: Appropriate, site-specific analysis as described in NEPA and any requisite
- 126 site specific decision making (i.e., 43 CFR Subpart 4160, or 36 CFR Part 251) would be
- 127 conducted prior to approving proposed management actions.
- 128 **3.11.** GD-11: Impacts analysis on other sagebrush steppe species and impacts on state
- 129 endowment trust lands managed by the Idaho Department of Lands would be analyzed
- 130 during site-specific project NEPA review.
- 131 **3.12.** GD-12: Activities not specifically addressed by the plan amendment would still be
- 132 subject to the allowances and restrictions of the applicable land use plans.
- 133 **3.13.** GD-13: Information in the Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage-
- 134 Grouse in Montana would be considered when designing projects that may affect sensitive
- 135 species or federally listed species in Montana.
- 136 **3.14.** GD-14: Any oil and gas leasing decisions would be consistent with the BLM and
- 137 Forest Service requirements for leasing decisions as found in 43 CFR Part 3101 and 36 CFR
- 138 228.102, respectively.
- 139 **3.15.** GD-15: In conjunction with plan evaluation, re-evaluate management zones,
- 140 required design features and other protective stipulations as new science, information and
- 141 data regarding the habitats and behavior of the species is obtained. Incorporate these
- 142 findings as part of plan maintenance.
- 143 **3.16.** GD-16: Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in
- 144 the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new
- 145 authorizations and suppression activities.
- 146 **3.17.** GD-17: Incorporate best management practices as described in Appendix A, as
- 147 applicable and appropriate in the design and development of implementation activities and
- 148 projects.
- 149 **3.18.** GD-18: Conduct implementation and project activities consistent with seasonal
- 150 habitat restrictions described in Appendix B.

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- 3.19. GD-19: Incorporate appropriate buffers into implementation and project design to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG described in Appendix C.
- 3.20. GD-20: Consistent with regulations, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site when surface disturbing activities are proposed. Ensure reclamation bonds are sufficient to cover costs that would result in full rehabilitation to restore lost GRSG habitat. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work.

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159 **4. Coordination**

- 160 4.1. CC-1: Collaborate, coordinate and utilize cooperative planning efforts to implement and
161 monitor activities to achieve desired conditions and to maximize the utilization of available
162 funding opportunities. Coordination efforts could include: adjacent landowners, federal
163 and state agencies, local governments, tribes, communities, other agencies, resource
164 advisory groups and non-governmental organizations.
- 165 4.2. CC-2: Develop a cooperative MOU between the BLM, Forest Service and State of Idaho to
166 establish the State of Idaho as a cooperating agency during implementation of the final
167 decision. The MOU would identify responsibilities, role and interaction of the BLM, FS and
168 Task Team. Montana BLM will participate as appropriate on Montana’s Sage-grouse
169 Oversight Team to facilitate coordinated and implementation of BLM’s final decision and
170 Montana’s forthcoming sage-grouse conservation strategy.
- 171 4.3. CC-3: The BLM and Forest Service would consider any recommendations from the
172 Governor of Idaho as a result of evaluation completed by the Sage-Grouse Implementation
173 Task Force.
- 174 4.4. CC-4: The BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with the State of Idaho and Montana
175 and the Idaho Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force and Montana Sage-grouse
176 Oversight Team regarding proposed management changes, the implementation of
177 conservation measures, mitigation, and site-specific monitoring, related to adaptive
178 management and livestock grazing (Appendix O).
- 179 4.5. CC-5: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would consider recommendations from
180 the Governor in the decision process recognizing that the BLM and Forest Service have the
181 final decision making authority and responsibility on federal lands under their appropriate
182 jurisdiction.
- 183 4.6. CC-6: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with IDFG, MFWP,
184 USFWS, and other conservation partners in collaborative efforts with adjacent states
185 (Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Wyoming) in GRSG MZs IV and II to evaluate GRSG
186 habitat and population status and trends within the broader USFWS PACs and make
187 appropriate recommendations for GRSG conservation at broader scales.
- 188 4.7. CC-7: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with appropriate
189 WAFWA Sage-grouse Technical Committee to develop consistent population and habitat
190 monitoring approaches that facilitate GRSG conservation at the MZ scale.
- 191 4.8. CC-8: All prescribed burning would be coordinated with state and local air quality agencies
192 to ensure that local air quality is not significantly impacted by BLM and Forest Service
193 activities.

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196 **5. Greater Sage-Grouse Management Areas**

197 **5.1.** Management Area (MA)-1: Designate five GRSG Conservation Areas within the sub-region
 198 to form the geographic basis for achieving population objectives; evaluating the disturbance
 199 density and adaptive regulatory triggers; and tailor adaptive management responses. These
 200 conservation areas are depicted in Map 1. These areas are referred to as Mountain Valleys,
 201 Desert, West Owyhee, Southern and Southwestern Montana Conservation Areas.

202 Conservation Area Description:

203
 204
 205 Mountain Valleys Conservation Area – generally located north of the Snake River Plain, and
 206 includes habitat in west-central population area. It extends west from Rexburg, north and
 207 west of Highway 33 to Howe, north and west of Highway 33/22 to Arco, north and west of
 208 Highway 26/20/93 to Carey, north and west of Highway 20 west to Hill City, north and
 209 west of Highway 20 to the Dylan Karaus Road, west to Canyon Creek. Canyon Creek to the
 210 confluence with the Snake River form the western boundary.

211
 212 Desert Conservation Area – located north of the Snake River and south of the Mountain
 213 Valleys Conservation Area. It extends from the confluence of Canyon Creek and the Snake
 214 River, eastward to Idaho Falls. The Snake River and Henry’s Fork form the eastern
 215 boundary.

216
 217 West Owyhee Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and west of the
 218 Bruneau River.

219
 220 Southern Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and east of the Bruneau
 221 River, including East Idaho uplands and Bear Lake Plateau, and the Utah portion of the
 222 Sawtooth National Forest in Box Elder County.

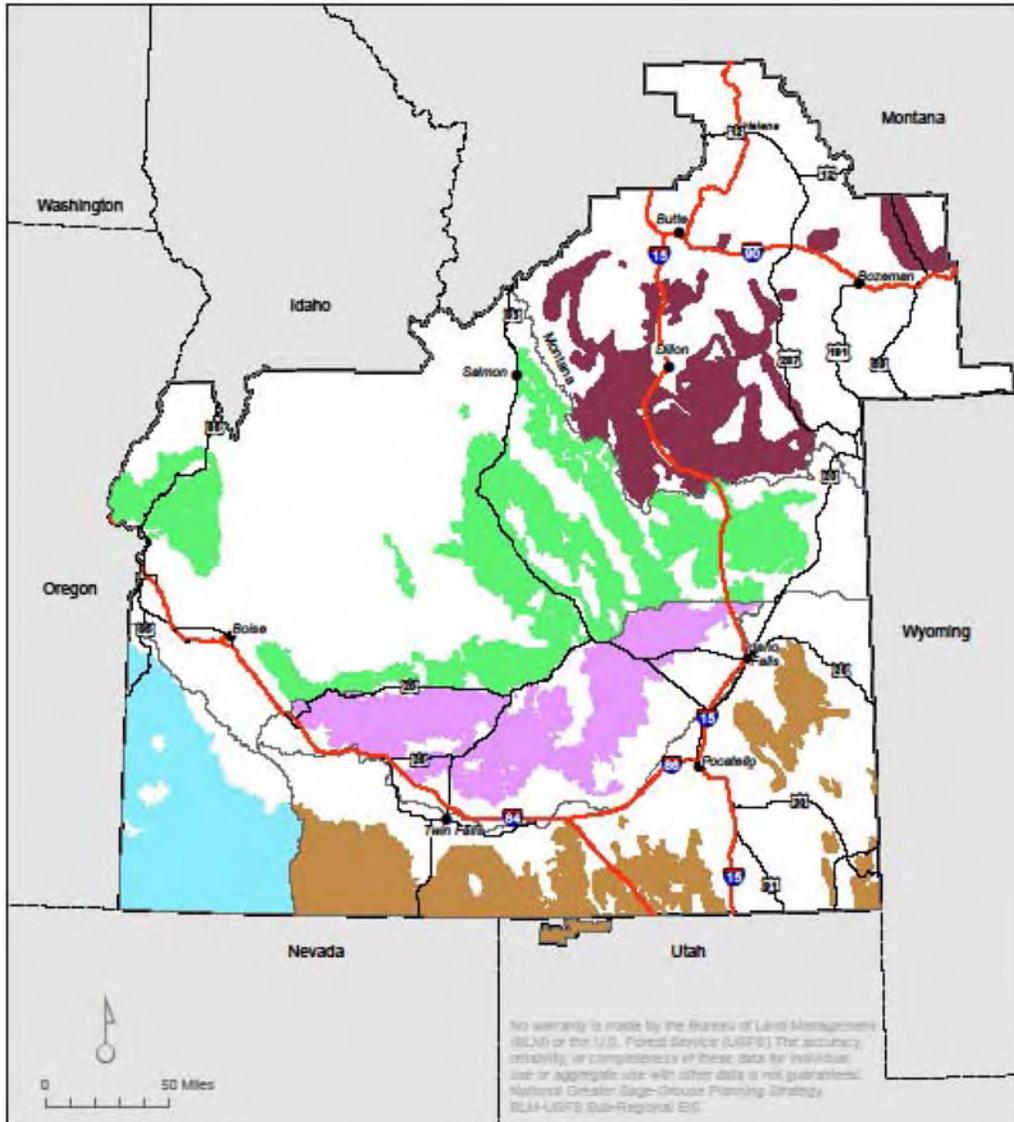
223
 224 Southwestern Montana – located in southwestern Montana - encompassing the Dillon and
 225 Butte BLM Field Office boundaries.

226
 227 Additionally, sage-grouse habitats in the Desert and West Owyhee CAs are relatively
 228 contiguous, while those in the Mountain Valleys and Southern CAs tend to be more
 229 fragmented due to topography, elevational and land use differences.

230 **5.2.** MA-2: Within each Conservation Area (CA) designate GRSG Management Zones: Core,
 231 Important and General Management Zones (Map 2). **Core Management Zones (CMZs)**
 232 focus on conserving the two key meta-populations in the sub-region. These meta-
 233 populations consist of a large aggregation of interconnected breeding subpopulations of
 234 GRSG that have the highest likelihood of long-term persistence. The CMZ encompasses
 235 areas with the highest conservation value to GRSG, based on the presence of larger leks,
 236 habitat extent, important movement and connectivity corridors and winter habitat. Core
 237 Management Zones include adequate area to accommodate continuation of existing land
 238 uses and landowner activities. **Important Management Zones (IMZs)** contain additional
 239 high value habitat and populations that provide a management buffer for the CMZ, connect
 240 patches of CMZ. The IMZ encompasses areas of generally moderate to high conservation
 241 value habitat and/or populations and in some CAs includes areas beyond those identified
 242 by USFWS as necessary to maintain redundant, representative and resilient populations

- 243 (Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs)). The IMZs are typically adjacent to CMZs but
244 generally reflect somewhat lower GRSG population status and/or reduced habitat value due
245 to disturbance, habitat fragmentation or other factors. There are no IMZs designated within
246 the Southwestern Montana CA. **General Management Zones (GMZs)** encompass habitat
247 that is outside of CMZs or IMZs. It is generally characterized by more marginal habitat and
248 few, if any, occupied leks or other important seasonal use areas.
- 249 **5.3.** MA-3: Annually prioritize Conservation Areas at the state scale considering results of the
250 annual adaptive regulatory trigger evaluations relative to implementation of restoration and
251 mitigation activities.
- 252 **5.4.** MA-4: Prioritize activities to protect, enhance and restore GRSG habitats (i.e. suppression
253 activities, fuels management activities, vegetation treatments, invasive species treatments,
254 etc.) first by Conservation Area, if appropriate (CA under adaptive management or at risk of
255 engaging adaptive management), followed by Core Management Zones, then Important
256 Management Zones then General Management Zones within the Conservation Areas. Local
257 priority areas within these zones will be further refined as a result of completing the GRSG
258 Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments as described in Appendix D. This could
259 include projects outside GRSG habitat when those projects would provide a benefit to
260 GRSG habitat.
- 261 **5.5.** MA-5: The management zone map and biologically significant unit baseline map would be
262 re-evaluated in conjunction with plan evaluation processes (i.e. approximately every 5 years).
263 This re-evaluation could indicate the need to adjust Core, Important or General
264 Management Zones or the habitat baseline. These adjustments could occur upon
265 completion of the appropriate analysis (plan amendment) to review the allocation decisions
266 based on the map.
- 267 **5.6.** MA-6: The appropriateness of specific project proposals or management activities within
268 the management zone designations (Core, Important, General) would be assessed
269 individually during project-level NEPA analysis. This evaluation is necessary since
270 designations of Core, Important and General Management Zones were derived at a broad
271 scale with additional refinements relative to boundaries and management consideration;
272 locally GRSG habitat suitability and vegetation characteristics vary.
- 273

Map 1. Conservation Areas within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

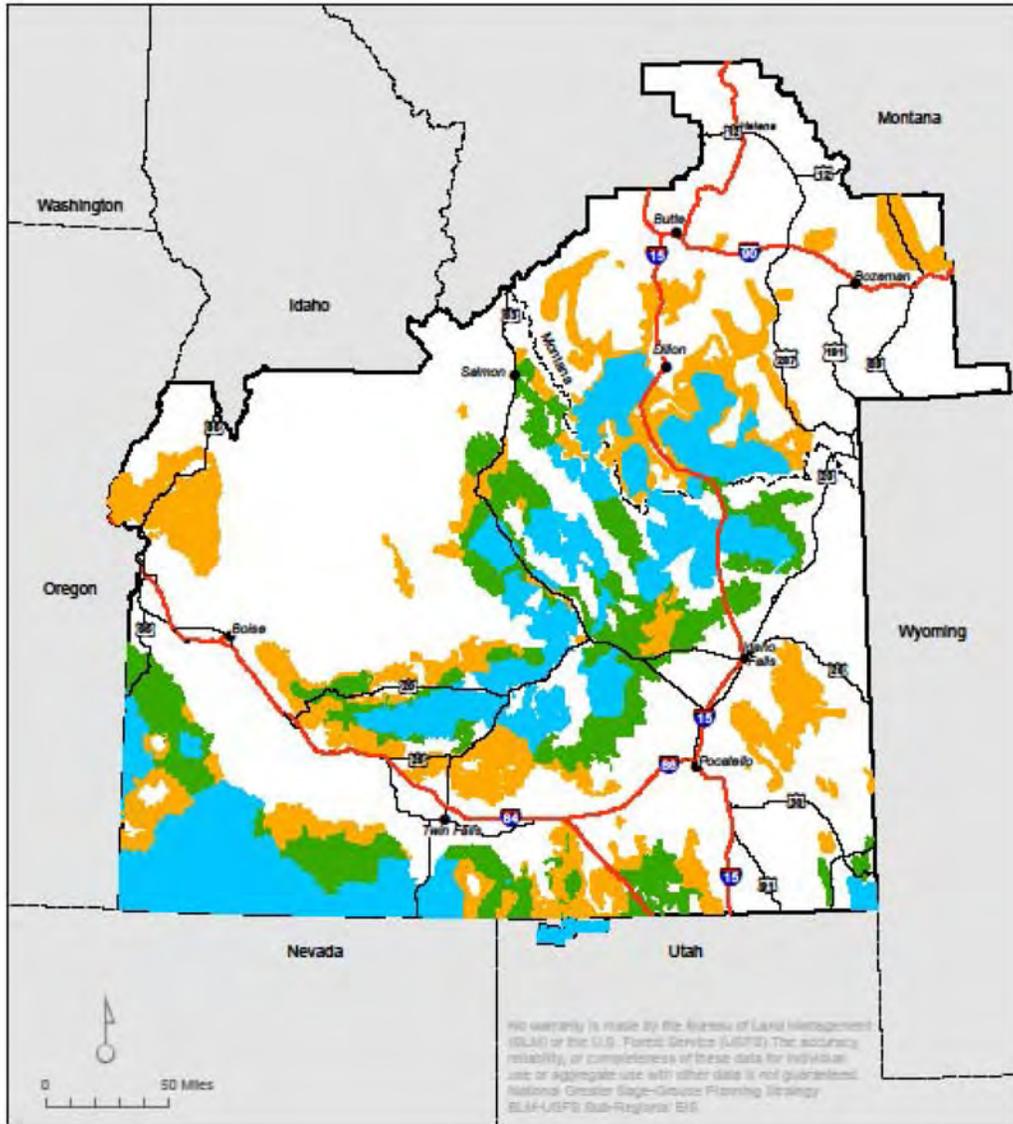


Conservation Area with Management Zone

- Idaho Desert Conservation Area
- Idaho Mountain Valleys Conservation Area
- Idaho Southern Conservation Area
- Idaho West Owyhee Conservation Area
- SW Montana Conservation Area

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Analysis Boundary

Map 2. Management Zones within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion



- Management Zone**
- Core
 - Important
 - General
 - Analysis Boundary

274 **6. Adaptive Management**

- 275 **6.1.** Adaptive Management (AM)-1: Idaho: Use hard and soft population and habitat triggers,
276 evaluated within a Conservation Area, to determine an appropriate management response.
- 277 **6.2.** AM-2: Utilize monitoring information collected through the Monitoring Framework Plan
278 (Appendix E) to determine when adaptive regulatory triggers have been met.
- 279 **6.3.** AM-3: Idaho: BLM and Forest Service would maintain GRSG habitat information, through
280 use of the Key Habitat map or latest sagebrush/vegetation map, which would be used to
281 track and identify habitat changes to assess the habitat trigger in the adaptive management
282 approach. Key habitat map updates are made each winter by BLM in coordination with the
283 FS and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), using the process described in
284 Appendix F.
- 285 **6.4.** AM-4: BLM and Forest Service would utilize population information collected and
286 maintained by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to track and identify population
287 changes to assess the population trigger in the adaptive management approach...
- 288 **6.5.** AM-5: Twice each year the applicable monitoring information would be reviewed to
289 determine if any adaptive management criteria have been met.
- 290 **6.6.** AM-6: Adaptive regulatory triggers would be individually calculated across all ownerships
291 within the biologically significant units (BSU). The BSU is defined as the nesting and
292 wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a Conservation
293 Area.
- 294 **6.7.** AM-7: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Habitat Triggers are defined as:
295 A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within
296 a CA compared to the 2011 biologically significant unit (BSU) baseline (Map 3) (The
297 BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important
298 Management Zones within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships and is
299 used in the evaluation of the adaptive regulatory triggers and the anthropogenic
300 disturbance threshold); or
301 A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a
302 CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline.
- 303 **6.8.** AM-8: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Habitat Triggers are defined as:
304 A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within
305 a CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline; or
306 A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a
307 CA compared to the 2011 BSU baseline.
- 308 **6.9.** AM-9: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Population Triggers are defined as:
309 A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change
310 significantly below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years
311 compared to the 2009-2011 baseline; or
312 A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change
313 significantly below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years
314 compared to the 2009-2011 baseline.
- 315 **6.10.** AM-10: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Population Triggers are defined as:
316 A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of
317 change below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared
318 to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011; or

- 319 A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of
320 change below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared
321 to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011.
- 322 **6.11.** AM-11: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been
323 met then the Implementation Team would engage to identify implementation level
324 actions that may be appropriate to consider.
- 325 **6.12.** AM-12: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been
326 met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend
327 additional potential implementation level activities Appendix G.
- 328 **6.13.** AM-13: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been
329 met due to loss of habitat then CMZ management actions would be applied to the
330 IMZ within that CA.
- 331 **6.14.** AM-14: If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified
332 as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive Grazing
333 Management Response described in Appendix G.
- 334 **6.15.** AM-15: Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population
335 information shows a return to or an exceedance of baseline values within the
336 associated CA.
- 337 **6.16.** Montana Adaptive Management:
338

339 **7. Anthropogenic Disturbance**

340 **7.1.** Anthropogenic Disturbance (AD)-1: Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent as
341 calculated within the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Map 3). The BSU is defined as the
342 nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a
343 Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat
344 disturbance from wildfire and includes activities described in Appendix H. For Idaho this
345 disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features. For
346 Montana this disturbance is measured utilizing the Disturbance Density Calculation Tool
347 process described in Appendix I.

348 **7.2.** AD-2: New anthropogenic disturbances within winter and nesting habitat within Core or
349 Important management zones within a CA where the disturbance threshold is already
350 exceeded from any source or where the proposed development would result in the
351 threshold being exceeded would not be allowed until enough habitat has been restored to
352 maintain the area under this threshold (subject to valid existing rights).

353 **7.3.** AD-3: Core Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria – in
354 addition to the Core and Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance
355 Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the screening and
356 assessment process:

- 357 a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is
358 stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not
359 currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new
360 authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be
361 subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those
362 renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing
363 development);
- 364 b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG
365 habitat and would provide a net conservation benefit of the respective Core
366 Management Zone;
- 367 c. The project would not likely result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat
368 fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species
369 within the relevant CA;
- 370 d. The project is developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization;
- 371 e. The project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development;
- 372 f. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Core Management Zone;
- 373 g. Can be co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (proposed actions
374 would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and associated impacts more than
375 fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.
- 376 h. Development would follow the required design features (RDF) and best
377 management practices (BMPs) as described in Appendix A;
- 378 i. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
- 379 j. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and
380 recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.

381 **7.4.** AD-4: Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development
382 Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- 383 a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of
384 this management zone; and

- 385 b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the
- 386 extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best
- 387 reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or
- 388 societal resources; and
- 389 c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation
- 390 or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the
- 391 relevant CA; and
- 392 d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate
- 393 compensatory mitigation; and
- 394 e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in
- 395 Appendix A.
- 396 f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
- 397 **7.5. AD-5: Co-locating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading**
- 398 **ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs or the construction of new facilities in**
- 399 **all management zones.**
- 400 **7.6. AD-6: Construction activities and other short-term anthropogenic disturbances would be**
- 401 **carried out subject to seasonal and timing restrictions Appendix B.**
- 402

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403 **8. Mitigation**

- 404 **8.1.** Mitigation (MIT)-1: BLM and USFS would establish an inter-agency GRSG Conservation
405 Board at the state level (both Idaho and Montana) to oversee GRSG Conservation.
- 406 **8.2.** MIT-2: The BLM and USFS, in coordination with the GRSG Conservation Board would
407 develop a State Mitigation Strategy. In Idaho this strategy would be consistent with the
408 Idaho Mitigation Framework (Appendix J).
- 409 **8.3.** MIT-3: Mitigate impacts from anthropogenic developments (Appendix H) to GRSG
410 habitats by first avoidance of impacts, minimizing impacts and then compensating for
411 impacts.
- 412 **8.4.** MIT-4: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix H) impacts to CMZs to a no net
413 loss standard (Appendix K) through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance
414 with the Mitigation Framework (Appendix L), referred to as no unmitigated loss.
- 415 **8.5.** MIT-5: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix H) impacts to GRSG habitat
416 through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework
417 (Appendix L).
- 418

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419 **9. Wildfire Preparedness/Prevention**

- 420 **9.1.** Wildfire Preparedness (WFP)-1: Support development and implementation of Rangeland
421 Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) in coordination with the State of Idaho.
- 422 **9.2.** WFP-2: Develop a consistent approach to fire restrictions within GRSG habitat through the
423 existing coordinated inter-agency approach to fire restrictions based upon National Fire
424 Danger Rating System thresholds (fuel conditions, drought conditions, and predicted
425 weather patterns).
- 426 **9.3.** WFP-3: Annually incorporate into existing fire management plans results and updates from
427 the Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments described in Appendix D, to
428 communicate/explain the resource value of GRSG habitat, including fire prevention
429 messages and actions to reduce human-caused ignitions.
- 430 **9.4.** WFP-4: Continue to participate with the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, a cooperative,
431 interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals,
432 actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management
433 Policy.
- 434 **9.5.** WFP-5: Continue annual coordination meetings held between cooperating agencies that
435 have fire suppression responsibilities. Incorporate Rangeland Fire Protection Associations
436 and other stakeholders into this coordination. Discuss priority suppression areas and
437 distribute maps showing priority suppression areas at both the Conservation Area and the
438 local office levels as based on the adaptive management strategy and Wildfire and Invasive
439 Species Assessments.
- 440 **9.6.** WFP-6: Ensure firefighter personnel receive annual orientation regarding GRSG habitat
441 and sagebrush management issues as related to wildfire suppression.
- 442 **9.7.** WFP-7: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments, identify roads, trails, and
443 recreational use areas with high frequency of human caused fires within or adjacent to the
444 Core or Important Management Zones. Consider these areas during annual fire restriction
445 evaluations, and as appropriate, through site specific management.
- 446 **9.8.** WFP-8: Coordinate with Federal, State and local jurisdictions on fire and litter prevention
447 programs to reduce human caused ignitions.
- 448 **9.9.** WFP-9: Implement activities identified within the Wildfire and Invasive Species
449 Assessments.
- 450

451 **10. Wildfire Suppression**

452 **10.1.**WFS-1: Complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessments as described within
453 Appendix D within 1 year of the Record of Decision and incorporate results into
454 appropriate Fire Management Plans as they are completed. Wildfire and Invasive Species
455 Habitat Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and
456 invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas/treatment opportunities for fuels
457 management, fire management, and restoration. These assessments identify priority areas
458 and describe strategies for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities.

459 **10.2.** WFS-2: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments incorporate a
460 wildfire response time analysis focusing on response time to identified priority areas within
461 Core and Important Management Zones or on those fires that have the potential to impact
462 Core and Important Management Zones. Incorporate findings into Unit Initial Attack
463 program

464 **10.3.** WFS-3: As part of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment incorporate a water
465 capacity analysis for suppression purposes, including potential private water sources.
466 Provide water availability to respond to fire in or threatening CMZ and IMZ during initial
467 attack.

468 **10.4.** WFS-4: During high fire danger conditions, stage initial attack and secure additional
469 resources closer to priority areas identified in the Wildfire and Invasive Species
470 Assessments, based on anticipated fires and weather conditions, with particular
471 consideration of the West Owyhee, Southern and Desert Conservation Areas to ensure
472 quicker response times in or near GRSG habitat.

473 **10.5.** WFS-5: Utilize a full range of fire management strategies and tactics through
474 strategic wildfire suppression planning consistent with appropriate management response
475 and within acceptable risk levels, to achieve resource objectives for GRSG habitat
476 consistent with land use plan direction. Utilizing both direct and indirect attack as
477 appropriate to limit the overall amount of GRSG habitat burned. This could include
478 suppressing fires in intact sagebrush habitats; limiting fire growth in General Management
479 Zones when suppression resources are available or managing wildfire for resource benefit in
480 areas of conifer (juniper) encroachment.

481 **10.6.** WFS-6: Suppression priorities: Firefighter and public safety followed by property are
482 the highest priority for protection during suppression activities. Maintaining GRSG habitat
483 will be prioritized immediately after human life and property, commensurate with
484 threatened and endangered species habitat or other critical habitats to be protected.

485 **10.7.** WFS-7: Ensure close coordination with federal and state firefighters including the
486 Rangeland Fire Protection Associations during suppression activities.

487

488 **11. Fuels Management**

- 489 **11.1.** FM-1: Design and implement fuels treatments that would reduce the potential start and
490 spread of unwanted wildfires and provide anchor points or control lines for the
491 containment of wildfires during suppression activities with an emphasis on maintaining,
492 protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems and successfully rehabilitated areas and
493 strategically and effectively reduce wildfire threats in the greatest area.
- 494 **11.2.** FM-2: Enhance (or maintain/retain) sagebrush canopy cover and community structure to
495 match expected potential for the ecological site and consistent with GRSG habitat
496 objectives unless fuels management objectives requires additional reduction in sagebrush
497 cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel
498 management treatments against the additional loss of sagebrush cover on the local
499 landscape in the NEPA process.
- 500 **11.3.** FM-3: Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing fuels management
501 treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present. Allow no treatments in
502 known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk
503 around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter
504 range habitat quality. Ensure chemical applications are utilized where they would assist in
505 success of fuels treatments. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to prevent
506 fire from spreading into Core Management Zones or WUI.
- 507 **11.4.** FM-4: Develop a fuels continuity and management strategy to expand, enhance, maintain
508 and protect GRSG habitat informed by the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments
509 completed as described in Appendix D.
- 510 **11.5.** FM-5: When developing the fuels management strategy as part of the Wildfire and Invasive
511 Species Assessment described in Appendix D consider up-to-date fuels profiles; land use
512 plan direction; current and potential habitat fragmentation; sagebrush and GRSG ecological
513 factors; active vegetation management steps to provide critical breaks in fuel continuity
514 where appropriate; incorporate a comparative risk analysis with regard to the risk of
515 increased habitat fragmentation from a proposed action versus the risk of large scale
516 fragmentation posed by wildfires if the action is not taken.
- 517 **11.6.** FM-6: Fuel treatments will be designed though an interdisciplinary process to expand,
518 enhance, maintain, and protect GRSG habitat which considers a full range of fuel reduction
519 techniques, including: grazing, targeted grazing, prescribed fire, chemical, biological and
520 mechanical treatments.
- 521 **11.7.** FM-7: Existing and proposed linear ROWs could be considered for use and maintenance as
522 vegetated fuel breaks in appropriate areas.
- 523 **11.8.** FM-8: Fuel breaks would incorporate existing vegetation treatments (seedings) or be located
524 adjacent to existing linear disturbance areas where appropriate. Fuel breaks should be
525 placed in areas with the greatest likelihood of compartmentalizing a fire and/or to foster
526 suppression options to protect existing intact habitat.
- 527 **11.9.** FM-9: Strategically pre-treat areas to reduce fine fuels.
- 528 **11.10.** FM-10: Protect seeding efforts from subsequent fire events.
- 529 **11.11.** FM-11: Targeted grazing as a fuels treatment to adjust the vegetation conditions to
530 reduce the potential start and spread of unwanted wildfires may be implemented
531 within existing grazing authorizations if feasible such as through temporary non-
532 renewable authorizations, or through contracts, agreements or other appropriate
533 means separate from existing grazing authorizations and permits.

- 534 **11.12.** FM-12: Targeted grazing to achieve fuels management objectives should conform to
535 the following criteria:
- 536 • Targeted grazing should be implemented strategically on the landscape, and
537 directly involve the minimum footprint and grazing intensity required to meet fuels
538 management objectives.
 - 539 • Allow conformance to the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health and
540 Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Idaho or Montana) at the
541 assessment scale.
 - 542 • Where feasible and applicable coordinate with the grazing permittee to
543 strategically reduce fuels through livestock management within the Mandatory Terms
544 and Conditions of the applicable grazing authorizations
- 545 **11.13.** FM-13: Prioritize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on
546 availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability
547 of success or native seed availability is low or non-economical, nonnative seeds may
548 be used to meet GRSG habitat objectives to trend toward restoring the fire regime.
549 When reseeding, use fire resistant native and nonnative species, as appropriate, to
550 provide for fuel breaks.
- 551 **11.14.** FM-14: Maintain effectiveness of fuels projects to ensure long-term success,
552 including persistence of seeded species and/or other treatment components while
553 maintaining the integrity of adjacent vegetation.
554

- 555 **12. Wildfire Restoration/Rehabilitation – Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation**
556 **12.1.** ESR-1: Utilize the findings and Restoration/Rehabilitation Strategy developed as part of
557 the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment process described in Appendix D to
558 determine if rehabilitation actions are needed, based on ecological potential, and direct
559 emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ESR) (BLM) or Burned Area Emergency
560 Restoration (BAER) (FS) actions after fire.
- 561 **12.2.** ESR-2: Incorporate GRSG Habitat Management Objectives into ESR/BAER plans
562 based on site potential and in accordance with the Restoration/Rehabilitation
563 Strategy developed as a result of the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.
- 564 **12.3.** ESR-3: Adjust management activities, as appropriate to ensure successful
565 establishment of vegetation from ESR and rehabilitation informed through the
566 evaluation of measurable groundcover and vegetation objectives such as plant vigor,
567 seed production and growing season conditions.
- 568 **12.4.** ESR-4: Adjust, as appropriate, livestock management on adjacent unburned areas
569 to mitigate the effect of the burn on local GRSG populations.
570

REVIEW

571 **13. Habitat Restoration and Vegetation Management**

572 **13.1.** VEG-1: Implement habitat rehabilitation or restoration projects in areas that have potential
573 to improve GRSG habitat using a full array of treatment activities as appropriate, including
574 chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments.

575 **13.2.** VEG-2: Implement vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects to enhance
576 sagebrush cover or to promote diverse and healthy grass and forb understory to
577 achieve the greatest improvement in GRSG habitat based on Wildfire and Invasive
578 Species Assessments, HAF assessments, other vegetative assessment data and local,
579 site specific factors that indicate sagebrush canopy cover or herbaceous conditions
580 do not meet habitat management objectives (i.e. is minimal or exceeds optimal
581 characteristics). This may necessitate the use of prescribed fire as a site preparation
582 technique to remove annual grass residual growth prior to the use of herbicides in
583 the restoration of certain lower elevation sites (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush) but
584 such efforts will be carefully planned and coordinated to minimize impacts to sage-
585 grouse seasonal habitats.

586 **13.3.** VEG-3: Require use of native seeds for restoration based on availability, adaptation
587 (ecological site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Non-
588 native seeds may be used as long as they support GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke
589 2011) to increase probability of success, when adapted seed availability is low or to
590 compete with invasive species especially on harsher sites.

591 **13.4.** VEG-4: Implement management changes in restoration and rehabilitation areas, as
592 necessary, to maintain suitable GRSG habitat, improve unsuitable GRSG habitat and
593 to ensure long-term persistence of improved GRSG habitat (Eiswerth and
594 Shonkwiler 2006). Management changes could be considered during livestock
595 grazing permit renewals, travel management planning, and renewal or reauthorization
596 of rights-of-way.

597 **13.5.** VEG-5: Consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed
598 production (Armstrong 2007) to provide a reliable source of locally adapted seed to
599 use during rehabilitation and restoration activities.

600 **13.6.** VEG-6: Allocate use of native seed to GRSG or ESA listed species habitat in years
601 when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation of native
602 seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects outside of Core or
603 Important Management Zones to those inside it. Where probability of success or
604 native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet
605 GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment of appropriate
606 sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory plants, relative to site
607 potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation efforts.

608 **13.7.** VEG-7: During land health assessments evaluate the compatibility of existing
609 nonnative seedings for GRSG habitat to keep as a component of a grazing system,
610 development of a forage reserve, or to be used as a fuelbreak (Davies et al. 2011) or
611 during restoration development. If nonnative seedings do not contribute to a
612 grazing system, are not suitable for a forage reserve, and are not suitable fuelbreaks,
613 evaluate the nonnative seedings in and adjacent to CMZ to determine if they should
614 be diversified with or converted to native grasses, forbs, and shrubs, including
615 sagebrush.

616 **13.8.** VEG-8: Utilize conifer (juniper) removal treatments to reduce the extent of conifer
617 encroachment areas. Refrain from using prescribed fire and conducting removal

618 projects in old-growth juniper stands. Old-growth juniper trees are characterized by
619 rounded tops and spreading canopies, often containing dead limbs and/or spike
620 tops, large branches near the base of the tree, as well as furrowed, fibrous bark, and
621 are typically host to arboreal lichens. Leader growth in the upper quarter of the tree
622 is usually less than one inch. These trees are generally distributed on rock outcrop or
623 rubble land soils, or other soils with coarse fragments in the soil-surface and/or
624 slopes over 12-25%, where juniper vegetation type is the climax plant community
625 (IDFG 2000; Miller et al 2005; USDI and USGS 2007).
626

REVIEW

627 **14. Invasive Species**

628 **14.1.** Invasive Species (INV)-1: Incorporate results of the Wildfire and Invasive Species
629 Assessments into projects and activities addressing invasive species.

630 **14.2.** INV-2: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed
631 management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans for
632 Cooperative Weed Management Areas in cooperation with State and Federal
633 agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.

634 **14.3.** INV-3: Conduct integrated weed management actions for noxious and invasive weed
635 populations that are impacting or threatening GRSG habitat quality using a variety of
636 eradication and control techniques including chemical, mechanical and other
637 appropriate means.

638 **14.4.** INV-4: Require project proponent to ensure that treatments of noxious weeds and
639 invasive species on disturbed project construction areas are completed for at least 3
640 years.

641

REVIEW

642 **15. Lands and Realty / Infrastructure**

643 **15.1.** Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Core: Designate and manage Core Management Zones as ROW
644 avoidance areas subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix
645 A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Management Zones as ROW
646 avoidance areas subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General:
647 Designate and manage General Management Zones as open with proposals subject to
648 RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.

649 **15.2.** LR-2: Core: Designate and manage Core Management Zones as exclusion areas for
650 utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and
651 hydropower energy development. Important: Designate and manage Important
652 Management Zones as avoidance areas for Wind and Solar testing and development,
653 nuclear and hydropower development. General: Designate and manage General
654 Management Zones as open for Wind and Solar testing and development and
655 nuclear and hydropower development subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal
656 timing restrictions.

657 **15.3.** LR-3: Core: Development of commercial service airports and facilities (as defined by
658 FAA 2014 – publically owned airports that have at least 2,500 passenger boardings
659 each calendar year and receive scheduled passenger service) would not be allowed
660 within Core Management Zones. Important and General Management Zones are
661 Avoidance and Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described
662 in LR-1.

663 **15.4.** LR-4: Core: Development of new landfills would not be allowed within Core
664 Management Zones. Important and General Management Zones are Avoidance and
665 Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described in LR-1.

666 **15.5.** LR-5: Core Management Zones: Rights-of-way for development of new or amended
667 ROWs and land use authorizations, not excluded, would only be considered when
668 consistent with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria (AD-3).
669 Important: Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use
670 authorizations, not excluded, could be considered consistent with the Important
671 Management Zones Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria. (AD-4).
672 General: New ROW and land use authorizations could be considered.

673 **15.6.** LR-6: If the project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing
674 development - the existing transmission line must be removed within a specified
675 amount of time after the new line is installed and energized.

676 **15.7.** LR-7: Existing designated corridors, including Section 368 Corridors, will remain
677 Open (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement).

678 **15.8.** LR-8: Process unauthorized use. If the use is subsequently authorized, it would be
679 authorized consistent with direction for the Management Zones within which it is
680 located and the RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. If the use is
681 not subsequently authorized the site would be reclaimed by removing these features
682 and restoring the habitat.

683 **15.9.** LR-9: Land use authorizations that are temporary in nature would be subject to
684 seasonal or timing restrictions and mitigation requirements regarding habitat loss as
685 needed.

686 **15.10.** LR-10: New ROW applications for water facilities (ditches, canals, pipelines), or
687 amendments to existing water facilities which include additional structures to
688 improve fish passage or benefits to fisheries (new diversions, fish screens) would be

- 689 allowed on a case-by-case bases subject to RDFs and BMPs to reduce impacts to
690 GRSG habitat and mitigation requirements regarding GRSG habitat loss as needed.
- 691 **15.11.** LR-11: When a ROW grant expires, is relinquished, or terminated, the lease holder
692 would be required to reclaim the site by removing overhead lines and other
693 infrastructure and to eliminate avian predator nesting opportunities provided by
694 anthropogenic development on public lands associated with the now void ROW
695 grant (e.g., remove powerline and communication facilities no longer in service).
- 696 **15.12.** LR-12: Work with ROW holders to retrofit existing towers with perch deterrents or
697 other anti-perching devices, where appropriate, to limit GRSG predation.
- 698 **15.13.** LR-13: Land tenure adjustments would be subject to the following disposal,
699 exchange, and acquisition criteria, which include retaining lands with GRSG habitat.
700 Retention of areas with GRSG would reduce the likelihood of habitat conversion to
701 agriculture, urbanization, or other uses that would remove sagebrush habitat and
702 potentially impact sensitive plants. Criteria:
- 703 a. Lands within Core and Important Management Zones would not be available
704 for disposal (Appendix M).
 - 705 b. Acquire habitat within Core and Important Management Zones, when
706 possible (i.e. willing landowner), and retain ownership of habitat within all Zones,
707 except if a land exchange would allow for additional or more contiguous federal
708 ownership patterns.
 - 709 c. Lands within Core and Important Management Zones would be retained
710 unless exchange of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity
711 of Core or Important Management Zones.
 - 712 d. Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality GRSG
713 habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands of higher quality
714 habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRSG habitats or lands providing for threatened
715 and endangered species. These potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the
716 extent or continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of Core Management
717 Zones. Higher priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of
718 sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of sagebrush areas within Core
719 Management Zones currently in public ownership. Lower priority would be given to
720 other lands that would promote enhancement in the Core and Important
721 Management Zones.
 - 722 e. Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide for
723 connectivity of Core Management Zones.
- 724

725 16. Minerals

726 16.1. Fluid Minerals

727 **16.1.1.** Fluid Minerals (FLM)-1: Idaho: Areas within Core Management Zones with no or
728 low potential for fluid mineral development (oil and gas or geothermal) would be
729 closed. Areas within Core Management Zones with moderate to high potential for
730 development and Important Management Zones would be open to mineral leasing and
731 development subject to no surface occupancy, in accordance with the Anthropogenic
732 Disturbance Exceptions (Core – AD-3) and the Anthropogenic Disturbance
733 Development Criteria (Important – AD-4) subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers, timing
734 restrictions and standard stipulations. General Management Zones would be open to
735 mineral leasing and development subject to CSU which includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers,
736 seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations. Montana: Areas within Core
737 Management Zones would be open to leasing subject to no surface occupancy. No
738 waivers, exceptions or modifications would be allowed unless approved by the State
739 Director. General Management Zones would be open to leasing subject to CSU which
740 includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.

741 **16.1.2.** FLM-2: Core Management Zones: Waivers, exemptions or modifications to the
742 NSO stipulation could be considered upon recommendation from the Governor
743 through the Implementation Task Force during the federal site-specific NEPA analysis
744 based on Core Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria
745 (AD-3). Important Management Zones: Waivers, exceptions or modifications to the
746 NSO stipulation could be considered upon recommendation from the Governor
747 through the Implementation Task Force during the federal site-specific NEPA analysis
748 based on the Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Development
749 Criteria (AD-4). In the event a waiver, exception or modification were allowed
750 development would still be subject to CSU which includes RDFs, BMPs, buffers,
751 seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.

752 **Waivers, Exceptions and Modifications (WEMs)** (Source IM-2008-032)

753
754 A waiver is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation, the stipulation would no
755 longer apply anywhere within the lease. Waivers require a 30-day public review and are
756 approved and signed by the State Director.

757
758 An exception is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the lease; exceptions
759 are determined on a case-by-case basis; the stipulation continues to apply to all other
760 sites within the lease. An exception is a limited type of waiver.

761
762 A modification is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or
763 for the term of the lease. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may
764 or may not apply to all sites within the lease to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

765 **16.1.3.** FLM-3: Incorporate required design features, best management practices appropriate
766 to the management area, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions as conditions of
767 approval into any post-lease activities.

768 **16.1.4.** FLM-4: Complete a Master Development Plan on leases where a producing field is
769 proposed to be developed.

770 **16.1.5.** FLM-5: Encourage unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and
771 operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring). The unitization must be

772 designed in a manner to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG according to the Federal
773 Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6.

774 **16.2. Unleased Fluid Minerals**

775 **16.2.1.** FLM-6: Allow temporary geophysical exploration, subject to site-specific RDFs,
776 BMPs, buffers, seasonal restrictions, and daily timing restrictions.

777 **16.2.2.** FLM-7: Parcels nominated for lease in Core or Important Management Zones would
778 be evaluated to determine whether they meet the Anthropogenic Disturbance
779 Exception (AD-3 for CMZ) or Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria
780 (AD-4) for IMZ), prior to lease offering. Parcels which do not meet the criteria would
781 not be offered for lease.

782 **16.3. Locatable Minerals**

783 **16.3.1.** Locatable Minerals (LOC)-1: Lands would remain open to locatable mineral entry in
784 all management zones.

785 **16.3.2.** LOC-2: Apply reasonable and appropriate Conditions of Approval to prevent
786 unnecessary or undue degradation of GRSG habitat when a Plan of Operations is
787 submitted for BLM or FS approval, in accordance with 43 CFR 3809.411(d)(2) (or 36
788 CFR 228.5(a)(3) on National Forest System lands).

789 **16.4. Salable Minerals**

790 **16.4.1.** Salable Minerals (SAL)-1: Core: No new site authorizations would be approved.
791 Important: New site authorizations could be considered consistent with the
792 Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) subject to RDFs, BMPs,
793 buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing community pits within
794 CMZ and IMZ would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions. General: Open to new
795 site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing
796 sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions.

797 **16.4.2.** SAL-2: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat
798 management objectives.

799 **16.4.3.** SAL-3: Require reclamation bonding that would require restoration of GRSG habitat
800 on new site authorizations for mineral material pits in IMZ (this would not apply to
801 free use permits issued to a government entity such as a county road district, but would
802 apply to non-profit entities).

803 **16.5. Non-Energy Solid Mineral Leasable Minerals**

804 **16.5.1.** Non Energy Leasables (NEL)-1: Core and Important Management Zones: Areas
805 within Know Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) will remain open to leasing. CMZ
806 areas outside KPLAs are closed to leasing and prospecting. IMZ areas outside of
807 KPLAs are open to leasing in accordance to the Anthropogenic Disturbance
808 Development Criteria (AD-4) subject to the anthropogenic disturbance cap (AD-1),
809 RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Exceptions may be made for
810 lease modifications and fringe leases where valid existing rights may be affected.
811 General Management Zones: Lands are available for leasing, exploration activities and
812 initial mine development subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers, timing restrictions (seasonal
813 and daily) and standard stipulations.

814 **16.5.2.** NEL-2: Require seasonal and daily timing restrictions in undeveloped non-energy
815 mineral leases when exploration activities or initial mine development is proposed, as
816 appropriate.

817 **16.5.3.** NEL-3: Include RDFs as conditions of approval to mine plans in undeveloped non-
818 energy mineral leases.

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16.6. Mineral Split Estate

16.6.1. Mineral Split Estate (MSE)-1: In coordination with surface land owner, apply stipulations, conservation measures, and design features consistent with those applied to BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands in the management zone where the federal government owns the mineral estate and the surface is non-federal ownership.

16.6.2. MSE-2: Recommend to the state regulatory entity to apply a timing restriction stipulation, COAs, and buffer restricts around occupied leks, when concurring to the approval of authorizations for mineral-related surface disturbance on lands in GRSG habitat where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership.

REVIEW

830 **17. Range Management/Livestock Grazing**

831 17.1. Range Management (RM)-1: Continue to make GRSG habitat available for livestock
832 grazing. Active AUMs for livestock grazing would remain the same, though the number of
833 AUMs available on an allotment may be adjusted based on site-specific conditions to meet
834 management objectives during term permit renewals, AMP development, or other
835 appropriate implementation planning. Additionally, temporary adjustments can be made
836 annually to livestock numbers, the number of AUMs, season of use in accordance with
837 applicable regulations.

838 17.2. RM-2: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing
839 permits consistent with management zone prioritization (MA-4), unless other higher
840 priority considerations exist such as threatened, endangered and proposed species
841 habitat that livestock grazing could affect. Where possible, conduct land health
842 assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.

843 17.3. RM-3: Where opportunities exist, coordinate with other land managers to encourage
844 livestock operations that utilize mixed federal, private and/or state land to be
845 managed at the landscape scale to benefit GRSG and their habitat across land
846 ownerships.

847 17.4. RM-4: CMZ & IMZ: During the land health assessment process, identify the type(s)
848 of seasonal habitat the assessed areas are capable of supporting. Utilize the habitat
849 assessment framework, (Stiver et al. 2014 as amended/replaced) or other BLM or
850 Forest Service approved methodology, in accordance with current policy and
851 guidance to determine whether vegetation structure, condition and composition are
852 meeting GRSG habitat objectives including riparian and lentic areas (HM-OBJ-2;
853 Table 2). Use appropriate Ecological Site Descriptions, reference sheets and state
854 and transition models to inform desired habitat conditions and expected responses
855 to management changes for the land unit being assessed.

856 17.5. RM-5: When modifying grazing management, analyze indirect effects to habitat,
857 including changes in fuel loading and wildfire behavior.

858 17.6. RM-6: When livestock management practices are determined to not be compatible
859 with meeting or making progress towards achievable habitat objectives following
860 consultation, cooperating and coordination with permittees and interested publics,
861 implement changes in grazing management through grazing authorization
862 modifications, or allotment management plan implementation. Potential
863 modifications include, but are not limited to, changes in:

- 864 1) Season or timing of use;
- 865 2) Numbers of livestock;
- 866 3) Distribution of livestock use;
- 867 4) Duration and/or level of use;
- 868 5) Kind of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, or goats) (Briske et al. 2011);
- 869 6) Voluntary measures such as temporary non-use; and
- 870 7) Grazing schedules (including rest or deferment).

871 17.7. RM-7: Where opportunities exist, establish forage reserves to facilitate restoration
872 and rehabilitation efforts in sage-grouse habitat areas.

873 17.8. RM-8: CMZ & IMZ - When an allotment becomes vacant or grazing preference is
874 relinquished, consider voluntary retirement of the allotment or grazing preference in
875 whole or in part, or converting the area to a forage reserve/buffer when doing so
876 would maintain or enhance sage-grouse habitat. GMZ - When an allotment

- 877 becomes vacant or grazing preference is relinquished, consider converting it to a
878 forage reserve/buffer to use during fire rehabilitation or restoration efforts
879 elsewhere, when such actions would result in a net benefit to GRSG habitat and
880 other priority resources.
- 881 **17.9.** RM-9: CMZ & IMZ - Where practical, design pasture rotations to utilize exotic
882 perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands, during GRSG nesting season
883 annually or periodically.
- 884 **17.10.** RM-10: Evaluate the locations where salt/supplements are placed. In coordination
885 with the permittee, have salt/supplements placed in areas which would reduce
886 impacts to GRSG habitat (e.g., existing disturbed areas).
- 887 **17.11.** RM-11: Incorporate RDFs into Terms and Conditions for crossing permits to limit
888 disturbance of occupied leks when trailing livestock across BLM- and Forest Service
889 -administered lands in the spring. Work with permittees in locating over-nighting,
890 watering and bedding locations to minimize impacts to seasonal habitats.
- 891 **17.12.** RM-12: Design any new structural range improvements, following cooperation,
892 consultation and coordination with permittees, to minimize and/or mitigate effects
893 to GRSG habitat. Any new structural range improvements are subject to RDFs
894 (Appendix A). Structural range improvement in this context, include, but are not
895 limited to: fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures;
896 pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water
897 hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments.
- 898 **17.13.** RM-13: During the land health assessment and grazing permit renewal process,
899 evaluate existing livestock management range improvements with respect to their
900 effect on GRSG habitat. Consider removal of projects that are not needed for
901 effective livestock management, are no longer in working condition, and/or
902 negatively affect GRSG habitat, with the exception of functional projects needed for
903 management of habitat for other threatened, endangered or proposed species or
904 other sensitive resources.
- 905 **17.14.** RM-14: Prioritize removal, modification or marking of fences or other structures in
906 areas of high collision risk following cooperation, consultation and coordination with
907 permittees to reduce the incidence of GRSG mortality due to fence strikes (Stevens
908 et al. 2012).
909

910 **18. Wild Horses and Burros**

- 911 **18.1.** Wild Horse and Burro (WHB)-1: Develop or amend BLM Herd Management Area Plans
912 and Forest Service Wild Horse Territory Plans to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and
913 management considerations for all BLM HMAs) and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories.
- 914 **18.2.** WHB-2: When evaluating AML on HMAs within CMZ, evaluate indicators that
915 address structure/condition/composition of vegetation and measurements specific
916 to achieving GRSG habitat objectives.
- 917 **18.3.** WHB-3: Utilize interdisciplinary land health assessments in HMAs containing GRSG
918 habitat to determine whether vegetation characteristics are meeting appropriate
919 seasonal habitat objectives.
- 920 **18.4.** WHB-4: CMZ: Do not expand HMAs. IMZ: Analysis of proposed additions to
921 existing HMA boundaries should consider the direct, indirect and cumulative
922 impacts on GRSG habitat, including the need for additional infrastructure such as
923 boundary fencing, and consider alternative areas outside of CMZ and IMZ.
924

REVIEW

925 **19. Travel Management**

- 926 **19.1.** Travel Management (TM) -1: Limit motorized travel within Idaho BLM Field
927 Offices to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails. This excludes areas previously
928 designated as open through an affirmative land use plan decision or currently under
929 review for designation as open, currently being analyzed in ongoing RMP revision
930 efforts in the Four Rivers, Jarbidge and Upper Snake Field Offices. The initial
931 designation would be “limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails”; this
932 designation would change to “limited to designated roads, primitive roads and trails”,
933 in areas where travel management plans are completed.
- 934 **19.2.** TM-2: Close areas adversely affected by off-highway vehicles immediately to the
935 type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated
936 and measures implemented to prevent recurrence when the authorized officer
937 determines that off-road vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse
938 effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical
939 resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized
940 uses, or other resources. This may include closure or specific routes or areas. (43
941 CFR 8341.2)
- 942 **19.3.** TM-3: Develop Travel Management Plans for each Field Office as described in the
943 BLM Travel Management Handbook 8342.1 and according to the travel
944 management planning guidelines (Appendix N).
- 945 **19.4.** TM-4: During subsequent travel management planning design and designate a travel
946 system to minimize adverse effects on GRSG. Locate areas and trails to minimize
947 harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Give special
948 attention to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats. Allow for
949 route upgrade, closure of existing routes, and creation of new routes to help protect
950 habitat and meet user group needs, thereby reducing the potential for pioneering
951 unauthorized routes. The emphasis of the comprehensive travel and transportation
952 planning within Core Management Zones would be placed on having a neutral or
953 positive effect on GRSG habitat.
- 954 **19.5.** TM-5: Conduct road maintenance activities to avoid disturbance during specific
955 times at different seasons – see seasonal and timing restrictions section.
956

957 **20. Recreation**

958 **20.1.** REC-1: Manage existing recreation uses and sites to minimize adverse effects on
959 GRSG or their habitat through incorporation of RDFs, BMPs, buffers and seasonal
960 restrictions.

961 **20.2.** REC-2: Do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g., campgrounds, trails,
962 trailheads, staging areas) within CMZs and IMZs unless the development would have
963 a neutral effect or be beneficial to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating recreation,
964 diverting use away from critical areas, etc.); or the new construction replaces existing
965 facilities and reduces impacts from the existing facilities as in TM-4, or unless the
966 development is required for visitor safety or resource protection.

967

REVIEW

968 **21. Monitoring**

- 969 **21.1.** Monitoring (MON)-1: Annually complete a review of Wildfire and Invasive Species
970 assessment implementation efforts within GRSG habitat with appropriate USFWS
971 and state agency personnel.
- 972 **21.2.** MON-2: Annually monitor the effectiveness of fuels treatment projects.
- 973 **21.3.** MON-3: Monitor invasive vegetation post vegetation management treatment
- 974 **21.4.** MON-4: Monitor project construction areas for noxious weed and invasive species
975 for at least 3 years, unless control is achieved earlier.
- 976 **21.5.** MON-5: Use lek, nesting and winter habitat maps and key habitat map (updates) to
977 annually assess GRSG population and habitat status in the context of the adaptive
978 management triggers.
- 979 **21.6.** MON-6: Continue to support updates to the Key Habitat map to track vegetation
980 changes in relation to GRSG habitat on a yearly basis, until such a time this process
981 is replaced. The process used to update the Key Habitat Map is described in
982 Appendix F.
- 983 **21.7.** MON-7: Monitor GRSG habitat as described in the monitoring framework plan
984 (Appendix E) in coordination with IDFG and MT FWP.
985
986

987 **Appendices**

988

989 **Appendix A – Required Design Features and Best Management Practices**

990 **Appendix B – Seasonal Timing Restrictions**

991 **Appendix C – Application of Buffers**

992 **Appendix D – Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments/FIAT Team**

993 **Appendix E – Monitoring Framework Plan**

994 **Appendix F – Idaho Key Habitat Map Update Process**

995 **Appendix G – Adaptive Management**

996 **Baseline Map and Description**

997 **Adaptive Management – Soft Trigger Implementation Actions**

998 **Adaptive Livestock Grazing Management Response**

999 **Appendix H – Idaho Anthropogenic Disturbance Process**

1000 **Appendix I – Montana Anthropogenic Disturbance Process**

1001 **Appendix J – Mitigation**

1002 **Regional Mitigation Framework**

1003 **Idaho Mitigation Framework**

1004 **Unmitigated Loss**

1005 **Appendix K – Lands No Longer Available for Disposal**

1006 **Appendix L – Travel Management Planning Guidelines**



United States Department of the Interior



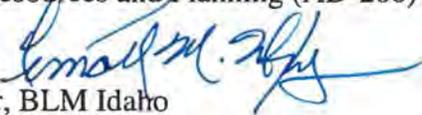
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Idaho State Office
1387 South Vinnell Way
Boise, Idaho 83709-1657

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (931)

MAY 28 2014

EMS TRANSMISSION Memorandum

To: Edwin L. Roberson
Assistant Director, Resources and Planning (AD-200)

From: Timothy M. Murphy 
Acting State Director, BLM Idaho

Jamie E. Connell
State Director, BLM Montana¹

Subject: Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregional Administrative Draft Proposed Plan Update

I. INTRODUCTION

This memo documents the key elements, allocations, and disturbance considerations in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Subregional Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) in response to WO Memo from Ed Roberson (1610 (210) of May 12, 2014). It has been reviewed and concurred with by the State Director in Montana/Dakotas.

The IDswMT effort includes portions of three states (Idaho, Montana, and Utah) and would amend 29 BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) land use plans. The planning area encompasses slightly more than 49 million acres of which 18.1 million acres are identified as GRSG habitat across all ownerships. BLM administered public lands comprise 9.3 million acres (roughly 50%) and USFS lands comprise 1.9 million areas (roughly 10%) of the total GRSG habitat within the subregion. Most of the subregion is located within WAFWA MZ IV with a small portion of southeast Idaho contained within WAFWA MZ II. The primary ongoing threats to GRSG are loss of habitat resulting from wildfire and spread of cheatgrass; of substantially less concern is loss of habitat due to infrastructure and oil and gas development. The ADPP addresses all of the applicable threats identified by population in the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Conservation Objectives Team (COT) report (Table 1).

¹ This memorandum is a coordinated response from both Idaho and Montana BLM. It has been developed in coordination with the Montana BLM and has been concurred with by the Montana State Director.

II. COORDINATION

The ADPP has been developed in close coordination with BLM, USFS, FWS, the State of Idaho through the Governor's Office of Species Conservation and GRSG Task Force and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the State of Montana through Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. The ADPP addresses the objectives described in the COT report and required policies and directives. The FWS provided the final COT threat assessment table as part of their public comments and the BLM held subsequent cooperating agency meetings with FWS, USFS and the State of Idaho to discuss, clarify and resolve the concerns identified in their letter and COT threat assessment table. The BLM has addressed all the concerns identified by FWS and have provided additional conservation measures or additional clarity to existing conservation measures in the ADPP (Table 2).

The State of Montana has prepared a draft strategy that has been reviewed. The Governor of Montana has yet to issue an expected Sage-Grouse Conservation Executive Order that would outline how the State of Montana would address GRSG conservation; therefore, it is not possible at this time to fully determine how the ADPP would compare with the potential State regulatory mechanisms or management actions to protect and conserve GRSG and their habitat. The Montana portion of the planning effort has also been coordinated with the other BLM plans in Montana to ensure some level of consistency within Montana. The ADPP (which applies to federal lands) remains flexible to provide cooperative landscape-level management for the conservation of GRSG which transcends ownership boundaries when coupled with the pending Executive Order from the Governor of Montana (which is anticipated to apply to all land ownerships whenever a state authorization is required).

III. KEY ELEMENTS

The primary threat to GRSG that the IDswMT effort responds to is wildfire. In coordination with the State of Idaho and FWS, the IDswMT ADPP identifies and maps three management zones (Core (ID & MT), Important (ID only) and General (ID & MT))² within five conservation areas (Map 1) which are responsive to the stochastic nature of wildfire and provide protections for GRSG and their habitat. Management actions for fuels and suppression management, in addition to those identified for inclusion from the Fire and Invasives Analysis Team have been included to further respond to the threat of wildfire. The ADPP also includes an adaptive management strategy and a mitigation strategy which utilizes the State of Idaho Mitigation Framework. For the SW Montana portion of the plan these components would be consistent with the Montana strategy.

The ADPP includes allocation decisions (Table 1) and program conservation measures to respond to GRSG threats, including required design features, best management practices, activity, and development buffers for GRSG leks and seasonal or timing restrictions.

The focus of the ADPP, including the delineation of three management zones, is to retain and protect sagebrush cover and GRSG habitat (consistent with Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008, and Knick et al. 2000) through appropriate prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitats and across broader habitat areas. Core Management Zones (CMZ) are delineated to protect large unfragmented, contiguous landscapes from anthropogenic disturbance and to focus wildfire reduction (suppression activities and fuels treatments) associated with the two key metapopulations

² Within the subregion management areas have been delineated into three zones – Core, Important and General, only two of which occur in Montana – Core and General.

within the subregion (Garton et al. 2011). These areas encompass all the seasonal habitats necessary to support approximately 73% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The Important Management Zones (IMZ) are delineated to provide protection to seasonal habitats adjacent to the CMZs and support approximately 22% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The two management zones encompass the FWS identified priority areas for conservation (PAC) and include areas beyond those PAC boundaries that would receive threat amelioration management to help foster connectivity and retention of habitat within CMZ and PAC areas.

The areas identified in the IDswMT subregion include the seasonal habitats relied upon by roughly 95% of the entire GRSG population in the subregion as contrasted with adjacent states where roughly 70-80% of the entire GRSG populations are included within areas identified for primary focus on threat amelioration. The IDswMT ADPP provides threat amelioration management on an additional 1 million acres (243k of Core and 795k of Important) and 3.8% of the breeding males (and population – 687 males and 39 leks) than just those areas identified by USFWS as the most important areas needed for maintaining GRSG representation, redundancy, and resilience across the landscape (USFWS 2013) (Map 2).

While CMZ is equivalent in concept and direction as Priority in the National Policy Team guidance (NPT) (May 1, 2014) and General Management Zones are the equivalent to General areas, the NPT does not have a similar designation as IMZ included within the IDswMT ADPP. This zone is a foundational component of the IDswMT ADPP and directly supports to adaptive management approach which is to adjust threat amelioration management into additional areas if further declines in populations or habitat occur. In coordination efforts with the State of Idaho, this three-tiered management approach was initially developed through the Governor's GRSG Task Force and is supported by State and County representatives on that Task Force. This acceptance in those arenas is helping to support development of the State's management approach for State and private lands within Idaho, consistent with the federal lands.

This three-tiered approach is not consistent with the NPT guidance. With several deviations CMZ allocation management in the IDswMT is consistent with the NPT guidance, in the event that adaptive management triggers are engaged then management in IMZs would then become reflective of Priority management, until that occurrence, IMZs are managed in a more protective approach than typically described for General.

IV. RESPONSE TO FWS COMMENTS ON DRAFT EIS

In the Service's comment letter on the Draft EIS (January 31, 2014) an evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives and their consistency with the COT report was described. The BLM, USFS, FWS and the State of Idaho have worked together over the last several months to reconcile the two co-preferred alternatives into on cohesive approach that responds to the concerns raised by FWS and further refines the approaches previously described in the Draft EIS.

V. CROSS JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES

Management direction within the subregion for Idaho and Montana has been coordinated across state boundaries with Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and Oregon. Allocation level decisions are mostly consistent across those boundaries with some discrepancy adjacent to Wyoming where there are some areas of

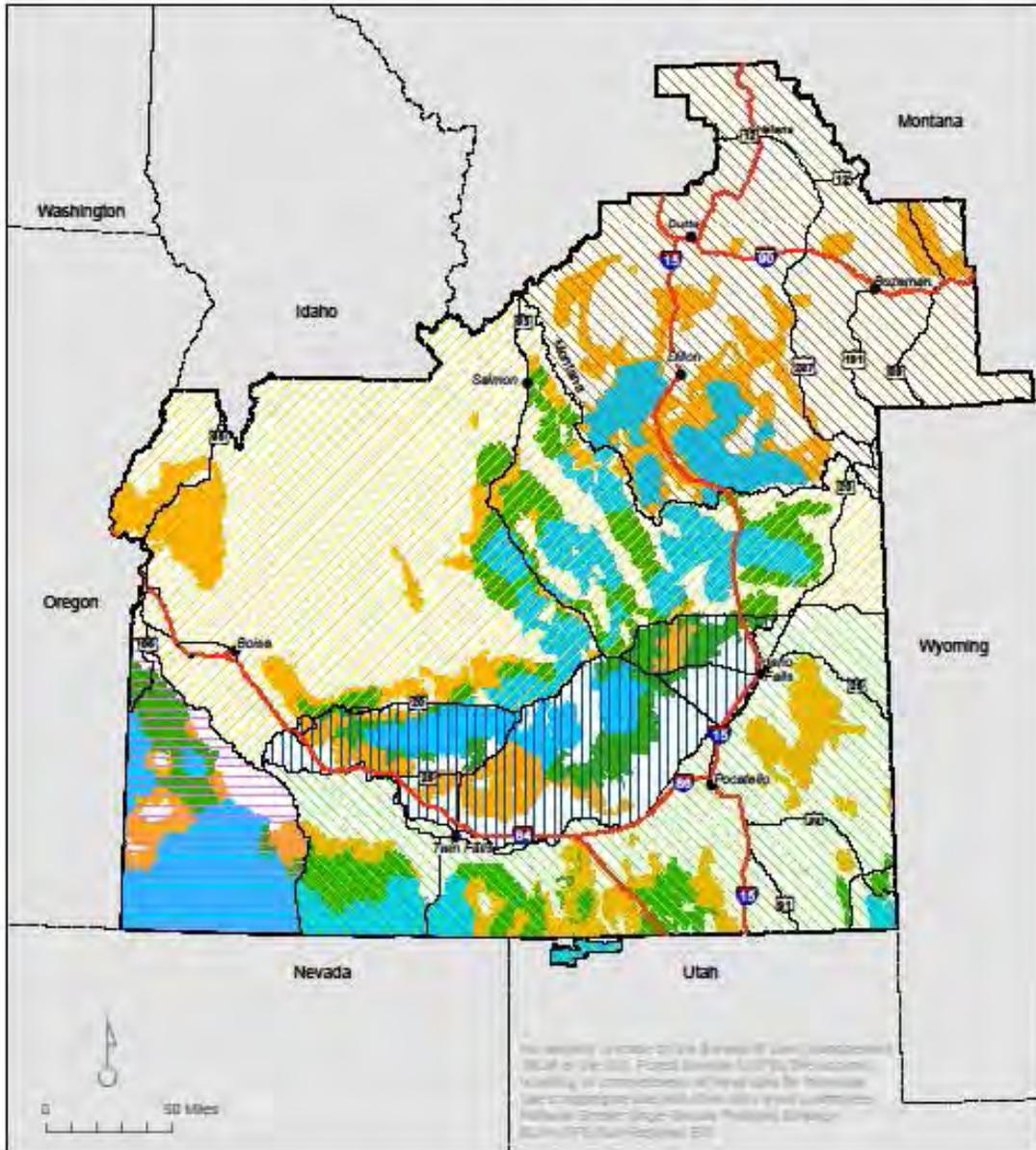
Core Management Zones in Idaho where across the border Wyoming identifies General management areas. There are some similar minor concerns with Utah. Core zones in Idaho and Priority areas in Nevada and Oregon largely match across the boundary and address the same allocation management in those areas.

Other Montana BLM planning efforts have incorporated mitigation and adaptive management approaches. The direction in the Southwestern Montana portion of the Final EIS for these components will differ from Idaho in order to maintain consistency with other Montana BLM plans.

VI. AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

None.

Map 1: Conservation Areas and Management Zones

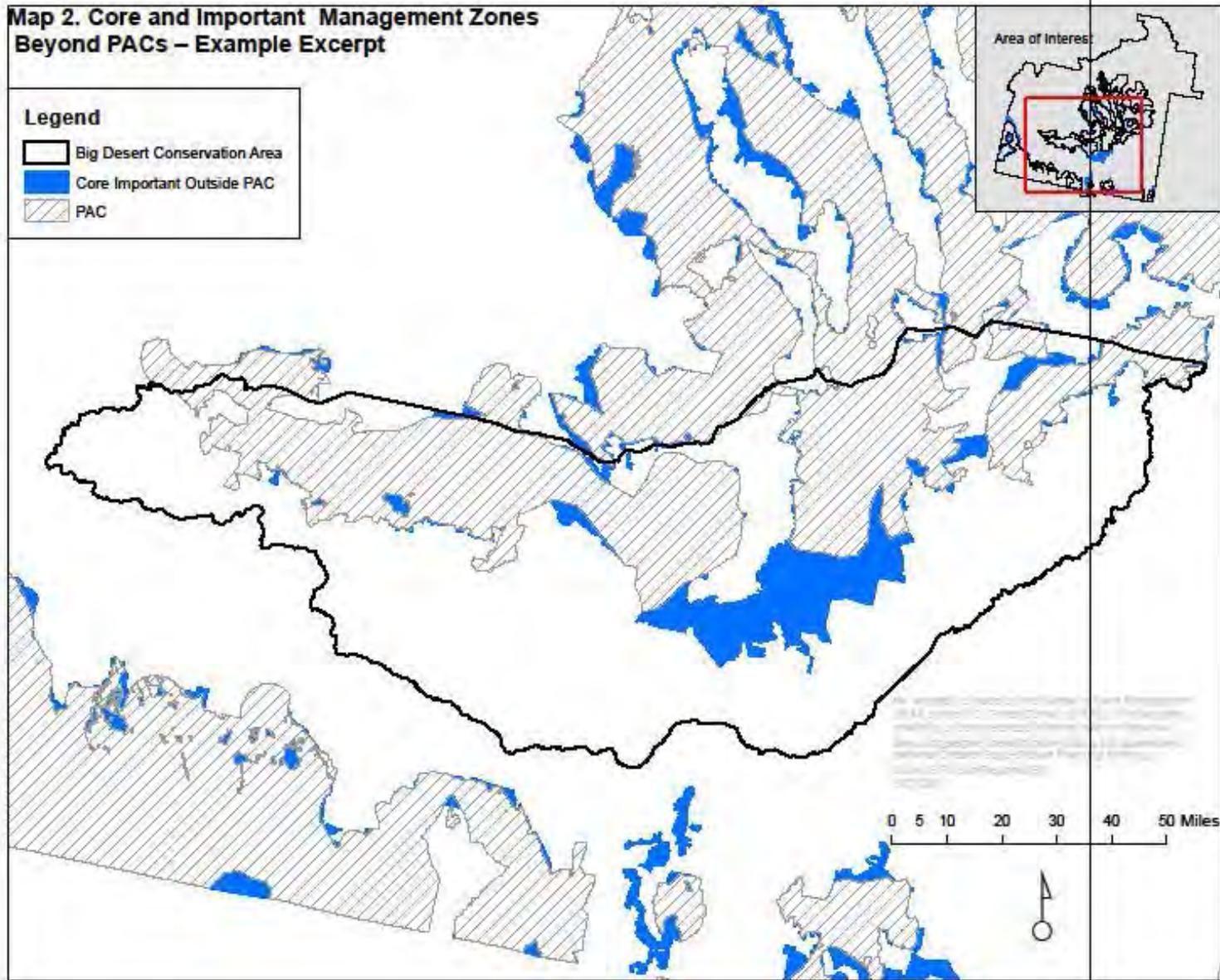


Conservation Area

-  Idaho Desert Conservation Area
-  Idaho Mountain Valleys Conservation Area
-  Idaho Southern Conservation Area
-  Idaho West Owyhee Conservation Area
-  SW Montana Conservation Area

Management Zone

-  Core
-  Important
-  General
-  Analysis Boundary



**Table 1. Allocation/Disturbance Checklist
Idaho and SW Montana EIS - Administrative Draft Proposed Plan**

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
Solar/Wind Energy Development ROW	All Core ³ : (Core is analogous to Priority) Consistent with Priority guidance.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged consistent with Priority.	
	All General: Inconsistent	
High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROW ⁴	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance with very limited exception opportunity.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance with limited exception opportunity as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged even more limitation to the exceptions would apply the same as Core.	
	All General: Inconsistent with guidance, Consistent with COT reduction of threats.	
Other (Minor) ROWs and Land Use Authorizations/Permits	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All General: Consistent with General guidance.	
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Including Geothermal)	Idaho Core: Inconsistent with guidance. Montana Core: Consistent with Rocky Mountain guidance.	Idaho: Oil and Gas: Core areas with low to no potential, which is most of the subregion, are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential, which are

³ Idaho portion of the plan identifies three (3) management delineations – Core, Important and General. Core areas are contained within the boundaries of the USFWS Priority Areas for Conservation (PAC) and make up roughly 66% of those areas. The remaining 33% of the PACs and other areas beyond the PACs are identified as Important Management Areas. This further refinement of management areas is **NOT** consistent with the NPT guidance. The Montana portion of the plan identifies two (2) management delineations – Core and General. Important direction does not apply to any areas in SW Montana. Direction for SW Montana in Core and General management areas as the same as for Idaho unless noted separately in the table.

⁴ Coordination across state boundaries for utility corridors is yet to be completed.

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance, includes additional restrictions to development.	within WAFWA MZ II and adjacent to Wyoming General areas are open, consistent with Wyoming General management (160k acres). Geothermal: Core areas with low or no potential are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential are open. All Core, Important and General areas would implement required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce and eliminate impacts to GRSG. Reasonably foreseeable development scenarios show limited, if any, development likely in the next 10-15 years. This direction is consistent with the COT in reducing the minimal threat that is present.
	All General: Consistent	
Non-Energy Leasable Materials	All Core: Consistent All Important: Consistent All General: Consistent	All Known Phosphate Leasing Areas are outside of GRSG identified Core and Important management zones.
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance. All Important: Consistent with General guidance with stringent limitation criteria. All General: Consistent	Core areas are closed to new mineral material site authorizations and open for sales from within existing sites subject to required design features and seasonal timing restrictions. Important and General areas are open to new mineral material site authorizations subject to required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce impacts to GRSG. No differentiation was made between free use and commercial use permits with regard to use of existing sites.
Disturbance (3 %) WY only (5%)	Idaho Core: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. Montana Core: Consistent with other Montana plans. All Important: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. All General: N/A	A 3% disturbance cap is applied to seasonal habitats of highest concern - nesting and wintering habitat - within Core and Important Management Areas.

Table 2. ADPP Response to FWS Comments

USFWS Concern	Resolution
Consistency across subregional boundaries	The BLM and FS have coordinated across subregional boundaries to further develop consistent approaches, or to clearly describe the rationale for the threat response where inconsistencies exist. Allocation level decisions are consistent across subregional boundaries; some conservation measures vary based on relative threats and habitat conditions/usage.
Disturbance Caps and no unmitigated loss	Disturbance caps have been included and further description of no net unmitigated loss has been included as part of the ADPP. A consistent approach and scale to measuring disturbance has been included with emphasis on seasonal habitats of concern in the Idaho and southwestern Montana subregion.
Adaptive Management Hard and Soft Triggers and an Implementation Team	Adaptive management hard and soft triggers as well as an Implementation Team to help assess these triggers in coordination with the State of Idaho has been included in the ADPP.
Lek buffers and noise protective measures	Buffers and their applicability have been further refined and defined in conjunction with FWS as have appropriate noise protective measures which are now included as required design features.
Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring	These monitoring components have been further described at the broad, mid and fine scales and are included in the ADPP.
Mitigation	Additional description of how mitigation is included as components of project proposals and stepped forward through use of the state mitigation strategies is included in the ADPP. Decision to develop a mitigation board and develop a state specific mitigation strategy consistent with and in conjunction with WAFWA MZ strategies is also included in the ADPP.
Certainty of Effective Implementation (specificity)	Management actions and conservation measures have been refined to more clearly articulate the intent and direction to support the specificity needed by the Service to ensure certainty of implementation.
Impacts Analysis	Work is ongoing to augment the initial impacts analysis described in the Draft EIS. Additional work is being completed to delineate effects with specific regard to priority areas for conservation and the identified threats. This work will be complete in the Final EIS.
Priority Areas for Conservation and Mapping	Further refinement of the GRSG management areas, consistent with the COT and biologically meaningful units has occurred in coordination with the State of Idaho, FWS, BLM and FS. This management area delineation is a foundational component of the Idaho and southwestern Montana ADPP.
Infrastructure	Further refinement and definition of infrastructure criteria with respect to effects on GRSG habitat has been included and describes the application of these criteria in relation to COT objectives in the ADPP.
Wildfire/Invasives	The ADPP includes application of the Wildfire and Invasives Assessment process and other work developed by the Fire and Invasives Assessment Team to address fire concerns. In addition several components of the Idaho State Plan have been incorporated into the ADPP which further prioritize and address wildfire concerns.

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 10:15 AM
To: John Carlson (jccarlso@blm.gov)
Subject: One More Document
Attachments: 140729 Mermejo NPT Inconsistencies.pdf

Here is the short list of concerns I received from Lauren.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2014 4:57 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Inconsistent with NPT Guidance

Here are the red highlighted areas that did not comport to the NPT Guidance:

1. Solar and Wind in Important and General Habitat
2. Non-energy Leasables in Important Habitat
3. Mineral Materials in Important Habitat
4. High Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs in General Habitat
5. No Net Unmitigated Loss not applied to General Habitat

Also, don't forget that Idaho is different in its application of avoidance criteria (whereas all of the other sub-regions adopted only ROW avoidance criteria)

Hope this helps you get prepared.....

Lauren

Brent Ralston

From: Jeffery Foss
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 9:11 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Kurt R Wiedenmann
Subject: Fwd: Info for SD call today
Attachments: Population Summaries NV_NE CA and ID_SW MT.docx; Great Basin Federal Family Meeting Agenda FINAL.docx

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Stangl, Kathryn" <kstangl@blm.gov>
Date: August 8, 2014 at 8:29:18 AM MDT
To: Edwin Roberson <eroberso@blm.gov>, Juan Palma <jpalma@blm.gov>, Katherine Kitchell <kkitchell@blm.gov>, Nancy Haug <nhaug@blm.gov>, Ruth Welch <rwelch@blm.gov>, Thomas Pogacnik <tpogacni@blm.gov>, Donald Simpson <dsimpson@blm.gov>, James Kenna <jkenna@blm.gov>, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>, Jerome Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, Amy Lueders <alueders@blm.gov>, Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>, Jessica Camargo <jcamargo@blm.gov>, Annette Fournier <afournie@blm.gov>, Jamie Harrison <jharriso@blm.gov>, Joanne Maluotoga <jmaluoto@blm.gov>, Judith Frye <jfrye@blm.gov>, Kathy Mondor <kmondor@blm.gov>, Samuel Herbert <sjherber@blm.gov>, Stella Portillo <sportill@blm.gov>, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov>, Timothy Murphy <tmurphy@blm.gov>
Subject: Info for SD call today

Good Morning,

We wanted to provide you some materials prior to our State Director call this afternoon. Below you will find the agenda for our upcoming Great Basin Federal Family meeting (Aug 19-21), a brief description below of the population summary tables and examples of those tables. For the Rocky Mountain Federal Family meeting we are expecting the agenda to look very similar.

The population summaries are based on the information found in our Draft Preferred Alternatives as it relates to the threats identified in the COT Report. We will be providing this information (hard copy via mail) prior to the meeting along with

the maps to all participants attending the Federal Family meeting. This will give you all an opportunity to review the materials and come prepared for the meeting discussions.

Talk to you later today but if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me. Thanks!

Kathy

202-208-3408

Population Summary Tables

- ✓ There are a total of seven population summary tables that are part of this informational packet. The tables are organized in two different ways: 1) by populations fully within a sub-region (a total of five tables), and 2) by populations that span across more than one sub-region (such as the Western Great Basin and Northern Great Basin Populations).
- ✓ Population Statistics: At the top of each table, there is a list of statistics relative to the population (or multiple populations that are solely within a sub-region). In order to provide context as to how the PACs correlate with the populations, this table provides the land status acre figures split by PPMA, PGMA, and Non-habitat for lands within the PACs and lands not within the PAC.
- ✓ Threats: The threats posed to each population are presented in the left-hand column of each table. The threats identified in this column are those threats cited as “present and widespread” in Table 2 of the USFWS’s 2013 Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. Although not identified as “present and widespread”, additional threats were addressed as they relate to the National Policy Team (NPT) allocation guidance.
- ✓ Red text: The red text indicates areas where the sub-regional ADPP allocation deviates from the NPT guidance provided to the sub-regional teams in April 2014. Rational as to why there is a deviation from the NPT guidance is also provided in red text in the right hand column of the table.
- ✓ Green text: The green text indicates areas where the Forest Service is deviating from the BLM’s allocation or management direction to address that threat.
- ✓ Purple text: The purple text is only displayed in the Montana population for the Idaho/SW Montana ADDP and depicts where the BLM has different management decisions in Idaho and Montana.

4d – Nevada/NE California Sub-region

Populations (fully within Nevada/NE California sub-region): : 14, 15c, and 30

Population Statistics (14, 15c, and 30)			
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 4,075,403 (17%) FS: 548,796 (2%) BIA: 11,448 (0%) Other Federal: 0 (0%) Private: 375,412 (2%) State: 51 (0%) Other: 300 (0%)	BLM: 1,193,253 (5%) FS: 125,898 (1%) BIA: 9,119 (0%) Other Federal: 0 (0%) Private: 190,959 (1%) State: 0 (0%) Other: 0 (0%)	BLM: 1,995,940 (8%) FS: 866,949 (4%) BIA: 14,451 (0%) Other Federal: 6 (0%) Private: 207,587 (1%) State: 158 (0%) Other: 648 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 808,526 (3%) FS: 103,312 (1%) BIA: 34,960 (0%) Other Federal: 11,532 (0%) Private: 153,184 (1%) State: 5,347 (0%) Other: 3,461 (0%)	BLM: 1,718,784 (7%) FS: 168,247 (1%) BIA: 3,350 (0%) Other Federal: 5,880 (0%) Private: 187,889 (1%) State: 221 (0%) Other: 812 (0%)	BLM: 8,575,055 (35%) FS: 1,373,050 (6%) BIA: 43,023 (0%) Other Federal: 183,561 (1%) Private: 1,653,278 (7%) State: 17,008 (0%) Other: 12,968 (0%)
TOTAL	6,131,732 (25%)	3,604,413 (14%)	14,943,682 (61%)
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>	
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 14 and 30)	<u>PPMA</u> : Retention <u>PGMA</u> : Retention <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat. 	
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 30)	<u>PPMA</u> : Retention <u>PGMA</u> : Retention <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA in federal ownership. 	
Fire (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. • Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 15c and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. • Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRS habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. • Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 30)	<p><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: Exclusion <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: NSO <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Mining (Applicable to: 14)	<p><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.

	<p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	
Infrastructure (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing WHB gathers to stay within HMLs. • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Apply Rangeland Health Standards.
Recreation (Trails and Travel Management) (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>PGMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM except limit to designated roads and trails</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a commitment to complete travel management plans. • Currently completing travel management inventories for GRSG habitat areas identified by the USFWS.
Urbanization (Applicable to: 30)	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Retention <u>PGMA</u>: Retention <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain PPMA and PGMA in Federal ownership.
Disturbance	<p>3%* disturbance threshold BSU: 18 Population</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance, at this point.

	Management Units from State Conservation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Net Unmitigated Loss applied to PPMA and PGMA.
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4e – Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region

Populations (fully within Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana sub-region): 18, 23, 25, and 27

Population Statistics (18, 23, 25, and 27)							
		Core (Includes Important)		General		Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	2,941,568 (22%)	BLM:	86,279 (1%)	BLM:	64,802 (0%)	
	FS:	313,417 (2%)	FS:	5,100 (0%)	FS:	102,363 (1%)	
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	
	Other Federal:	402,626 (3%)	Other Federal:	5,104 (0%)	Other Federal:	98,493 (1%)	
	Private:	817,310 (6%)	Private:	27,191 (0%)	Private:	62,875 (0%)	
	State:	302,901 (2%)	State:	4,113 (0%)	State:	26,288 (0%)	
	Other:	240 (0%)	Other:	1,114 (0%)	Other:	383 (0%)	
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	467,106 (3%)	BLM:	855,232 (6%)	BLM:	550,225 (4%)	
	FS:	81,821 (1%)	FS:	100,714 (1%)	FS:	2,100,542 (15%)	
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	37,083 (0%)	BIA:	29,523 (0%)	
	Other Federal:	39,377 (0%)	Other Federal:	126,059 (1%)	Other Federal:	397,648 (3%)	
	Private:	97,876 (1%)	Private:	673,236 (5%)	Private:	2,392,700 (18%)	
	State:	28,984 (0%)	State:	195,543 (1%)	State:	216,321 (2%)	
	Other:	28 (0%)	Other:	1,196 (0%)	Other:	19,079 (0%)	
TOTAL	5,493,353 (40%)	TOTAL	2,177,962 (16%)	TOTAL	6,061,242 (44%)		
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>		Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>				
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 18, 25, and 27)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM		BLM and FS: • Retain Core and important, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat.				
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 18)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM		BLM and FS: • Retain Core and Important habitat in federal ownership.				
Fire (Applicable to: 23)	N/A		BLM and FS:				

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. • Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance. <p>FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No prescribed fire in Wyoming big sage habitat or in less than 12" precipitation zones.
Conifers (Applicable to: 18)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. • Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 23 and 25)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRS habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. • Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 18, 23, and 25)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>Core:</u> Exclusion <u>Important:</u> Avoidance <u>General:</u> Open</p> <p><u>FS:</u> Same as BLM in Core, <u>Important is Exclusion and</u> <u>General is Avoidance</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>Core:</u> Closed & NSO <u>Important:</u> NSO <u>General:</u> Open with moderate</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not excluding Important areas to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria.</i> • <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRS. Presence of development resources within general zones is sparse to non-existent.</i> <p>Important Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the

	<p>constraints (CSU & TL) <u>FS</u>: All NSO in Core, otherwise, same as BLM</p>	<p>extent practicable. If not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant Conservation Area; and d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs; f. The project should not exceed the disturbance threshold.
<p>Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM, except Important is Closed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not closing important areas to mineral materials in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria (see above under the threat: “Energy”).</i>
<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 18 and 27)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Avoidance <u>Important</u>: Avoidance <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Core is Exclusion, otherwise, same as BLM</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i>

	<u>Core</u> : Avoidance <u>Important</u> : Avoidance <u>General</u> : Open <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Grazing (Applicable to: 18, 23, 25, and 27)	<u>Core</u> : Available <u>Important</u> : Available <u>General</u> : Available <u>FS</u> : Available	BLM and FS (with variation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly. Quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Using HAF indicators for monitoring. • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG.
Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 23)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Manage to AML in all HMAs. • Prioritize gathers in Core habitat.
Disturbance	ID BLM: 3% within BSU (Nesting and wintering habitat within CMZs/IMZs in four Conservation Areas in Idaho) <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • No Net Unmitigated Loss will be applied to all Core, Important, and General management zones.

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Great Basin Region Federal Family Meeting Agenda

August 19-21, 2014 – BLM Oregon State Office, Portland, OR

Objectives of this Meeting

- Identify threats to Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) for each PAC/population within the BLM/FS planning area as identified in the COT Report
- Determine how each BLM and FS plan addresses these threats through land use allocations and other conservation actions
- Discuss the adequacy of the land use allocation decisions and other conservation measures to address these threats and any changes in plans required to address inadequacies and/or inconsistencies in response
- Provide clear and specific guidance to develop draft final administrative plans that are adequate to address the threats to each GRSG population identified in the COT Report

DAY ONE – TUESDAY AUGUST 19, 2014

- 8:00 am **Welcome**
Jerry Perez, OR State Director
- 8:05 am **Introductions**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 8:10 am **Opening Remarks**
Neil Kornze, BLM Director
Noreen Walsh, USFWS Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region
Chris Iverson, USFS Deputy Regional Forester
Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director
- 8:30 am **Process, Expectations, and Outcomes**
Jim Lyons, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, DOI
Michael Bean, Counselor for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, DOI
- 9:00 am **Agenda Review (Logistics)**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 9:15 am **BLM Approach to Developing ADPP's**
Ed Roberson, BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning
- 9:25 am **Forest Service Approach to Developing their DPPA's**
Chris Iverson, USFS
- 9:40 am **Major Changes between BLM/FS DEIS' and ADPPs in Great Basin**
Lauren Mermejo, Great Basin Regional Project Manager
- 10:00 am 15 Minute Break**

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10:15 am **5-Minute Plan Overview by BLM State Directors**

NV - Amy Lueders, BLM NV State Director

CA - Jim Kenna, BLM CA State Director

OR - Jerry Perez, BLM OR State Director

UT - Juan Palma, BLM UT State Director

ID - Tim Murphy, BLM Acting ID State Director

MT - Jamie Connell, BLM MT State Director

11:00 am **Information Packet Orientation**

Frank Quamen, BLM-NOC Wildlife Biologist

Matt Magaletti, BLM- WO Planning

WAFWA Management Zone V

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations Solely within OR

11:15 am

- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**

Jim Lyons - ASLM

- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**

Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti

- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**

Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads

- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**

Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**

- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**

Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00 pm

1 Hour Lunch

Review of Conservation Strategies for the Western Great Basin Population (NV/NE CA and OR)

1: 00 pm

- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**

Jim Lyons - ASLM

- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**

Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti

- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**

Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads

- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**

Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each**

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PAC/population and remaining issues in question

- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

3:00 pm **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

3:30 pm 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Utah

- 3:45 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

5:45 pm **Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

DAY TWO – WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20, 2014

8:00 am **Recap from day 1**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

Continuation of WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Nevada

- 8:15 am ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

9:15 **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

9:45 am 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone IV

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Idaho

- 10:00 am ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00pm 1 Hour Lunch

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Review of Conservation Strategies for Northern Great Basin Population (ID, NV/CA, and OR)

- 1:00 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- 2:30 pm** **15 Minute Break**
- 2:45 pm
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- 4:00 pm
- Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie
- 5:00 pm
- Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

DAY THREE – THURSDAY AUGUST 21, 2014

8:00 am **Recap from day 2**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

Continuation of WAFWA Management Zone IV

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Southwest Montana

8:15 am ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
 Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
 Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
 Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
 Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

9:15 am **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone IV**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

9:45 am 15 Minute Break

10:00 am **Adaptive Management, Mitigation and Monitoring**
Status by BLM State Directors Facilitated by Penny Mabie

11:00 am **Update on Coordination with States**
Status by BLM State Directors Facilitated by Penny Mabie

12:00 pm 1 Hour Lunch

1:00 pm **Next Steps with the States**
Jim Lyons, ASLM

1:45 pm **NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative Update with the States/Private Landowners**
Tim Griffiths, NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative Coordinator

2:15 pm **Schedule Discussion**
Ed Roberson, BLM
Noreen Walsh, USFWS

2:45 pm 15 Minute Break

Draft Internal Deliberative Document – Not for Distribution

3:00 pm **Outcome Summary and Follow-up Actions**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

4:00 pm **Closing Remarks**
Jim Lyons, DOI
Ed Roberson, BLM
Noreen Walsh, USFWS
Chris Iverson, USFS

Great Basin Region Roll-Up Attendees:

- BLM States (12): State Directors: **Amy Lueders, Jerry Perez, Juan Palma, Jim Kenna, Tim Murphy and Jamie Connell**
Project Managers: Joe Tague, Joan Suther, Mike Haske, Quincy Bahr, Brent Ralston, John Carlson
 - BLM Regional (2): Lauren Mermejo and Johanna Munson
 - BLM WO/NOC (8): **Neil Kornze, Steve Ellis, Ed Roberson,** Kathy Stangl,
Frank Quamen, Joe Stout, Steve Small, and Matt Magaletti
 - DOI (3) **Jim Lyons, Michael Bean, and Sarah Greenberger**
 - SOL (3): **Bret Birdsong, Ted Boling,** and Sarah Shattuck
 - USFS National (5): **Chris Iverson,** Glen Stein and Madelyn Dillon
Project Managers: Ron Rodriguez, Rob Mickelson
 - OGC (1): Kathryn Guillou Bergenholtz
 - FWS (11): **Noreen Walsh,** Pat Deibert, Nicole Alt, Paul Henson
Dennis Mackey, Ted Koch, Mary Grim, Michael Fris,
Terry Rabot, Larry Crist and Jesse Delia
 - NRCS National (1): Tim Griffiths
 - Facilitator (1): Penny Mabie
 - EMPSI Rep (1): David Batts
- TOTAL: 48 (16 Principals at the table)**

Brent Ralston

From: Foss, Jeffery
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 11:45 AM
To: Kurt R Wiedenmann; Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: [REMINDER] Federal Family Prep Meeting - Conference Call - (866) 506-1142 - P/C 444397#

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: eroberso@blm.gov <eroberso@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Aug 8, 2014 at 10:58 AM
Subject: [REMINDER] Federal Family Prep Meeting - Conference Call - (866) 506-1142 - P/C 444397#
To: "wreynolds@blm.gov" <wreynolds@blm.gov>, "kstangl@blm.gov" <kstangl@blm.gov>, "afournie@blm.gov" <afournie@blm.gov>, "jfrye@blm.gov" <jfrye@blm.gov>, "j2stout@blm.gov" <j2stout@blm.gov>, "rwelch@blm.gov" <rwelch@blm.gov>, "jmaluoto@blm.gov" <jmaluoto@blm.gov>, "bclayton@blm.gov" <bclayton@blm.gov>, "jpalma@blm.gov" <jpalma@blm.gov>, "nbattle@blm.gov" <nbattle@blm.gov>, "ssmall@blm.gov" <ssmall@blm.gov>, "erjones@blm.gov" <erjones@blm.gov>, "ssleach@blm.gov" <ssleach@blm.gov>, "sellis@blm.gov" <sellis@blm.gov>, "nhaug@blm.gov" <nhaug@blm.gov>, "sminkoff@blm.gov" <sminkoff@blm.gov>, "jccarlso@blm.gov" <jccarlso@blm.gov>, "jcamargo@blm.gov" <jcamargo@blm.gov>, "dsimpson@blm.gov" <dsimpson@blm.gov>, "jfoss@blm.gov" <jfoss@blm.gov>, "jharriso@blm.gov" <jharriso@blm.gov>, "jkenna@blm.gov" <jkenna@blm.gov>, "sportill@blm.gov" <sportill@blm.gov>, "kmondor@blm.gov" <kmondor@blm.gov>, "sjherber@blm.gov" <sjherber@blm.gov>, "tpogacni@blm.gov" <tpogacni@blm.gov>, "jmichels@blm.gov" <jmichels@blm.gov>, "jperez@blm.gov" <jperez@blm.gov>, "kkitchell@blm.gov" <kkitchell@blm.gov>, "lquesenb@blm.gov" <lquesenb@blm.gov>, "mmagalet@blm.gov" <mmagalet@blm.gov>, "alueders@blm.gov" <alueders@blm.gov>, "eroberso@blm.gov" <eroberso@blm.gov>
Cc: nbattle@blm.gov, jmaluoto@blm.gov, tpogacni@blm.gov, ssleach@blm.gov, ssmall@blm.gov, lquesenb@blm.gov, j2stout@blm.gov, kkitchell@blm.gov, sellis@blm.gov, alueders@blm.gov, kmondor@blm.gov, jharriso@blm.gov, sjherber@blm.gov, sportill@blm.gov, jfrye@blm.gov, jperez@blm.gov, afournie@blm.gov, kstangl@blm.gov, erjones@blm.gov, nhaug@blm.gov, dsimpson@blm.gov, jmichels@blm.gov, jkenna@blm.gov, jcamargo@blm.gov, bclayton@blm.gov, wreynolds@blm.gov, jpalma@blm.gov, jfoss@blm.gov, sminkoff@blm.gov, jccarlso@blm.gov, mmagalet@blm.gov, rwelch@blm.gov

In 4 hours we will be having a call to help us all prepare for the two Federal Family meetings that we will have in near future. We will quickly run through the draft agenda for the Great Basin meeting (the Rocky Mountain agenda will be framed the same way). We did a trial run of the meeting with USFS, FWS, SOL and DOI: and I want to some issues. Also, there are several topics I believe you need to be prepared to discuss:

- *Buffers – What are the lek buffers in your plan.
- *Disturbance Threshold - What you plan will say.
- *Adaptive Management – What your soft/hard triggers are, your current response strategy, and scales.
- *Have an idea of what the resource potential is relative to the major allocations considered in your plan.
- *How your plan protect PACs – closed vs open; exclude vs avoid
- *Where you are with the State(s) in developing a monitoring strategy (fine and site scale)

I would like to update you on the ROD concept we discussed at the ELT.

Finally, we had a team review Chapter 2 for all 14 documents and have decided we need to create an outline or template Chapter 2 for consistency. This is more about formatting for a common look and feel. We will work with your planning project managers.

I look forward to our call. Thank you all. ed

Federal Family Meeting - Conference Call - (866) 506-1142 – P/C 444397#

When Fri Aug 8, 2014 4:30pm – 5:15pm Eastern Time

- Who
- Noreen Battle - organizer
 - Donald Simpson
 - Erin Jones
 - Bridget Clayton
 - Jeffery Foss
 - Ruth Welch
 - Steven Ellis
 - John Carlson
 - Nancy Haug
 - Matthew Magaletti
 - Thomas Pogacnik
 - Katherine Kitchell
 - Stephen Small
 - Juan Palma
 - Kathryn Stangl
 - Edwin Roberson
 - James Michels
 - Sandra Leach
 - Joseph Stout
 - Jerome Perez
 - Leah Quesenberry
 - Sara Romero-Minkoff
 - Michael Haske
 - James Kenna
 - Amy Lueders
 - Wendy Reynolds
 - Jamie Harrison - optional
 - Joanne Maluotoga - optional
 - Stella Portillo - optional
 - Judith Frye - optional
 - Annette Fournier - optional
 - Kathy Mondor - optional
 - Samuel Herbert - optional
 - Jessica Camargo - optional

--

Jeff Foss

Deputy State Director- Resources, Idaho BLM

1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709

208-373-3800

jfoss@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Stangl, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2014 9:39 AM
To: Foss, Jeffery
Cc: Brent Ralston; Edwin Roberson
Subject: Re: Prep for Pre-Roll Up Meeting Call on Wednesday

Hello Jeff - The intent of this call is to prepare Tim for the questions that he will need to address at the upcoming Federal Family meeting. As discussed on our SD call last Friday, the SDs will need to discuss the following elements of their plans:

- Buffers – Know what your buffers are.
- Disturbance
- Adaptive Management – Know what your soft/hard triggers are, your current response strategy, and scales
- Have an idea of resource potential
- How you plan on protecting the PACs – closed vs. open
- Where are you with the States in developing a monitoring strategy (fine and site scale)

During our "Mock Roll-up" meeting last week, the following questions specific to ID came up which Tim will also need to be prepared to explain to the group on how and why ID decided to move in this direction...

- 3 percent disturbance in biologically significant unit for nesting and winter habitat only?
- Core/important/general habitat categories - how were these developed?
- Issues with MT/ID as there are great differences?
- Designated corridors in SE Idaho?

Hope this helps - thanks!

Kathy

On Mon, Aug 11, 2014 at 3:37 PM, Foss, Jeffery <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:

Kathy

To make the most of our time on Wednesday, please provide some questions or issues you would like us to address on the call with you and Ed.

Thanks

Jeff

--

Jeff Foss

Deputy State Director- Resources, Idaho BLM

1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709

208-373-3800

jfoss@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Foss, Jeffery
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 7:46 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Timothy Murphy; Kurt R Wiedenmann
Subject: Fwd: Federal Family Roll-up Meeting Prep

Brent

Please prepare a succinct script for Tim (NTE 5 minutes) for him to address the 6 points in Ed's message. Please complete this by Friday and provide a copy to Tim so he can customize it in prep for the Portland meeting.

Thanks
Jeff

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Edwin Roberson <eroberso@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 7:31 AM
Subject: Federal Family Roll-up Meeting Prep
To: Amy Lueders <alueders@blm.gov>, James G Kenna <jkenna@blm.gov>, Timothy M Murphy <tmurphy@blm.gov>, Juan Palma <jpalma@blm.gov>, Jerome E Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, Ruth Welch <rwelch@blm.gov>, Donald Simpson <dsimpson@blm.gov>, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov>
Cc: Neil Kornze <nkornze@blm.gov>, Steven Ellis <sellis@blm.gov>, Kathryn Stangl <kstangl@blm.gov>, Joe Stout <j2stout@blm.gov>, Stephen Small <ssmall@blm.gov>, Roxanne D Falise <rfalise@blm.gov>, Mark Nielsen <manielsen@blm.gov>, Jon Raby <jraby@blm.gov>, Katherine P Kitchell <kkitchell@blm.gov>, Buddy W Green <bwgreen@blm.gov>, Jenna Whitlock <jwhitloc@blm.gov>, Wendy Reynolds <wreynolds@blm.gov>, Jeffery L Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>, Raul Morales <rmorales@blm.gov>, Michael J Haske <mhaske@blm.gov>, Nancy Haug <nhaug@blm.gov>

Hello all,

I wanted to follow-up with you all as I know many of you were not able to participate on our call last Friday. The point of that call was to share the outcomes of the "Mock Roll-up" meeting that occurred on the 8/5 and 8/6. We had good participation from all agencies partners so felt that the meeting was successful but there still are some unanswered questions that only you and your project leads can answer. So, I think it is very important for you all to know what we expect at the Portland and Denver meetings. Here is a quick review of what we discussed on the Friday call:

1-On the Federal Family meeting agenda (Tuesday) all State Director's will be asked to give a 5-minute overview of where you all are with your plans. The bullets below should be covered and we are asking that you please do not do a PowerPoint but speak directly to these points.

- Buffers – Know what your buffers are.
- Disturbance
- Adaptive Management – Know what your soft/hard triggers are, your current response strategy, and scales
- Have an idea of resource potential

- How you plan on protecting the PACs – closed vs. open
- Where are you with the States in developing a monitoring strategy (fine and site scale)

2-As identified on the agenda, these meetings will focus on the threats and allocations related to the specific populations. We know you will be looking to your project leads for the specifics but we are looking for you to provide answers to questions that may come up as to why certain decisions were carried forward in your plans.

3-Also on agenda for Thursday there are two topics that you all will be asked to lead the discussions on. The first topic includes Adaptive Management, Mitigation and Monitoring, and the second is an update on your coordination with your state partners. On the first item, we are asking for a status update of where you are with adaptive management, mitigation and monitoring. Regarding the coordination with the state partners piece, it would be very helpful if you provide your insights on how you think the upcoming meeting with states should move forward.

I know this is a lot to think about with your busy schedules but want you know in advance what the meeting expectations are. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks, ed

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jeff Foss
Deputy State Director- Resources, Idaho BLM
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709
208-373-3800
jfoss@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 1:25 PM
To: 'Rob Mickelsen'; Dennis Mackey; Jason Pyron (jason_pyron@fws.gov)
Subject: FW: Federal Family Materials
Attachments: Final Consolidated GB FFM Packet (Excluding Maps).pdf; GRSG_Atlas.pdf; SD Introduction.docx; Fed_Fam_Mtg_TPs_8 2014 Final.docx; FFM Talking Points 081514.docx

Here are the materials we've prepared for Tim for next week.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 11:15 AM
To: Timothy Murphy
Cc: Foss, Jeffery L; Cheryle Zwang (czwang@blm.gov); 'Gardetto, Jessica D (jdgardetto@blm.gov)'
Subject: Federal Family Materials

Tim,

Here are the background materials for next week.

GB FFM packet & GRSG Atlas – this is an electronic version of the hardcopy materials we received.
SD Introduction – this is the highlight points for the introductory discussion.
Fed Fam TPs – these are talking points with more detail organized by topic for easy reference.
FFM Talking Points – this is the more detailed and exhaustive list of topics and rationale that has come to us as potential topics for next week.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812



National Greater Sage-Grouse
Idaho & Southwestern Montana Sub Region
Federal Family Meeting
August 2014



1. Why does Idaho need to have three GRSG management zones?

The Idaho delineates three GRSG management zones – Core, Important and General, to retain and protect sagebrush cover and GRSG habitat (consistent with Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008, and Knick et al. 2000) through appropriate prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitats and across broader habitat areas. Each of these management zones has associated management restrictions and protections for greater sage-grouse (GRSG) and are foundational to the adaptive management strategy.

Core Management Zones (CMZ) are delineated to protect large unfragmented, contiguous landscapes from anthropogenic disturbance and to focus wildfire reduction (suppression activities and fuels treatments) associated with the two key metapopulations within the subregion (Garton et al. 2011). These areas encompass 65% of the occupied leks and associated seasonal habitats necessary to support 73% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. CMZ compose 66% of the USFWS priority areas for conservation (PACs). They have the highest priority for wildfire suppression and minimization activities (fuel breaks and reduction treatments) and have the most restrictive management direction for anthropogenic development which is consistent with the national policy team direction or goes beyond that direction in its protection of GRSG.

Important Management Zones (IMZ) are delineated to provide protection to habitats adjacent to the CMZs and encompass 30% of the occupied leks and support approximately 22% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. IMZ compose the remaining areas of PACs (33%) and in addition include over 750K additional acres supporting 4% of the breeding males outside of PAC areas. The two management zones encompass the FWS identified priority areas for conservation (PAC) and include areas beyond those PAC boundaries that would receive threat amelioration management to help foster connectivity and retention of habitat within CMZ and PAC areas. The IMZ areas provide a management buffer between more intact CMZ areas and General Management Zones with a higher likelihood of wildfire occurrence. The IMZ also has protective and restrictive management supporting the retention and recovery of GRSG habitats in IMZ and CMZ with management direction for anthropogenic development disturbance that is largely consistent with the national policy team direction with several exceptions – solar, wind, non-energy leasable (phosphate) and mineral material developments.

General Management Zones (GMZ) contain less than 5% of the occupied leks and population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG.

The three-tiered management zone approach, unique to Idaho's Plan, was specifically designed in coordination with the State of Idaho to support an adaptive management strategy that substantively addresses the primary threat to the species in Idaho and which could be supported and applicable to non-federal lands within the management zone in coordination with Rural Fire Protection Associations, the development and support of which has garnered Gubernatorial and Congressional support in the State of Idaho.

2. *Why is Solar development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?*
3. *Why is Wind development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?*
4. *Why is non-energy leasable development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*
5. *Why is mineral materials development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*

- a. See - *Why does Idaho need to have three GRSG management zones?*
- b. The management zone development restrictions serve to discourage further development in GRSG habitat. The management for the identified uses is consistent with the objectives described in the USFWS COT Report and consistent with the identified PAC areas. The CMZ areas are extremely limited to further anthropogenic disturbance and go beyond the direction provided by the National Policy Team (e.g. closures to fluid mineral leasing and a cessation of further development in the event an adaptive regulatory hard trigger is engaged).
- c. Any proposed development in Important Zones must comply with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (avoidance criteria); if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

AD-4: Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and
- b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and
- c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in Appendix A.
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

6. *Why are high voltage transmission and major pipeline ROW developments not avoided in General Management Zones?*

The GMZ is not identified as an avoidance area for ROW developments; however, proposals within this zone would still need to conform to the required design features, lek buffers and seasonal restrictions which would serve to direct actions away from GRSG habitat (leks specifically) and times that could impact bird behavior. This maintains a high standard of limiting effects to GRSG even within GMZ. This serves to direct potential use away from CMZ and IMZ areas while still minimizing and eliminating impacts to GRSG.

7. *Why is no net unmitigated loss not applied to General Management Zones?*

This has been further refined during the development of the Proposed Plan to include no net unmitigated loss within GMZs as well.

8. *Why does avoidance criteria apply to more than ROWs?*

While many activities or proposals for development are carried out within the purview of ROW permits, others are not, and in some cases proposals involve both actions permitted under a ROW and those permitted under other authorities. In Idaho the ROW avoidance criteria has been expanded to include all large scale anthropogenic disturbance proposals. This effectively accomplishes several objectives:

1. All disturbance and associated effects is evaluated with regard to GRSG impacts with the same rule set (individual proposals may have very different potential impacts – a transmission line versus and oil and gas well – which would be considered in the evaluation of the projects conformance to the criteria.
2. This eliminates the potential occurrence where an activity may be approved/not approved while the ROW associated with or supporting that activity would be conversely not approves/approved, leading to inconsistencies in application.

9. *Lek Buffers*

10. *Disturbance Threshold*

Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent as calculated within the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Map 3). The BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships for evaluation.

Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat disturbance from wildfire and includes activities described in Table X. For Idaho this disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features (powerlines, pipelines and roads). For Montana this disturbance is measured utilizing the Disturbance Density Calculation Tool process described in Appendix I.

New anthropogenic disturbances within winter and nesting habitat within Core or Important management zones within a CA where the disturbance threshold is already exceeded from any source or where the proposed development would result in the threshold being exceeded would not be allowed until enough habitat has been restored to maintain the area under this threshold (subject to valid existing rights).

Core Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria – in addition to the Core and Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the screening and assessment process:

- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

11. *Adaptive Management*

Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Habitat Triggers are defined as:

A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within a CA compared to the 2012 biologically significant unit (BSU) baseline (Map 3) (The BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a

Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships and is used in the evaluation of the adaptive regulatory triggers and the anthropogenic disturbance threshold).; or
A 20 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a CA compared to the 2012 BSU baseline.

Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Habitat Triggers are defined as:

A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within CMZ within a CA compared to the 2012 BSU baseline; or
A 10 percent combined loss of nesting and/or wintering habitat within IMZ within a CA compared to the 2012 BSU baseline.

Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Population Triggers are defined as:

A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change significantly below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years compared to the 2009-2011 baseline; or
A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change significantly below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years compared to the 2009-2011 baseline.

Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Population Triggers are defined as:

A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change below 1.0 within CMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011; or
A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change below 1.0 within IMZ within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011.

When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend additional potential implementation level activities Appendix G.

When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been met then CMZ management actions would be applied to the IMZ within that CA.

If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive Grazing Management Response described in Appendix G.

5.14. AM-14: Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population information shows a return to or an exceedance of baseline values within the associated CA.

12. Resource Potentials

Solar: Extremely low to the point of not addressed in Solar PEIS

Wind: Low with a few areas with higher potential/interest – Cotterell, China Mountain

Oil and Gas: Low in most of Idaho; moderate to high in Bear Lake (se Idaho) and sw Montana

Geothermal: Low in western, northern and eastern part of Idaho and sw Montana; moderate to high in central part of Idaho

Phosphate: high in Known Phosphate Leasing Areas in eastern part of Idaho

13. Protection of PACs

14. State Monitoring Strategy

Brent Ralston

From: Timothy Murphy
Sent: Saturday, August 16, 2014 12:04 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Jeffery Foss
Subject: Timothy Murphy has shared a file with you on OneDrive

Spending some focused time on prep for the Fed FAM Meeting. I sure appreciate the effort to develop material for me, not to mention the coordination you did with EA, NOC, and others. The link below has some points where I have brief Qs or need clarification

To view Timothy Murphy's file, click this link:
[Qs for Brent.docx](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Anthropogenic disturbance is well below 3%: Do we have a SWAG on that ? If indeed small I'd like to give an approx. number as it can really shore-up our contentions on everything from 3 zones to protective measures.

USFWS put some information together regarding PACs based on Don Major's work:

- **Infrastructure development has been limited in Idaho's sage-grouse habitats. Since European settlement, approximately 0.5% disturbance has occurred from large-scale anthropogenic infrastructure within Idaho's Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) as shown for each Conservation Area.**
 - o **Desert: 0.45%**
 - o **Mountain Valleys: 0.53%**
 - o **Southern: 0.48%**
 - o **West Owyhee: 0.12%**

We are still working to map the BSUs and calculate these numbers according to that stratification but the numbers should be similar.

Names of 2 meta pops in ID and SW MT subregion ?

**Salmon/Snake/Beaverhead north of the Snake River
Northern Great Basin south of the Snake River**

Idaho Maps:

Wind & Solar - Why Exclusion areas in the General MgmtZone, e.g. red within the Weiser area (farthest NW population in Idaho)?

Those ROW exclusions are pre-existing designations and are not the result of decisions in this LUP.

Fluid Mineral Leasing (O&G) – Why Open Major Stips (NSO) in Core Mgmt Zone (NE Idaho)?

Not exactly sure which area, the Core I see in NE Idaho is all closed (red), in SW Montana Core areas are open with major stipulations, which is still consistent with the NPT guidance and the direction Montana wanted to go for leasables. In SE Idaho, small portion of Bear Lake plateau is open with major stips. For fluid minerals in Idaho the direction in Core is Closed in areas of no or low potential; Open with No Surface Occupancy (Major Stips) in moderate to high potential areas.

Geothermal – Why Open Major Stips (NSO) in Core areas throughout the state?

For fluid minerals in Idaho the direction in Core is Closed in areas of no or low potential; Open with No Surface Occupancy (Major Stips) in moderate to high potential areas. The difference between oil and gas and geothermal is in the difference in potential areas – there are more moderate to high potential geothermal areas in Core than for oil and gas.

Locatable Minerals - Brief TP for Locatable Open in Core & Important Mgmt Zones

This GRSG planning effort does not recommend any areas for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry. The withdrawals shown on the map are existing. BLM's only discretionary decision is to recommend for withdrawal which would be taken up by Congress for final decision.

Salable Mineral Material Disposals – Brief TP for Open in Core & Important Mgmt Zones

In Core Zones, new pit developments are closed, in Important new

pits could be considered based on the anthropogenic disturbance criteria.

ROW Constraints – applied to all levels of E transmission i.e. small distribution through major power lines?

Yes, understanding that part of the anthropogenic disturbance criteria relates to limiting effects to GRSG, smaller distribution type lines would have a smaller footprint and fewer impacts to GRSG and could potentially occur whereas high voltage transmission could not under the same criteria.

Resource Potential:

Are Cotterell and China Mtn within PAC, within Core, Important?

They are both with PACs – China Mtn is within Core south of Twin Falls and Cotterell is within Important se of Burley.

Monitoring Strategy:

Fed Family Meeting paper, page 5, 15. State Monitoring Strategy says... State of ID monitors & tracks pop indices and BLM and FS monitor and track habitat indices. SDIntroduction paper says... In Idaho the population component of the Adaptive Management Strategy is monitored and tracked by the State F&G agency, BLM and FS in coordination with the F&G and Local Sage-Grouse Working Groups who track the habitat component. Clarification?

These are both trying to say the same thing and it looks like my grammar confused the issue:

There are two components/indices involved with the adaptive management strategy – population and habitat.

Population metrics (leks, # males) are counted each year by the State Fish and Game agencies (sometimes BLM and Forest Service

participate with these counts but the data is the State's and managed by them.

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This should probably be stated in the other direction – approximately 66% of the PACs are in Core and approximately 33% are in Important, so that 100% of PACs are in Core and Important with approximately 750K additional acres beyond PACs in Important Zones.

Gonna need to chat more on Buffers. Address Plan's concept of protected space around leks (NSO, no leasing, exclusion, CSU, timing stip, etc. Our key is protection of Core and Important and basis in science.

Paul is back Monday and we might want to pull him into this conversation – especially for buffers.

Brent Ralston

From: Tmarkmurphy1
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2014 8:16 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Jeffery Foss; Peter Ditton; Kathy Mondor
Subject: Re: Fed Fam Meeting Prep

Call Kathy and she'll ET us connected. Thanks man. !

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 17, 2014, at 6:30 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Tim,

Here are some clarifications and answers to chew on. I'll call in tomorrow morning – is there a number for me to use?

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Copies I'll need:
FIAT Report
Adaptive Grazing Mgt Report

These are attached.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Timothy Murphy [mailto:tmarkmurphy1@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2014 1:17 PM
To: Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston
Cc: Peter Ditton
Subject: Fed Fam Meeting Prep

Let's plan on 1000 - 1200 Monday to cover the following stuff.

Names of 2 meta pops in ID and SW MT subregion ?

Idaho Maps (what Brent coordinated with NOC showing just Idaho plan):

- Wind & Solar - Why Exclusion areas in the General MgmtZone, e.g. red within the Weiser area (farthest NW population in Idaho) ?
- Fluid Mineral Leasing (O&G) – Why Open Major Stips (NSO) in Core Mgmt Zone (NE Idaho) ?
- Geothermal – Why Open Major Stips (NSO) in Corevareas throughout the state ?
- Locatable Minerals - Brief TP for Locatable Open in Core & Important Mgmt Zones
- Salaboe Mineral Material Disposals – Brief TP for Open in Core & Important Mgmt Zones
- ROW Constraints – applied to all levels of E transmission i.e. small distribution through major pwr lines ?

Resource Potential:

Don't know my geography as good I should. Are Cotterell and China Mtn within PAC, within Core, Important ?

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Names of the 2 meta-pops

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Copies I'll need:

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Draft Internal Deliberative Document:

- Let's review the agenda
- discuss table on p.27
- p.30 High Volt Trans & Major P/Ls: let's discuss our argument
- p.34 SW MT Disturbance, let's discuss difference with BSUs in Idaho

<0 FIAT_IM_6-25-14 Final.docx>

<1 Attachment1_Final Fire and Invasive Assessment 6-10-14.pdf>

<2 Attachment2_BLM_FIAT_offices 2014-06-25 Final.docx>

<3 Attachment3_Map_Of_Priority_Landscapes.docx>

<ID swMT ADPP Appendix G 081714 Adaptive Management Clean.docx>

Brent Ralston

From: Timothy Murphy
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2014 10:16 AM
To: Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston
Subject: SD 5 Minute Intro Comments
Attachments: SD Introduction-TM 08.16.14.docx

Anything I have not addressed, need for clarity, emphasis, or something missing ? Attached and pasted below

The Idaho and SW Montana Subregional Plan covers 18.5 M BLM & FS acres, in which there are 11 M acres of habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse.

The 11 million acres represent 12 % of the habitat range-wide & provides habitat for 15 % of Sage-Grouse range-wide.

The greatest threat to Sage-Grouse in the subregion by far is wildfire and invasive species (ann brome). Other threats are minor or very site specific in extent.

Anthropogenic disturbance is well below 3% in all S-G areas and potential for solar, wind, and O&G development is low in most or all of the subregion. SE ID has a high potential phosphate resource w/designated PO4 leasing areas.

The Plan designates 5 Conservation Areas based on relative threats, S-G populations, and similar habitat conditions.

There are 3 Mgmt Zones in ID and 2 in SW MT. They're based on S-G pops & habitat conditions to protect the 2 key meta-populations in the subregion.

The zones are Core, Important & General in ID, and Core & General in SW MT. Designated to protect S-G habitat through habitat prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitat.

There is a 3% disturb. threshold across all Conservation Areas and all Mgmt Zones.

The Mgmt Zones, Adaptive Mgmt strategy, Disturbance Threshold and all other significant components of the plan have been developed in full coop & coordination w/the State of ID, USFWS & FS.

Core Management Zones cover 5.2 M acres of BLM & FS S-G habitat, 66% of the priority areas for conservation, protect 68% of leks and 77% of the pop.

Important Management Zones provide protection to an additional 3.1 million acres of BLM & FS S-G habitat, protect the remaining areas within PACs & add an additional 750 thousand acres outside of PACs. The Important Zone protects 26% of leks and 20% of the population.

Combined Core & Important Management Zones encompass over 64% of the sage-grouse habitat in the sub-region, contain all of the priority areas for conservation plus an additional 750 k acres, include over 94% of the leks and 97% of the pop in ID.

The Adaptive Mgmt Strategy is designed to specifically address the threat of wildfire. Core Mgmt Zones are the highest priority for allocating suppression resources during times of multiple starts, & for fuel breaks & other fuels mgmt activities.

The Important Management Zone is the next highest priority for suppression & fuels mgmt activities. In the event significant portions of pops or habitat are lost (primarily due to fire although other factors could play a role) the Important Mgmt Zone then receives the same high priority & restrictive measures as Core.

The Adaptive Mgmt Strategy uses soft & hard triggers to determine mgmt changes, based on a 10% (soft trigger) or 20% (hard trigger) change in either pop or habitat.

A soft trigger results in an analysis of cause and evaluation of implementation level activities with potential adjustments to reduce or eliminate impacts to S-G.

A hard trigger results in a planning scale change in mgmt direction. When any Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for a Hard Trigger is met, then CMZ mgmt. actions are applied to the IMZ w/in a Conservation Area. Such as Additional priority for wildfire suppression, fuels treatments and limitations on anthropogenic disturbance activities.

The Adaptive Management Strategy is a coordinated effort among BLM, FS, USFWS and the States of ID and MT for their respective states.

An institutionalized Monitoring Process in ID since 2001, the pop component of the Adaptive Mgmt Strategy is monitored & tracked by State F&G, BLM and FS in coordination with the F&G and Local Sage-Grouse Working Groups who track the habitat component. (The State of ID Office of Species Conservation also supports this effort with oversight to be provided to the ID Implementation TF when it is convened.) Key habitat maps are updated yearly in coord among State, BLM, FWS, FS, & Local Working Groups.

Implementation of the Habitat Assessment Framework & the broad scale Monitoring Framework are included in the monitoring strategy.

The Adaptive Mgmt Strategy is designed to address the largest threat to S-G in the subregion, ...fire and to sustain viable populations of S-G.

The 3% disturbance threshold is designed to limit development w/in critical habitats (nesting & wintering) w/in Core & Important Mgmt. Zones, by Conservation Area;... and is inclusive of all

land ownerships for evaluation. Current disturbance is significantly below 3% and future development is not expected to ever hit this threshold.

The plan identifies the need to mitigate all impacts across all management zones. A no net unmitigated loss requirement applies w/in all Mgmt Zones.

Resource Potentials: **Solar** – Extremely Low.

Wind: Low w/few areas with higher potential (Cotterell, China Mtn)

O&G: Low in most of ID; mod to high in far SE ID (Bear Lake) and SW MT

Geothermal: Low in W, N, & E ID & SW MT; Mod to High in Central Idaho

Phosphate: High in Known Phosphate Leasing Areas in E ID

The ID portion of the plan has been closely coordinated & developed with the State, USFWS, and the FS.

Impact Minimization Measures like Buffers & Timing Restrictions were collaboratively developed among biologists from BLM, FS, FWS, & the State.

Implementation and effective management direction is reliant on a continued strong partnership and involvement of all partners.

There is a very strong foundation for inclusion of State and potentially private lands.

This coalition of support, and mgmt addressing primary threats, protection to over 95% of the S-G pop in ID and consistency with the Service's Conservation Objective, and the protection of all of the PAC, provides a strong footing to maintain resilient populations in the subregion.

Brent Ralston

From: Tblmfa@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2014 6:00 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Mickelsen, Robbert -FS
Subject: Re: Qs for preparation

Thank you Brent. I get some of it, but other portions read foreign language to me. We can go over it after the meeting

Sent from my iPad

> On Aug 19, 2014, at 4:42 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:
>
> Tim,
>
> We have set objectives to strive toward that are based on a variety of
> references including Connelly:
>
> Connelly, J. W., M. A. Schroeder, A. R. Sands, and C. E. Braun. 2000.
> Guidelines to manage sage-grouse populations and their habitats.
> Wildlife Society Bulletin 28:967-985.
> Connelly, J. W., K. P. Reese, and M. A. Schroeder. 2003. Monitoring
> of Greater sage-grouse habitats and populations. University of Idaho
> College of Natural Resources Experiment Station Bulletin 80.
> University of Idaho, Moscow, ID.
> Hagen, C. A., J. W. Connelly, and M. A. Schroeder. 2007. A
> meta-analysis of greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* nesting
> and brood-rearing habitats. *Wildlife Biology* 13 (Supplement 1):42-50.
> Stiver, S. J., E. T. Rinkes, D. E. Naugle, P. D. Makela, D. A.
> Nance, and J. W. Karl. In Press. Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework:
> Multi-scale Habitat Assessment Tool. Bureau of Land Management and
> Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Technical Reference
> XXXX-X. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Denver, Colorado.
>
> And here is how we've incorporated vegetation 'objectives' into all
> projects, including grazing permits:
>
> 2.11. HM-OBJ-2: Incorporate GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives (Table 2)
> into the design of projects or activities, as appropriate, based on
> site conditions and ecological potential, unless achievement of fuels
> management objectives require additional reduction in sagebrush cover
> to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat and conserve habitat
> quality for the species; unless at least one of the following
> conditions can be demonstrated and documented in the NEPA analysis
> associated with the specific project:
> A specific objective is not applicable to the site-specific
> conditions of the project or activity;
> An alternative objective is determined to provide equal or better

> protection for GRSG or its habitat (based on appropriate scientific
> findings); or
> Analysis concludes that following a specific objective would
> provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following
> it, for the project being proposed.
>
> Brent Ralston
> Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
> Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion Idaho State Office
> 208-373-3812
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Tblmfa@gmail.com [<mailto:tblmfa@gmail.com>]
> Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2014 5:19 PM
> To: Brent Ralston
> Subject: Qs for preparation
>
> Grazing: "Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health studies
> and Connely"
> In our plan do we also have ..and / or best available science? If we
> do not how hard would state resist?
>
> Sent from my iPad

Brent Ralston

From: Makela, Paul
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2014 11:53 AM
To: tblmfa@gmail.com
Cc: Kurt R Wiedenmann; Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Buffers

Tim,
Some states/subregions used a more generic buffer (e.g., 4 miles or such, for everything) but we do not believe the science justifies that universal approach. Where we found more specific "science" we used that. For example, our 600 m buffer for transmission was based on a recent graduate study (Gillan et al. 2013) in western Idaho, that detected GRSG avoided transmission lines by 600 m. The 3 mile Comm tower buffer is based on the Johnson et al. (2011) paper from the Studies in Avian Biology GRSG book, that found "a steady downward pattern of trends in lek counts as the number of towers increased either within 5 km (3 miles) or 18km." We felt the 3 mile buffer would be sufficient, as an 18 km (11 mile) buffer would not be realistic, as it would preclude towers pretty much across all habitat. For our references to 2 mile buffers, (solar, misc. anthropogenic structures, recreational events), we fell back to the Connelly et al. 2000 guidelines relative to tall structures, as there was little else to go on- for example, there is no research on effects of solar or recreational activities on GRSG.

An important thing to bear in mind is that for the IDswMT plan, new proposals for anthropogenic disturbance will need go through the state implementation team screen "Exception Criteria" first, so protections to the GRSG are not based solely on the buffer size. Also Solar and Wind development are excluded in Core outright. I copy/pasted the exception criteria below for reference. See below. Note, especially, items 6.1 a, c. and i.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Paul

Exection Criteria from Proposed Plan:

6.1. AD-3: Core Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria – in addition to the Core and Important Management Zone Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the screening and assessment process:

- a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers;
- b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat and would provide a net conservation benefit of the respective Core Management Zone;
- c. The project would not likely result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA;

- d. The project is developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization;
- e. The project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development;
- f. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Core Management Zone;
- g. Can be co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (proposed actions would not increase the existing authorized footprint and associated impacts more than fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.
- h. Development would follow the required design features (RDF) and best management practices (BMPs) as described in Appendix A;
- i. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
- j. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

7.1.

7.2.

7.3.

7.4. AD-4: Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and
- b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and
- c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and

- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs as described in Appendix A.
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

On Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 10:43 AM, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:

Paul

Can you address Tim's question?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Tblmfa@gmail.com" <tblmfa@gmail.com>
Date: August 20, 2014 at 10:27:20 AM MDT
To: Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>
Subject: Buffers

Most states have standard buffer size. I may be asked what drives our numbers. Brent says ID buffers devised by our biologists. A good one to run to ground is Comm Towers 3 miles contracting Transmission Lines at 600 meters.

Program/Use	Buffer
Fluid Minerals Development	2 miles
Solar Development	2 miles
Misc. Anthropogenic Structures	2 miles
Roads	0.8 miles
Industrial Pipelines	0.6 miles
Salable Minerals Developments	0.8 miles
Communication Towers	3 miles
Transmission Lines	600 meters
Organized Recreational Events	2 miles

Sent from my iPad

--

Paul Makela
Wildlife Program Lead
Idaho BLM State Office
Branch of Resources and Science
1387 S. Vinnell Way
Boise, ID 83709

Office (208) 373-3809
Fax (208) 373-3805 Fax
pmakela@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Tblmfa@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2014 10:09 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Non habitat

Thanks

Sent from my iPad

> On Aug 20, 2014, at 9:02 AM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

>

> 1. Yes, plus areas along edges throughout the state.

>

> 2. Big Desert is the primary area where acres were added.

>

> Brent Ralston

> Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

> Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion Idaho State Office

> 208-373-3812

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: TBLMFA [<mailto:tblmfa@gmail.com>]

> Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2014 9:43 AM

> To: Brent Ralston

> Subject: Non habitat

>

> P25, upper right cell. Adds up to 355,204. Is this the acres we

> deliberately cut out from PAC based on lava and other logical basis?

> Yes, plus areas along edges throughout the state.

>

> Primary locations of 750 k acres? Big desert I know, other locations?

>

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2014 12:20 AM
To: Matthew Magaletti (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'David Batts'; Lauren Mermejo
Subject: Waivers Language Comparison
Attachments: Waivers Language Comparison.docx

Here is a table comparing the waivers language in each of the plans – I tried to line up similar or identical components for ease of comparison.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Waivers, Exemptions and Modifications

Waivers, Exceptions and Modifications (WEMs) (Source IM-2008-032)

A waiver is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation, the stipulation would no longer apply anywhere within the lease. Waivers require a 30-day public review and are approved and signed by the State Director.

An exception is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the lease; exceptions are determined on a case-by-case basis; the stipulation continues to apply to all other sites within the lease. An exception is a limited type of waiver.

A modification is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or for the term of the lease. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to all sites within the lease to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Oregon	Montana
Exceptions to the NSO stipulation could be granted if the following conditions are met:	FLM-3: Core Management Zones: Waivers, exemptions or modifications to the NSO stipulation could be considered in accordance with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Exceptions (Core – AD-3) and the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (Important – AD-4)	Action G-UFM 1: In unleased federal fluid mineral estate in PPMA, apply a no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation. A lease exception may be considered Action G-UFM 2: In unleased federal fluid mineral estate in PGMA, apply a NSO stipulation, but allow for waivers, exception, or modifications consistent with the objective.	Action MLS – x: Stipulate all leases within PPMA as NSO, with no waivers or modifications. A single exception will be allowed:	Areas within Core Management Zones would be open to leasing subject to no surface occupancy. No waivers, exceptions or modifications would be allowed unless
The development (e.g., well pad, road, etc.) is on a portion of the lease is determined to be in non-habitat, the area is not used by GRSG, nor would it have direct, indirect or cumulative effects to sage grouse or its habitat (see conditions outlined in MA-GRSG-2). The determination would be made by a team of agency GRSG biologists, including experts from the state wildlife agency, USFWS, and BLM/FS.	The project would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA (the project would be outside Key habitat in areas not meeting desired habitat conditions or the project would provide a benefit to habitat areas that are functioning in a limited way as habitat);	where a portion of the proposed lease is determined to be in nonhabitat, the area is not used by GRSG, and the lease would not have direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on GRSG or its habitat. A team of agency GRSG experts, including experts from the state wildlife agency, USFWS, SEIT, the BLM and the Forest Service, would make this determination.	Exception: a lease exception may be considered where a portion of the proposed lease is determined to be in non-habitat, the area is not used by Greater Sage-grouse, or it would not have direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to Greater Sage-grouse or its habitat. The determination would be made by a team of interagency Greater Sage-grouse experts, including an expert from the state wildlife agency, USFWS, and the BLM.	

Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Oregon	Montana
Prior to granting an exception to this NSO stipulation a 30-day public review period will be provided (43 CFR 3101.1-4).	Waivers require a 30-day public review	Waivers require a 30-day public review	Waivers require a 30-day public review	Waivers require a 30-day public review
In addition, exceptions to this NSO stipulation may only be granted by the BLM Utah State Director.	are approved and signed by the State Director.	All exceptions must be approved by the State Director.	All exceptions must be approved by the State Director.	approved by the State Director.
<p>If an exception is granted to this NSO stipulation, the following restrictions would be placed on the proposed development as COAs.</p> <p>disturbance is limited to an average of one minerals disturbance per 640 acres, regardless of type of mineral disturbance (i.e., non-energy, coal, locatable, mineral material, or fluid) (MA-MIN-2);</p> <p>construction, drilling, and completion, and scheduled maintenance activities would not occur during sensitive seasonal periods (i.e., breeding and nesting, brood rearing, winter) (MA-GRSG-3); and</p> <p>disturbance would be consistent with the 3 percent disturbance objective (Objective-GRSG-3).</p> <p>In addition, the RDFs identified in Appendix J, Required Design Features for Fluid Minerals, would be attached as lease notices to all new leases in PPMA and would be applied during the permitting process as COAs, unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:</p> <p>A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;</p> <p>A proposed design feature or BMP is</p>	<p>In the event a waiver, exception or modification were allowed development would still be subject to CSU which includes buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.</p> <p>subject to RDFs, BMPs, buffers, timing restrictions and standard stipulations</p> <p>Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new authorizations and suppression activities, as conditions of approval into any post-lease activities and as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to the extent allowable by law, unless at least one of the following conditions can be demonstrated and documented in the NEPA analysis associated with the specific project:</p> <p>A specific RDF is not applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project or activity;</p> <p>A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat; or</p> <p>Analysis concludes that following a specific RDF would provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for the project being proposed.</p>	<p>Objective G-Lease-FM 2: Conserve and maintain the quality and distribution of PPMA and PGMA through application of lease stipulations, Conditions of Approval (COAs), and RDFs on existing and future leases.</p>		

Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Oregon	Montana
<p>determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;</p> <p>Analyses conclude that following a specific feature will provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for the specific project being proposed.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The proposed well can be drilled from an existing well pad (expanded to accommodate multiple wells) in GRSG habitat; · In coordination with UDWR it is determined that locating a proposed development (e.g., well pad, road, etc.) on Federal lands in GRSG habitat would have less effect to the GRSG population than locating the well on State or private lands. 	<p>and upon recommendation from the Governor through the Implementation Task Force during the federal site-specific NEPA analysis.</p> <p>Core</p> <p>The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing development);</p> <p>The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat and would provide a net conservation benefit of the respective Core Management Zone;</p> <p>Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Core Management Zone; or can be either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade) ; or 3) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (i.e. powerlines)</p>	<p>Upon expiration or termination of existing leases within PPMA, apply the same stipulation as above.</p> <p>Upon expiration or termination of existing leases within PGMA, apply the same stipulation as above.</p>		

Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Oregon	Montana
	<p>(proposed actions would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and associated impacts more than fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.</p> <p>Development could be implemented adhering to the required design features (RDF) described in Appendix A;</p> <p>The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).</p> <p>The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.</p> <p>Core and Important:</p> <p>The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and</p> <p>The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and</p> <p>The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and</p> <p>The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and</p>			

Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Oregon	Montana
	<p>The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in Appendix A.</p> <p>The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).</p>			

Avoidance Criteria Comparison

Idaho – Mitigation/RDFs	Idaho – Core	Idaho – Core & Important	Nevada	Oregon	Utah
	Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Core Management Zone; or can be either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade) ; or 3) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (i.e. powerlines) (proposed actions would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and associated impacts more than fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.	The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone	Where avoidance is not possible, place new ROWs under the following conditions:	Where avoidance is not possible, placement of new ROWs would be allowed under the following conditions	Placement of new ROWs in PPMA should be avoided if at all possible. Where avoidance is not possible in PPMA, placement of new ROWs could be allowed under the following conditions
	The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources	The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources	Development would only occur in non-habitat areas. If this is not possible, then development must occur in the least suitable GRSG habitat (e.g., edge of sagebrush or existing disturbance areas).	To the extent feasible, development should only occur in non-habitat areas. If this is not possible, then development must occur in the least suitable habitat for Greater Sage-grouse	To the extent feasible, the development should be located in areas that minimize the effect on the GRSG population (e.g., non-habitat areas, least suitable habitat).
Mitigate anthropogenic development (Table X) impacts to a no net loss of Key habitat standard (Appendix J) through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework (Appendix J), referred to as no unmitigated loss.	The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat and would provide a net conservation benefit of the respective Core Management Zone;	The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA	Apply the “avoid, minimize and mitigate process and the Conservation Credit System to ensure no net unmitigated loss (Appendix G) of GRSG habitat due to anthropogenic disturbances.	All disturbance is subject to no net unmitigated loss (see _X_) in PPMA and PGMA	Mitigation is implemented to offset impacts to GRSG and their habitats, including no-net-unmitigated-loss (MA-GRSG-7);
Mitigate impacts from anthropogenic developments (Table X) to GRSG habitats to a net conservation benefit by first avoidance of impacts, minimizing impacts and then compensating for impacts.	The project would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA (the project would be outside Key habitat in areas not meeting desired habitat conditions or the project would provide a benefit to habitat areas that are functioning in a limited way as habitat	The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation	Mitigation is implemented to offset impacts on GRSG and its habitat (Appendix G, Greater Sage-Grouse Mitigation Strategy, and Appendix D) in GRSG habitat.	Mitigation is implemented to offset impacts to Greater Sage-grouse and its habitats (see Appendix X, Mitigation Framework) in PPMA and PGMA	
Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent as calculated within	The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).	The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).	Development does not exceed the 3 percent disturbance threshold (see	Development does not exceed the 3 percent disturbance limit (see _X_)	Development would be consistent with the 3 percent disturbance

Idaho – Mitigation/RDFs	Idaho – Core	Idaho – Core & Important	Nevada	Oregon	Utah
<p>the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Map 3). The BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important Management Zones within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships for evaluation. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat disturbance from wildfire and includes activities described in Table X. For Idaho this disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features (powerlines, pipelines and roads). For Montana this disturbance is measured utilizing the Disturbance Density Calculation Tool process described in Appendix I.</p>			<p>Objective G-G 2) in PPMA.</p>	<p>in PPMA Only issue ROWs after documenting that the ROWs will not adversely affect Greater Sage-grouse populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities (independent of disturbance cap) except where such limitation would make accessing valid existing rights impracticable in PPMA and PGMA</p>	<p>objective (Objective-GRSG-3).</p>
	<p>The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing development);</p>		<p>Only issue ROWs after documenting that the ROWs would not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities (independent of disturbance cap) except where such limitation would make accessing valid existing rights impracticable in PPMA and PGMA.</p>		<p>The project plan and NEPA document demonstrate the ROW development would not impair the behavioral needs of the GRSG population except where such limitation would make accessing valid existing rights impracticable; and</p>
<p>Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new authorizations and suppression activities, as conditions of approval into any post-lease activities and as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to</p>	<p>Development could be implemented adhering to the required design features (RDF) described in Appendix A;</p>	<p>The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in Appendix A.</p>	<p>All new permits, ROWs, or re-authorizations would follow RDFs in GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>All new permits/Rights-of – ways (ROWs) or re-authorizations will follow Required Design Features in PPMA and PGMA</p>	<p>ROW Required Design Features</p> <p>Required design features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where technically and financially feasible, bury distribution powerlines and communication lines within existing disturbance. • Use existing roads, or realignments of existing roads to the extent possible. • Design roads to an

Idaho – Mitigation/RDFs	Idaho – Core	Idaho – Core & Important	Nevada	Oregon	Utah
the extent allowable by law,					<p>appropriate standard no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place infrastructure in already disturbed locations where the habitat has not been fully restored. • Cluster disturbances, operations, and facilities. • Micro-site linear facilities to reduce impacts to sage-grouse habitats. • Locate staging areas outside GRSG habitat to the extent possible. • Coordinate road construction and use among ROW holders. • Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings. • Consider placing pipelines under or immediately adjacent to a road or adjacent to other pipelines first, before considering co-locating with other ROW. • Control the spread and effects of non-native plant species. • Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids. <p>New ROW structures will be constructed with perch deterrents or other anti-perching devices, where needed.</p>
Conduct implementation and project activities, including construction and short-term anthropogenic disturbances consistent with seasonal habitat restrictions described in Appendix B.			Provide seasonal restrictions so that development does not occur during sensitive seasonal periods (see Action G-SSS-3) in GRSG habitat.	Provide seasonal protection so that development does not occur during sensitive seasonal periods in PPMA and PGMA habitat. During any sensitive seasonal period, manage discretionary surface disturbing activities and uses within 1 mile of PPMA and 0.6 mile for PGMA of occupied or pending leks to prevent surface disturbance within Greater Sage-grouse habitat and disruption of its activities. Seasonal protection periods are from March 1 through June 30 for breeding and early	Development does not occur during sensitive seasonal periods (i.e., breeding and nesting, brood rearing, winter) (MA-GRSG-5);

Idaho – Mitigation/RDFs	Idaho – Core	Idaho – Core & Important	Nevada	Oregon	Utah
				brood-rearing, late brood-rearing from July 1 to September 30, and November 1 through February 28 for wintering.	
Incorporate appropriate buffers into implementation and project design to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG described in Appendix C. (0.6-2.0 miles)			New anthropogenic disturbance does not occur within 4 miles of an active lek in PPMA and PGMA, except within existing designated corridors.	New anthropogenic disturbance does not occur within 1 mile of an occupied or pending lek in PPMA habitat, and 0.6 mile of an occupied or pending lek in PGMA habitat except designated corridors are open	Development does not occur within 1-mile of an occupied lek in PPMA, except in designated corridors.
Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new authorizations and suppression activities, as conditions of approval into any post-lease activities and as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to the extent allowable by law 10 dB increase during breeding			Development must meet noise restrictions (see Action G-SSS-4 and Appendix B) in GRSG habitat.	Development meets noise restrictions (see X) in PPMA and PGMA	Development meets noise restrictions (MA-GRSG-3);
			New road ROWs would be considered if a county or state is pursuing a Title V FLPMA ROW grant on an RS 2477 road and the new ROW grant would create no new surface disturbance.		
	The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.				Development meets tall structure restrictions (MA-GRSG-3);

BLM, FS and FWS leadership met in Portland this week to discuss our progress to date and the work that remains to develop a comprehensive, rangewide strategy for GRSG conservation in the context of our multiple-use sustained yield missions.

Key Messages -

Jim Lyons: It doesn't matter how painful we need to finish as a team with a landscape level approach that results in the conservation of sage-grouse.

Neil Kornze: This is the 11th hour, we need to resolve concerns and make decisions that move us forward.

Noreen Walsh: The COT is the lens by which we need to evaluate the actions to minimize threats. Differences between subregions must be simply explainable.

Approach -

BLM and Forest service will retain all priority (Core and Important) and general habitat lands currently under federal management and manage these for the benefit of the GRSG.

BLM and Forest Service will avoid and/or minimize further surface disturbance of priority areas for conservation (PACs) through closures or no surface occupancy restrictions applied to any further leasing and development of resources.

BLM and FS will eliminate or limit further development of rights of way (transmission lines and pipelines) in PACs in order to minimize impacts. Efforts will be made to route transmission lines outside of PACs or, where this is not technically feasible will use the least impactful route possible and mitigate for the full effect of the development.

All development on priority and general habitat will be mitigated to ensure no net unmitigated loss of habitat for GRSG.

BLM and FS will set specific, quantifiable objectives and timeframes for rangeland improvement and vegetative management to address the negative impacts of improper livestock grazing on GRSG habitat.

Items of Concern for Idaho/SW Montana

Avoidance of Wind Development in Important – Exclusion Optimal

Avoidance of Solar Development in Important – Exclusion Optimal

Closure of Fluid Minerals in Core/Low Potential – No Surface Occupancy Optimal

Application of FIAT Approach in Montana

NSO Waivers tied to Avoidance Criteria – Waiver only for non-habitat - **** DECISION**

Items of National Concern

Disturbance Threshold – Measurement, Application & Scale

Solicitor's to Follow-Up on Buffers

Timeline

August 2014 – BLM/FS/FWS meet to review plans
August/September 2014 (Last week of September/first week of October) – States join BLM/FS/USFWS to review plans
Fall 2014 (Mid October)– Plans revised in response to plan review
Fall 2014 (Mid November start reviews- public release) – Proposed LUP revisions/FEIS protest and Gov consistency reviews
Late Fall 2014/Early 2015 – Sign Records of Decision

Detailed for Idaho/SW Montana

Sept 9-11 Rocky Mtn FFM
October (3) State Mtg
October (10) Resolution of Plans
October (17) Secretarial Brief
??? (November 14) WO Review Starts
??? (December 12) Subregional Response to WO Comments
??? (December 19) WO Resolution of Concerns
??? (January 9) NPT Briefing
??? (January 16) Director Briefing
??? (January 16) Secretarial Briefing
X (January 30) Publish Proposed Plans
X+30 (March 1) Protest Period Ends
X+60 (March 31) Governor's Consistency Ends
X+75 (April 15) Protest Resolution Ends
X+135 (June 14) Consultation Ends – Indication that Idaho may be in Formal Consultation – That should not be the case.
??? (June 21) Director's Briefing
??? (June 21) Secretarial Briefing
??? (June 21) RODs Signed

Brent is planning on meeting with the State of Idaho (Dustin and Cally) to discuss allocation decisions and potential flexibility in Important with Wind and Solar, and Fluid Mineral NSO in Core.



National Greater Sage-Grouse
Idaho & Southwestern Montana Sub Region
Federal Family Meeting
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1. Why does Idaho need to have three GRSG management zones?

The Idaho delineates three GRSG management zones – Core, Important and General, to retain and protect sagebrush cover and GRSG habitat (consistent with Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008, and Knick et al. 2000) through appropriate prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitats and across broader habitat areas. Each of these management zones has associated management restrictions and protections for greater sage-grouse (GRSG) and are foundational to the adaptive management strategy.

Core Management Zones (CMZ) are delineated to protect large unfragmented, contiguous landscapes from anthropogenic disturbance and to focus wildfire reduction (suppression activities and fuels treatments) associated with the two key metapopulations within the subregion (Garton et al. 2011). These areas encompass 65% of the occupied leks and associated seasonal habitats necessary to support 73% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. CMZ compose 66% of the USFWS priority areas for conservation (PACs). They have the highest priority for wildfire suppression and minimization activities (fuel breaks and reduction treatments) and have the most restrictive management direction for anthropogenic development which is consistent with the national policy team direction or goes beyond that direction in its protection of GRSG.

Important Management Zones (IMZ) are delineated to provide protection to habitats adjacent to the CMZs and encompass 30% of the occupied leks and support approximately 22% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. IMZ compose the remaining areas of PACs (33%) and in addition include over 750K additional acres supporting 4% of the breeding males outside of PAC areas. The two management zones encompass the FWS identified priority areas for conservation (PAC) and include areas beyond those PAC boundaries that would receive threat amelioration management to help foster connectivity and retention of habitat within CMZ and PAC areas. The IMZ areas provide a management buffer between more intact CMZ areas and General Management Zones with a higher likelihood of wildfire occurrence. The IMZ also has protective and restrictive management supporting the retention and recovery of GRSG habitats in IMZ and CMZ with management direction for anthropogenic development disturbance that is largely consistent with the national policy team direction with several exceptions – solar, wind, non-energy leasable (phosphate) and mineral material developments.

General Management Zones (GMZ) contain less than 5% of the occupied leks and population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG.

The three management zone approach, unique to Idaho's Plan, was specifically designed in coordination with the State of Idaho to support an adaptive management strategy that substantively addresses the primary threat to the species in Idaho and which could be supported and applicable to non-federal lands within the management zone in coordination with Rural Fire Protection Associations, the development and support of which has garnered Gubernatorial and Congressional support in the State of Idaho.

2. Why is Solar development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?

3. *Why is Wind development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?*
4. *Why is non-energy leasable development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*
5. *Why is mineral materials development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*

- a. See - *Why does Idaho need to have three GRSG management zones?*
- b. The management zone development restrictions serve to discourage further development in GRSG habitat. The management for the identified uses is consistent with the objectives described in the USFWS COT Report and consistent with the identified PAC areas. The CMZ areas are extremely limited to further anthropogenic disturbance and go beyond the direction provided by the National Policy Team (e.g. closures to fluid mineral leasing and a cessation of further development in the event an adaptive regulatory hard trigger is engaged).
- c. Any proposed development in Important Zones must comply with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (avoidance criteria); if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

AD-4: Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and
- b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and
- c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in Appendix A.
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

6. *Why are high voltage transmission and major pipeline ROW developments not avoided in General Management Zones?*

The GMZ is not identified as an avoidance area for ROW developments; however, proposals within this zone would still need to conform to the required design features, lek buffers and seasonal restrictions which would serve to direct actions away from GRSG habitat (leks specifically) and times that could impact bird behavior. This maintains a high standard of limiting effects to GRSG even within GMZ. This serves to direct potential use away from CMZ and IMZ areas while still minimizing and eliminating impacts to GRSG.

7. *Why is no net unmitigated loss not applied to General Management Zones?*

This has been further refined during the development of the Proposed Plan to include no net unmitigated loss within GMZs as well.

8. *Why does avoidance criteria apply to more than ROWs?*

While many activities or proposals for development are carried out within the purview of ROW permits, others are not, and in some cases proposals involve both actions permitted under a ROW and those permitted under other authorities. In Idaho the ROW avoidance criteria has been expanded to include all large scale anthropogenic disturbance proposals. This effectively accomplishes several objectives:

1. All disturbance and associated effects is evaluated with regard to GRSG impacts with the same rule set (individual proposals may have very different potential impacts – a transmission line versus oil and gas well – which would be considered in the evaluation of the projects conformance to the criteria.
2. This eliminates the potential occurrence where an activity may be approved/not approved while the ROW associated with or supporting that activity would be conversely not approves/approved, leading to inconsistencies in application.

9. Lek Buffers

The plan contains direction to minimize impacts from various impacts and causes. These include minimization measures, buffers around leks and seasonal timing restrictions. The following table delineates specific uses and associated lek buffers.

Program/Use	Buffer
Fluid Minerals Development	2 miles
Solar Development	2 miles
Misc. Anthropogenic Structures	2 miles
Roads	0.8 miles
Industrial Pipelines	0.6 miles
Salable Minerals Developments	0.8 miles
Communication Towers	3 miles
Transmission Lines	600 meters
Organized Recreational Events	2 miles

10. Disturbance Threshold

Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent. This is measured within the nesting and wintering habitat within Core and Important management zones, separately, by Conservation Area. This area is inclusive of all ownerships for evaluation. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat disturbance from wildfire and includes specific activities defined in the Monitoring Strategy. For Idaho this disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features (powerlines, pipelines and roads).

If or when the 3% threshold were hit within the nesting and wintering areas of either Core or Important management zones then new anthropogenic disturbances within that Core or Important management zone would not be not be allowed (subject to valid existing rights).

Core and Important Management Zone: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).

11. 3 percent disturbance in biologically significant unit for nesting and winter habitat only?

Nesting and wintering habitats were delineated in Idaho within each of the Conservation Areas to monitor and adaptively manage threats at a biologically meaningful scale. Measuring habitat loss and disturbance within nesting and wintering habitats, as opposed to across the entire Conservation Area or PAC, has several advantages:

- It more accurately reflects methodologies applied in relevant scientific literature (e.g. Knick et al. 2013, Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008);
- Provides greater sensitivity for threat response within the large meta-populations;
- Provides a disincentive for development in more critical habitats, while at the same time providing an incentive for proactive maintenance and restoration of those same habitats.

12. Adaptive Management

The Idaho portion of the plan contains both soft and hard triggers for adaptive management. The triggers are a loss of 10% (soft) or 20% (hard) of either population of habitat when compared to 2001 baseline values.

When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend additional potential implementation level activities.

When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been met then CMZ management actions would be applied to the IMZ within that CA.

If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive Grazing Management Response.

Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population information shows a return to or an exceedance of baseline values within the associated CA.

13. Resource Potentials

Solar: Extremely low to the point of not addressed in Solar PEIS

Wind: Low with a few areas with higher potential/interest – Cotterell, China Mountain

Oil and Gas: Low in most of Idaho; moderate to high in Bear Lake (se Idaho) and sw Montana

Geothermal: Low in western, northern and eastern part of Idaho and sw Montana; moderate to high in central part of Idaho

Phosphate: high in Known Phosphate Leasing Areas in eastern part of Idaho

14. Protection of PACs

Core and Important Management Zones encompass all of the PAC areas. Protective management is included for both management zones which meets the COT objectives and affects over 95% of the population in Idaho.

15. State Monitoring Strategy

The subregional monitoring strategy includes measures and processes to support the evaluation of the adaptive regulatory triggers and anthropogenic disturbance cap. The State of Idaho monitors and tracks population indices and the BLM and Forest Service monitor and track habitat indices.

Implementation of the Habitat Assessment Framework and the broad scale Monitoring Framework are also included as part of the local monitoring strategy.

16. Issues with MT/ID as there are great differences?

Montana BLM continues to work forward in the development of adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance approaches applicable to Montana that are also consistent with the yet to be final State of Montana Plan. These will be incorporated into the proposed plan when final.

17. Designated corridors in SE Idaho?

No final answer on these corridors, their validity and designation is being investigated.

18. Mitigation

The plan calls for mitigation for any impacts to GRSG and their habitat to a net conservation benefit standard and in addition any key habitat impacted through discretionary actions would be mitigated to a no net loss standard.



National Greater Sage-Grouse
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1. *Why is Solar development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?*
2. *Why is Wind development not excluded in Important and General Management Zones?*
3. *Why is non-energy leasable development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*
4. *Why is mineral materials development not excluded in Important Management Zones?*

- a. See Management Zones delineation.
- b. Any proposed development in Important Zones must comply with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (avoidance criteria); if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

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 - c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and
 - d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
 - e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs as described in Appendix A.
 - f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold (AD-1).
5. *Why are high voltage transmission and major pipeline ROW developments not avoided in General Management Zones?*
 6. *Why is no net unmitigated loss not applied to General Management Zones?*
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 8. *Why does Idaho have three GRSG management zones?*

The Idaho delineates three GRSG management zones – Core, Important and General. Each of these management zones has associated management restrictions and protections for greater sage-grouse (GRSG) and are foundational to the adaptive management strategy.

Core Management Zones contain 65% of the occupied leks and associated seasonal habitats; 73% of the breeding males; and compose 66% of the USFWS priority areas for conservation (PACs). They are the most restrictive and management direction for anthropogenic development within these areas consistent with the national policy team direction or goes beyond that direction in its protection of GRSG.

Important Management Zones contain 30% of the occupied leks; 22% of the breeding males; and compose 33% of the PAC areas plus over 1 million additional acres supporting 4% of the breeding males outside of PAC areas. Core and Important Management Zones support approximately 95% of the population in Idaho. They contain restrictive management direction for anthropogenic development disturbance that is largely consistent with the national policy team direction with several exceptions – solar, wind, non-energy leasable (phosphate) and mineral materials developments.

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the occupied leks and population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG.

9. qssq

1. The BLM and FS have reviewed all threats to GRSG....
2. BLM and Forest service will retain all priority and general habitat lands currently under federal management and manage these for the benefit of the GRSG.
3. BLM and Forest Service will avoid and/or minimize further surface disturbance of priority areas for conservation (PACs) through closures or no surface occupancy restrictions applied to any further leasing and development of resources. Where valid existing rights could lead to surface disturbance, BLM and FS will work with lease holders to consolidate and limit further infrastructure in PACs in order to reduce the impacts of development where they may occur.
4. BLM and FS will eliminate or limit further development of rights of way (transmission lines and pipelines) in PACs in order to minimize impacts. Efforts will be made to route transmission lines outside of PACs or, where this is not technically feasible will use the least impactful route possible and mitigate for the full effect of the development.
5. All development on priority and general habitat will be mitigated to ensure no net unmitigated loss of habitat for GRSG.
6. BLM and FS will set specific, quantifiable objectives and timeframes for rangeland improvement and vegetative management to address the negative impacts of improper livestock grazing on GRSG habitat.

Timeline

August 2014 – BLM/FS/FWS meet to review plans

August/September 2014 (Last week of September/first week of October) – States join

BLM/FS/USFWS to review plans

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Ed Schedule

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X+135 (June 14) Consultation Ends

??? (June 21) Director's Briefing

??? (June 21) Secretarial Briefing

??? (June 21) RODs Signed

BLM, FS and FWS leadership met in Portland this week to discuss our progress to date and the work that remains to develop a comprehensive, rangewide strategy for GRSG conservation in the context of our multiple-use sustained yield missions.

We had an intense, focused, and very productive meeting.

We have one more meeting of the federal family to review the rocky mtn plans

Then we look forward to meeting with the states to compare notes, to share our draft plans, to review the state plans for state and private lands, and to see how we can work together to strengthen our plans and our cumulative GRSG conservation efforts, where needed.

We're optimistic that we can meet our goal of.....

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2014 4:57 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Inconsistent with NPT Guidance

Here are the red highlighted areas that did not comport to the NPT Guidance:

1. Solar and Wind in Important and General Habitat
2. Non-energy Leasables in Important Habitat
3. Mineral Materials in Important Habitat
4. High Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs in General Habitat
5. No Net Unmitigated Loss not applied to General Habitat

Also, don't forget that Idaho is different in its application of avoidance criteria (whereas all of the other sub-regions adopted only ROW avoidance criteria)

Hope this helps you get prepared.....

Lauren

Ed's questions regarding ID-BLM Response to NPT 6/4/14

In preparation for our discussion later today, I wanted to provide you with some of the concerns we would like to go over with you and your team regarding the info memo you sent us on 5/29/14. Hopefully you can provide us with some clarification/rationale on a few inconsistencies with the NPT allocation recommendations.

For Priority Habitat (Core/Important):

What is your rationale for managing medial (important) habitat as a ROW avoidance area, instead of managing it as a ROW exclusion area for wind/solar?

Idaho is only closing areas to fluid mineral development that are low potential. What is the biological rationale for opening moderate and high potential areas for development? Are you applying NSO to any core (priority) areas?

Are core and important areas closed to non-energy leasables?

For mineral materials, what is the rationale for leaving medial (important) areas open? For existing sites, are they subject to the 3% disturbance cap and no net unmitigated loss?

For General Habitat

What is your rationale for not managing general habitat as a ROW avoidance area for solar/wind?

What is your rationale for not managing general habitat as a ROW avoidance area for high-voltage transmission ROWs?

Adaptive Management

Is BLM Idaho's adaptive management strategy consistent with the AM sideboards? How does the AM strategy apply to other allocation categories other than ROWs?

Disturbance

What do you mean when you say that BLM Idaho is “inconsistent with specific biological units.” The NPT guidance allowed the sub-regions to provide for their own unit, as long as information could be aggregated up to the PAC level. Also – you state that the cap is only subject to “seasonal habitats of highest concern” – does this mean that you are not applying the cap to all general and priority (core, important, and general)? Who makes the determination of what is of a “highest concern?”

Will the no net unmitigated loss be applied to core, important, and general habitat?

How much medial (important) habitat lies within the PAC boundaries?

Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination

Are there any inconsistencies with how the Forest Service plans to manage their priority and general habitat areas?

Have you resolved all of the FWS stop-light matrix concerns (shifting reds to yellows or greens)?

I look forward to our discussion. After we discuss these questions and reconcile these issues, we can confirm that the data you sent to the NOC is ready for the roll-up or you can send any changes in data on to the NOC.

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (931)

Memorandum

To: Ed Roberson, Assistant Director, Resources and Planning (AD-200)

From: Tim Murphy, Acting State Director, BLM Idaho

Subject: Supplemental Update for Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregional Administrative Draft Proposed Plan

Date: June 4, 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum documents additional descriptions and rationale in support of the May 28, 2014, update memorandum for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP). This document is organized by the questions and concerns that have been identified and further descriptions are included to responding to those concerns.

II. THREE MANAGEMENT ZONES

The Idaho portion of the ADPP delineates three management zones – Core, Important and General. These management zones represent a continuum of management restrictions/protections for greater sage-grouse (GRSG) and are foundational to the adaptive management strategy contained within the ADPP.

Core Management Zones contain 65% of the occupied leks; 73% of the breeding males; and compose 66% of the USFWS priority areas for conservation (PACs). They are the most restrictive and management direction within these areas consistent with the national policy team direction or goes beyond that direction in its protection of GRSG.

Important Management Zones contain 22% of the breeding males. They compose 33% of the PAC areas plus over 1 million additional acres supporting 4% of the breeding males outside of PAC areas. Core and Important Management Zones support approximately 95% of the population in Idaho.

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG.

Any proposed development within Important Management Zones would be required to meet the following Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria:

- a. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant Conservation Area; and
- b. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management area; and
- c. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation;

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- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs as described; and
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance threshold

The restrictions/protections from development in Core Zones, coupled with the stringent development criteria associated with proposals in Important Zones effectively pushes development to areas outside Core and Important Zones (i.e. the PAC areas); or maintains the standard that any development within Important Zones would not impact the GRSG population and any impacts to habitat would be mitigated.

III. CORE and IMPORTANT ZONES

Rationale for managing Important Zones as ROW avoidance areas for Wind and Solar development.

Core Zones exclude the highest potential areas for these types of developments within GRSG habitat. Any proposed development in Important Zones must comply with the Development Criteria (previous); if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

Biological rationale for opening moderate and high potential areas for fluid mineral development development.

Areas of moderate to high fluid mineral potential would be open in Core and Important Zones, subject to a no surface occupancy restriction which is consistent with the NPT guidance. Areas of low or no potential within Core Zones would be closed – this is more restrictive/protective of GRSG habitat than the NPT guidance.

Core and Important Zones closed to non-energy leasables

Non-energy leasable areas in Idaho are associated with phosphate mining. Areas with this potential have been inventoried and identified as Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) which are the only areas currently open for phosphate leasing. There are no KPLAs within Core or Important Zones, so Core and Important Zones are closed to non-energy leasables.

Rationale for leaving Important Zones open for mineral materials

Core Zones are closed to new site authorizations. Any new site development in Important Zones must comply with the Development Criteria (previous) including the disturbance cap; if development were to proceed then lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions would also be applied to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required. Sales from existing pits would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions and required design features.

IV. GENERAL ZONES

Rationale for not managing as a ROW avoidance area for solar/wind

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Presence of a developable resource within General Zones is sparse to non-existent. Any proposed development in General Zones is guided by application of lek buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

Rationale for not managing as a ROW avoidance area for high-voltage transmission ROWs

General Management Zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and least productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in General Zones is guided by application of lek

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buffers, required design features and appropriate seasonal or timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition mitigation of residual impacts would be required.

V. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

BLM Idaho's adaptive management strategy consistency with the AM sideboards

The adaptive management strategy included with the ADPP includes adaptive changes that adjustment management of Important Zones. It provides for more restrictive management when a trigger is engaged and it also provides for removing this restrictive management when habitat and populations recover to pre-trigger levels. The concept that an adaptive trigger can only be used to adjust management in a more restrictive direction even if habitat and populations have recovered and would no longer meet the trigger criteria is not consistent with Idaho's incentive-based strategy.

The additional component presented in the National Policy Team guidance of adjusting management to a more restrictive alternative if necessary requires additional discussion with FS, FWS, and our State partners.

VI. DISTURBANCE

Biological significant units that could be aggregated up to the PAC level

Idaho BLM has worked with our partners (FS, FWS and State of Idaho) to define the biologically significant unit for analysis of the disturbance cap/threshold as the nesting and wintering habitat within Core or Important Zones by Conservation Area. This delineation recognizes the strategic importance and value of biologically limiting seasonal habitats and the desire to push development away from and limit additional development within those areas.

This calculation can be aggregated to the PAC level consistent with the National Policy Team guidance.

VII. CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION

Inconsistencies with Forest Service plans

BLM and FS have been coordinating closely through the development of the ADPP. The FS is currently finalizing the FS ADPP and while initial indications are toward consistency there may be several areas requiring further discussion. These discussions are pending until the FS has completed their initial ADPP development.

Resolution of FWS COT consistency

In the Service's comment letter on the Draft EIS (January 31, 2014) an evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives and their consistency with the COT report was described. The BLM, FS, FWS and the State of Idaho have worked together over the last several months to reconcile the two co-preferred alternatives into one cohesive approach that responds to the concerns raised by FWS and further refines the approaches previously described in the Draft EIS. All of the concerns identified by FWS as documented on the COT evaluation table (i.e. stop-light matrix) have been resolved. As a point of clarification this table did not identify any significant areas of concern of inconsistency (red) based on evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives described in the Draft EIS. Several areas of concern were identified (yellow) and these have been resolved by further augmenting of direction in the ADPP.



United States Department of the Interior



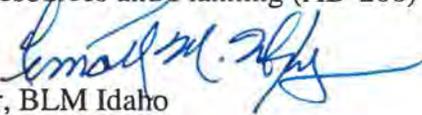
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Idaho State Office
1387 South Vinnell Way
Boise, Idaho 83709-1657

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (931)

MAY 28 2014

EMS TRANSMISSION Memorandum

To: Edwin L. Roberson
Assistant Director, Resources and Planning (AD-200)

From: Timothy M. Murphy 
Acting State Director, BLM Idaho

Jamie E. Connell
State Director, BLM Montana¹

Subject: Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregional Administrative Draft Proposed Plan Update

I. INTRODUCTION

This memo documents the key elements, allocations, and disturbance considerations in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Subregional Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) in response to WO Memo from Ed Roberson (1610 (210) of May 12, 2014). It has been reviewed and concurred with by the State Director in Montana/Dakotas.

The IDswMT effort includes portions of three states (Idaho, Montana, and Utah) and would amend 29 BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) land use plans. The planning area encompasses slightly more than 49 million acres of which 18.1 million acres are identified as GRSG habitat across all ownerships. BLM administered public lands comprise 9.3 million acres (roughly 50%) and USFS lands comprise 1.9 million areas (roughly 10%) of the total GRSG habitat within the subregion. Most of the subregion is located within WAFWA MZ IV with a small portion of southeast Idaho contained within WAFWA MZ II. The primary ongoing threats to GRSG are loss of habitat resulting from wildfire and spread of cheatgrass; of substantially less concern is loss of habitat due to infrastructure and oil and gas development. The ADPP addresses all of the applicable threats identified by population in the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Conservation Objectives Team (COT) report (Table 1).

¹ This memorandum is a coordinated response from both Idaho and Montana BLM. It has been developed in coordination with the Montana BLM and has been concurred with by the Montana State Director.

II. COORDINATION

The ADPP has been developed in close coordination with BLM, USFS, FWS, the State of Idaho through the Governor's Office of Species Conservation and GRSG Task Force and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the State of Montana through Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. The ADPP addresses the objectives described in the COT report and required policies and directives. The FWS provided the final COT threat assessment table as part of their public comments and the BLM held subsequent cooperating agency meetings with FWS, USFS and the State of Idaho to discuss, clarify and resolve the concerns identified in their letter and COT threat assessment table. The BLM has addressed all the concerns identified by FWS and have provided additional conservation measures or additional clarity to existing conservation measures in the ADPP (Table 2).

The State of Montana has prepared a draft strategy that has been reviewed. The Governor of Montana has yet to issue an expected Sage-Grouse Conservation Executive Order that would outline how the State of Montana would address GRSG conservation; therefore, it is not possible at this time to fully determine how the ADPP would compare with the potential State regulatory mechanisms or management actions to protect and conserve GRSG and their habitat. The Montana portion of the planning effort has also been coordinated with the other BLM plans in Montana to ensure some level of consistency within Montana. The ADPP (which applies to federal lands) remains flexible to provide cooperative landscape-level management for the conservation of GRSG which transcends ownership boundaries when coupled with the pending Executive Order from the Governor of Montana (which is anticipated to apply to all land ownerships whenever a state authorization is required).

III. KEY ELEMENTS

The primary threat to GRSG that the IDswMT effort responds to is wildfire. In coordination with the State of Idaho and FWS, the IDswMT ADPP identifies and maps three management zones (Core (ID & MT), Important (ID only) and General (ID & MT))² within five conservation areas (Map 1) which are responsive to the stochastic nature of wildfire and provide protections for GRSG and their habitat. Management actions for fuels and suppression management, in addition to those identified for inclusion from the Fire and Invasives Analysis Team have been included to further respond to the threat of wildfire. The ADPP also includes an adaptive management strategy and a mitigation strategy which utilizes the State of Idaho Mitigation Framework. For the SW Montana portion of the plan these components would be consistent with the Montana strategy.

The ADPP includes allocation decisions (Table 1) and program conservation measures to respond to GRSG threats, including required design features, best management practices, activity, and development buffers for GRSG leks and seasonal or timing restrictions.

The focus of the ADPP, including the delineation of three management zones, is to retain and protect sagebrush cover and GRSG habitat (consistent with Wisdom et al. 2011, Aldridge et al. 2008, and Knick et al. 2000) through appropriate prioritization and protective measures within the most critical habitats and across broader habitat areas. Core Management Zones (CMZ) are delineated to protect large unfragmented, contiguous landscapes from anthropogenic disturbance and to focus wildfire reduction (suppression activities and fuels treatments) associated with the two key metapopulations

² Within the subregion management areas have been delineated into three zones – Core, Important and General, only two of which occur in Montana – Core and General.

within the subregion (Garton et al. 2011). These areas encompass all the seasonal habitats necessary to support approximately 73% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The Important Management Zones (IMZ) are delineated to provide protection to seasonal habitats adjacent to the CMZs and support approximately 22% of the breeding males (and by association the entire population) in Idaho. The two management zones encompass the FWS identified priority areas for conservation (PAC) and include areas beyond those PAC boundaries that would receive threat amelioration management to help foster connectivity and retention of habitat within CMZ and PAC areas.

The areas identified in the IDswMT subregion include the seasonal habitats relied upon by roughly 95% of the entire GRSG population in the subregion as contrasted with adjacent states where roughly 70-80% of the entire GRSG populations are included within areas identified for primary focus on threat amelioration. The IDswMT ADPP provides threat amelioration management on an additional 1 million acres (243k of Core and 795k of Important) and 3.8% of the breeding males (and population – 687 males and 39 leks) than just those areas identified by USFWS as the most important areas needed for maintaining GRSG representation, redundancy, and resilience across the landscape (USFWS 2013) (Map 2).

While CMZ is equivalent in concept and direction as Priority in the National Policy Team guidance (NPT) (May 1, 2014) and General Management Zones are the equivalent to General areas, the NPT does not have a similar designation as IMZ included within the IDswMT ADPP. This zone is a foundational component of the IDswMT ADPP and directly supports to adaptive management approach which is to adjust threat amelioration management into additional areas if further declines in populations or habitat occur. In coordination efforts with the State of Idaho, this three-tiered management approach was initially developed through the Governor's GRSG Task Force and is supported by State and County representatives on that Task Force. This acceptance in those arenas is helping to support development of the State's management approach for State and private lands within Idaho, consistent with the federal lands.

This three-tiered approach is not consistent with the NPT guidance. With several deviations CMZ allocation management in the IDswMT is consistent with the NPT guidance, in the event that adaptive management triggers are engaged then management in IMZs would then become reflective of Priority management, until that occurrence, IMZs are managed in a more protective approach than typically described for General.

IV. RESPONSE TO FWS COMMENTS ON DRAFT EIS

In the Service's comment letter on the Draft EIS (January 31, 2014) an evaluation of the co-preferred alternatives and their consistency with the COT report was described. The BLM, USFS, FWS and the State of Idaho have worked together over the last several months to reconcile the two co-preferred alternatives into on cohesive approach that responds to the concerns raised by FWS and further refines the approaches previously described in the Draft EIS.

V. CROSS JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES

Management direction within the subregion for Idaho and Montana has been coordinated across state boundaries with Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and Oregon. Allocation level decisions are mostly consistent across those boundaries with some discrepancy adjacent to Wyoming where there are some areas of

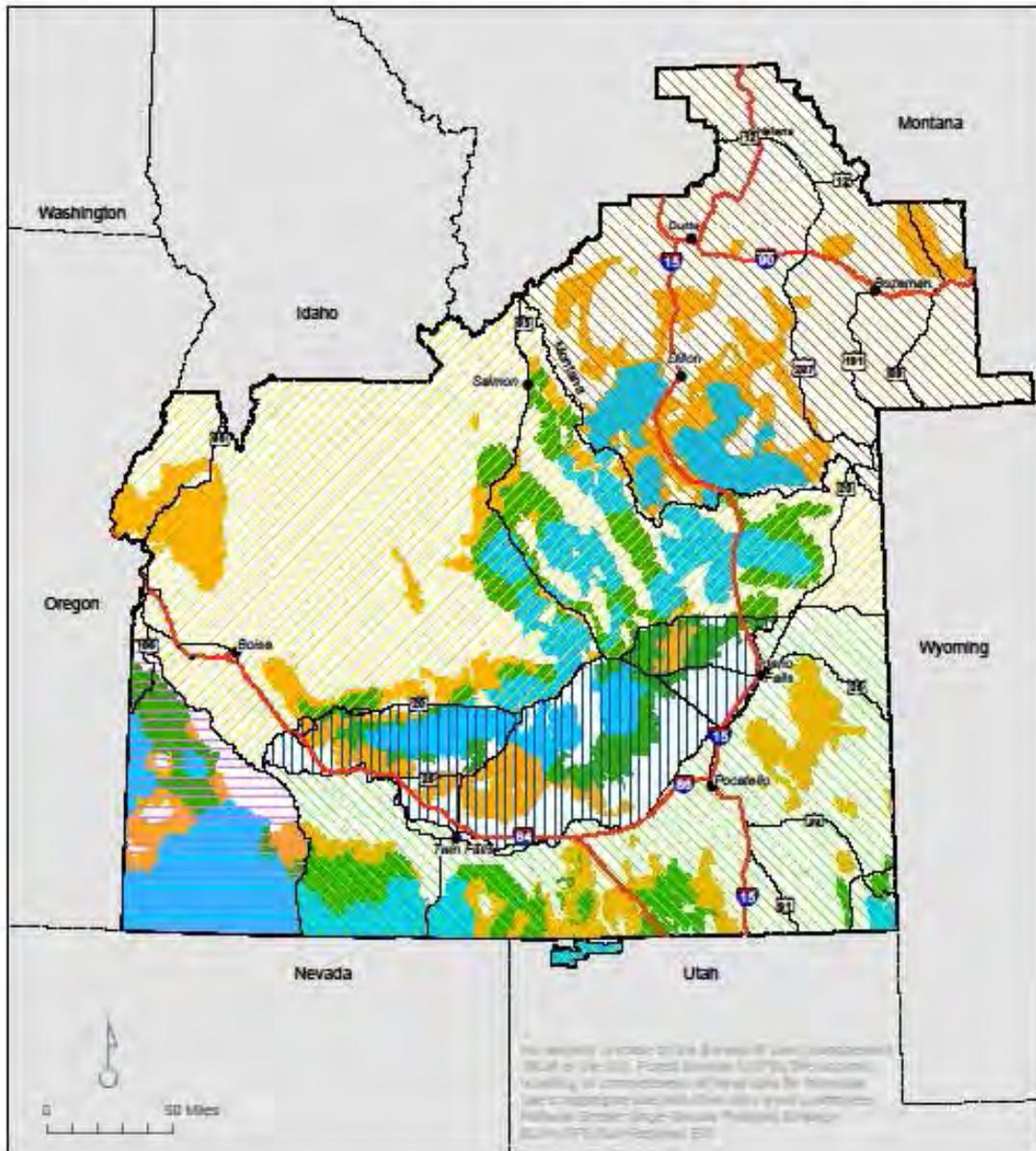
Core Management Zones in Idaho where across the border Wyoming identifies General management areas. There are some similar minor concerns with Utah. Core zones in Idaho and Priority areas in Nevada and Oregon largely match across the boundary and address the same allocation management in those areas.

Other Montana BLM planning efforts have incorporated mitigation and adaptive management approaches. The direction in the Southwestern Montana portion of the Final EIS for these components will differ from Idaho in order to maintain consistency with other Montana BLM plans.

VI. AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

None.

Map 1: Conservation Areas and Management Zones

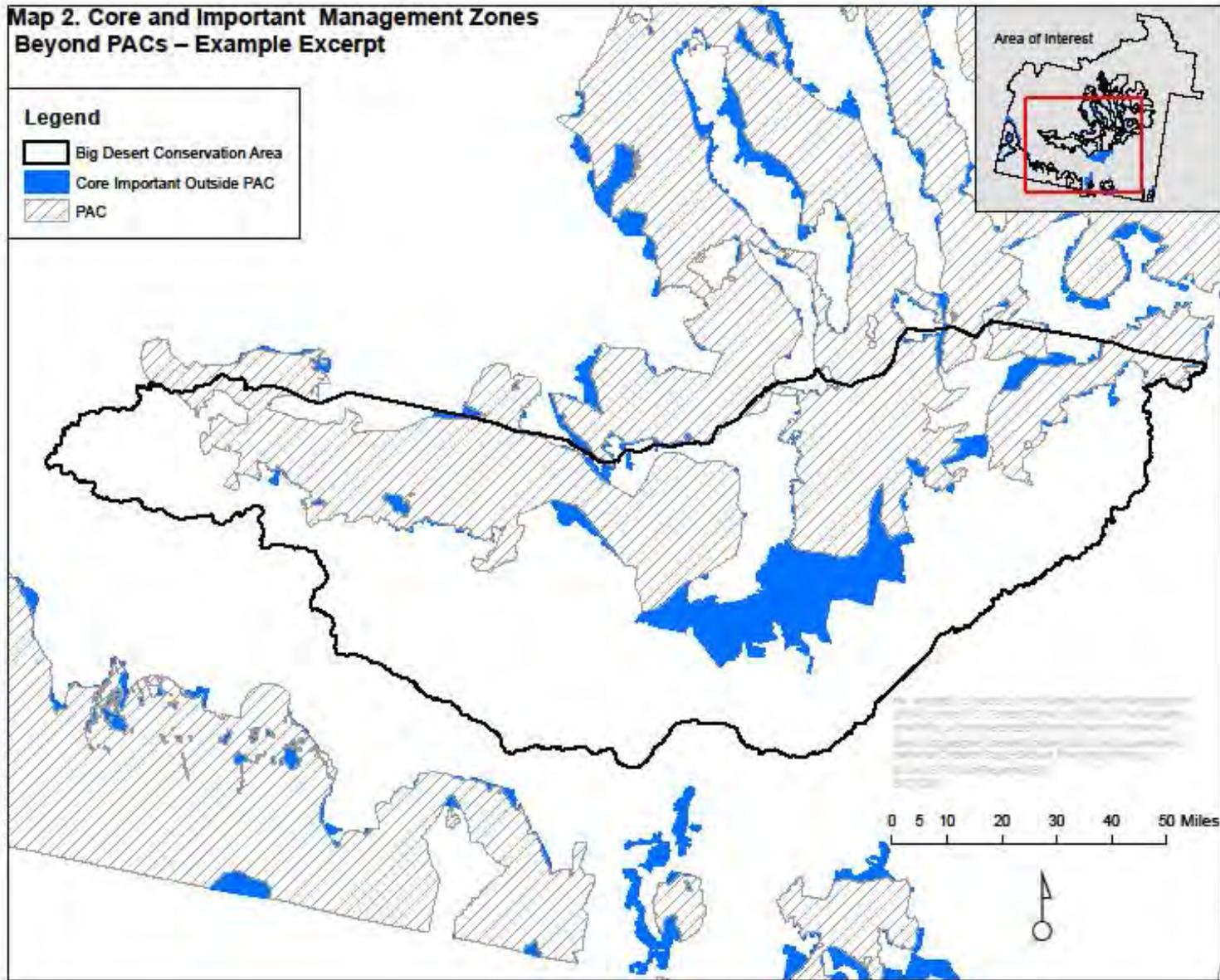


Conservation Area

-  Idaho Desert Conservation Area
-  Idaho Mountain Valleys Conservation Area
-  Idaho Southern Conservation Area
-  Idaho West Owyhee Conservation Area
-  SW Montana Conservation Area

Management Zone

-  Core
-  Important
-  General
-  Analysis Boundary



**Table 1. Allocation/Disturbance Checklist
Idaho and SW Montana EIS - Administrative Draft Proposed Plan**

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
Solar/Wind Energy Development ROW	All Core ³ : (Core is analogous to Priority) Consistent with Priority guidance.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged consistent with Priority.	
	All General: Inconsistent	
High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROW ⁴	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance with very limited exception opportunity.	General areas are not identified as avoidance; however, required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions would be required and would limit and eliminate impacts to the limited GRSG habitat contained in this zone (<5% of leks and males).
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance with limited exception opportunity as long as population numbers and habitat availability do not engage an adaptive management trigger. If an adaptive trigger is engaged even more limitation to the exceptions would apply the same as Core.	
	All General: Inconsistent with guidance, Consistent with COT reduction of threats.	
Other (Minor) ROWs and Land Use Authorizations/Permits	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All Important: Consistent with Priority guidance.	
	All General: Consistent with General guidance.	
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Including Geothermal)	Idaho Core: Inconsistent with guidance. Montana Core: Consistent with Rocky Mountain guidance.	Idaho: Oil and Gas: Core areas with low to no potential, which is most of the subregion, are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential, which are

³ Idaho portion of the plan identifies three (3) management delineations – Core, Important and General. Core areas are contained within the boundaries of the USFWS Priority Areas for Conservation (PAC) and make up roughly 66% of those areas. The remaining 33% of the PACs and other areas beyond the PACs are identified as Important Management Areas. This further refinement of management areas is **NOT** consistent with the NPT guidance. The Montana portion of the plan identifies two (2) management delineations – Core and General. Important direction does not apply to any areas in SW Montana. Direction for SW Montana in Core and General management areas as the same as for Idaho unless noted separately in the table.

⁴ Coordination across state boundaries for utility corridors is yet to be completed.

Allocations/ Disturbance	Consistent with NPT Table	Rationale for Change
	All Important: Consistent with General guidance, includes additional restrictions to development.	within WAFWA MZ II and adjacent to Wyoming General areas are open, consistent with Wyoming General management (160k acres). Geothermal: Core areas with low or no potential are closed. Core areas with moderate to high potential are open. All Core, Important and General areas would implement required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce and eliminate impacts to GRSG. Reasonably foreseeable development scenarios show limited, if any, development likely in the next 10-15 years. This direction is consistent with the COT in reducing the minimal threat that is present.
	All General: Consistent	
Non-Energy Leasable Materials	All Core: Consistent All Important: Consistent All General: Consistent	All Known Phosphate Leasing Areas are outside of GRSG identified Core and Important management zones.
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)	All Core: Consistent with Priority guidance. All Important: Consistent with General guidance with stringent limitation criteria. All General: Consistent	Core areas are closed to new mineral material site authorizations and open for sales from within existing sites subject to required design features and seasonal timing restrictions. Important and General areas are open to new mineral material site authorizations subject to required design features, lek buffers and timing restrictions to reduce impacts to GRSG. No differentiation was made between free use and commercial use permits with regard to use of existing sites.
Disturbance (3 %) WY only (5%)	Idaho Core: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. Montana Core: Consistent with other Montana plans. All Important: Consistent with scale of application, Inconsistent with specific biologically significant unit identified. All General: N/A	A 3% disturbance cap is applied to seasonal habitats of highest concern - nesting and wintering habitat - within Core and Important Management Areas.

Table 2. ADPP Response to FWS Comments

USFWS Concern	Resolution
Consistency across subregional boundaries	The BLM and FS have coordinated across subregional boundaries to further develop consistent approaches, or to clearly describe the rationale for the threat response where inconsistencies exist. Allocation level decisions are consistent across subregional boundaries; some conservation measures vary based on relative threats and habitat conditions/usage.
Disturbance Caps and no unmitigated loss	Disturbance caps have been included and further description of no net unmitigated loss has been included as part of the ADPP. A consistent approach and scale to measuring disturbance has been included with emphasis on seasonal habitats of concern in the Idaho and southwestern Montana subregion.
Adaptive Management Hard and Soft Triggers and an Implementation Team	Adaptive management hard and soft triggers as well as an Implementation Team to help assess these triggers in coordination with the State of Idaho has been included in the ADPP.
Lek buffers and noise protective measures	Buffers and their applicability have been further refined and defined in conjunction with FWS as have appropriate noise protective measures which are now included as required design features.
Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring	These monitoring components have been further described at the broad, mid and fine scales and are included in the ADPP.
Mitigation	Additional description of how mitigation is included as components of project proposals and stepped forward through use of the state mitigation strategies is included in the ADPP. Decision to develop a mitigation board and develop a state specific mitigation strategy consistent with and in conjunction with WAFWA MZ strategies is also included in the ADPP.
Certainty of Effective Implementation (specificity)	Management actions and conservation measures have been refined to more clearly articulate the intent and direction to support the specificity needed by the Service to ensure certainty of implementation.
Impacts Analysis	Work is ongoing to augment the initial impacts analysis described in the Draft EIS. Additional work is being completed to delineate effects with specific regard to priority areas for conservation and the identified threats. This work will be complete in the Final EIS.
Priority Areas for Conservation and Mapping	Further refinement of the GRSG management areas, consistent with the COT and biologically meaningful units has occurred in coordination with the State of Idaho, FWS, BLM and FS. This management area delineation is a foundational component of the Idaho and southwestern Montana ADPP.
Infrastructure	Further refinement and definition of infrastructure criteria with respect to effects on GRSG habitat has been included and describes the application of these criteria in relation to COT objectives in the ADPP.
Wildfire/Invasives	The ADPP includes application of the Wildfire and Invasives Assessment process and other work developed by the Fire and Invasives Assessment Team to address fire concerns. In addition several components of the Idaho State Plan have been incorporated into the ADPP which further prioritize and address wildfire concerns.

ID/swMT GRSG EIS
Section 7 Consultation Coordination
Meeting Minutes
20 August 2014

1. Attending: Scott Hoefler (BLM), Mark Robertson, Barb Schmidt (FWS), Chris Colt, Doug Middlebrook, Katherine Malengo (FS); Absent: Bruce Davidson (FS), Anna Halford (BLM)
2. Discussion of Slickspot Peppergrass (LEPA): The final Conservation Agreement has been approved and is expected to be signed by early next week.
3. Discussion of Grizzly: we are lacking spatial data on current distribution of grizzly; would like this information to overlay with sage-grouse habitat. Discussed the initial determination, need to review overlap of distribution and sage-grouse habitat; may affect, not likely to adversely affect call may be most appropriate. Doug has started looking into this species, Katherine will take over and finish the analysis. Chris will talk to FS Biologist who is on the Grizzly Recovery Team to get best contact person for distribution mapping. Mark/Barb will talk to East Idaho Field Office FWS to give them a heads up on the project and this species and get some initial feedback.
4. Discussion of yellow-billed cuckoo: Riparian gallery forest species – some overlap with sage-grouse habitat. Discussion about potential effects; based on no specific management actions in riparian gallery forest habitat and existing protection measures for riparian areas the initial view was no adverse impacts. Chris and Scott will research existing LUP BAs and other for language describing protections and how management actions will not impact YBCU. Mark/Barb will talk to East Idaho Field Office FWS to give them a heads up on the project and this species and get some initial feedback.
5. NOAA/NMFS: An initial letter was sent to NMFS and a response was received. Information from this letter was incorporated into the analysis. There is some overlap of GRSG habitat and designated critical habitat based on the 8th huc mapping Doug is working on, however, based on the scope of the management actions, we do not anticipate any adverse impacts to anadromous fish. Scott has been in contact with Bill Lind (NMFS) and will continue to communicate. Specifically, he will contact Bill and discuss the current “no effect” determination direction with the project. Chris will provide Scott an example notification letter from the Oregon project.
6. Timeline: Expect to have draft Biological Assessment completed by 17 September, 2014. Will provide to FWS for informal review. They will then have ~2-3 weeks to review and let BLM/FS know of any concerns with determinations and analysis methodology. We will discuss and decide on FWS informal review dates as we get closer based on project timeline and other FWS logistical considerations. Then we will finalize the BA and provide to FWS.
7. Next meeting: Wednesday 8/27/14 @ 10:00 MDT

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2014 1:45 PM
To: Joan Suther; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Quincy Bahr; Brent Ralston
Subject: GRSG GBR FedFam Mtg - Attachment A
Attachments: Attachment A-GRSG GBR Fed Family Mtg PDX_2014_08_19-21_Reviewed_Distribute.docx

Importance: High

Good Friday Afternoon to Joan, Joe, Quincy and Brent!!

I wanted to share with you our Attachment A from the Federal Family Meeting notes. This Attachment summarizes the action items that we need to follow up on from our meeting. The notes, themselves, are not ready to be distributed as Sarah is still reviewing and commenting on the 29 pages of them....they should be ready in a week or two.

Please do not distribute Attachment A any further than your desks at this point. They may change or be modified as a result of the Rocky Mountain Meeting next week....but I wanted you all to think about what we have left to do on this list. The Solicitors and the WO have many of the tasks to follow up on.

Quincy.....your name comes up a lot as well!!

I am not sure if we are going to distribute this list at the Rocky Mtn. FFM, or just use it as points of discussion....haven't heard yet.

I won't be on the PL Tuesday call for the next two weeks – and neither will David. I am sure he will have someone else from EMPSi open up the meetings and take notes – so plan on having the calls. Next week we will be in Denver at the Rocky Mtn. FFM, and the next week in Washington to do a roll-up of the roll-up meetings. I think that is where the rubber is going to meet the road.

If anything REALLY interesting comes up.....I will send you all out an e-mail and let you know.

Carry on with all the great things you are accomplishing. Have a great week-end!

Lauren



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
All	Land Tenure / Retention	<p>The following land retention policy text should be included into the ADPP for land retention and related management actions should be adjusted as appropriate:</p> <p>"Lands classified as priority habitat and general habitat (or habitat classification appropriate for the sub-region) for Greater Sage-Grouse will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation benefit to the Greater Sage-Grouse or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse."</p>	PMs to incorporate as written into ADPP	ADPP
All	Vegetation Management/ Prescribed Fire	<p>Incorporate the following language regarding when fire would be used as a vegetation treatment tool for areas with <12" precip.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using prescribed fire in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat unless evaluation of site-specific conditions demonstrate that there would be a net benefit for sage-grouse. If prescribed fire is used in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, include an analysis in the NEPA document that indicates how Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives will be addressed and met by its use, why alternative techniques were not selected, and a risk assessment to address how potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat would be minimized. • If prescribed fire is to be used at the implementation level, at a minimum, the burn plan will indicate how Conservation Objective Team/land use plan objectives would be addressed and met and why alternative techniques were not selected. • Avoid prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment in Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species, or in areas with a potential for post-fire exotic annual dominance. However, after other treatment opportunities have been explored and as site-specific variables allow, prescribed fire could be used in these areas to meet specific fuels objectives that would maintain, improve, or restore Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in 	<p>Lauren to consolidate language</p> <p>PMs to incorporate into ADPP</p>	ADPP



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
		<p>PPMAs (e.g., creation of fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer reduction treatments, used as a component with other treatment methods to combat annual grasses and restore native plant communities).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality. 		
All	Disturbance	All ADPPs should refer to the “disturbance cap” instead of disturbance threshold.	PMs to incorporate into ADPPs	ADPP
All	Conifers/Veg Management?	Incorporate the following common goal for conifer removal: “Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied sage-grouse habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and tools like VDTT and the FIAT report will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated.”	PMs to incorporate as written into ADPPs	ADPP
All	Fire	<p>Ensure ADPPs discuss the current authority for temporary closures as a travel management tool to reduce fire ignition risk.</p> <p>“In PPMA and PGMA, temporary closures will be considered in accordance with 43 CFR subpart 8364 (Closures and Restrictions); 43 CFR subpart 8351 (Designated National Area); 43 CFR subpart 6302 (Use of Wilderness Areas, Prohibited Acts, and Penalties); 43 CFR subpart 8341 (Conditions of Use).</p> <p>Temporary closure or restriction orders under these authorities are enacted at the discretion of the authorized officer to resolve management conflicts and protect persons, property, and public lands and resources. Where an authorized officer determines that off-highway vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources, the affected areas shall be immediately closed</p>	PMs to verify this is discussed in Chapter 2.	ADPP



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
		to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence. (43 CFR 8341.2) A closure or restriction order should be considered only after other management strategies and alternatives have been explored. The duration of temporary closure or restriction orders should be limited to 24 months or less; however, certain situations may require longer closures and/or iterative temporary closures. This may include closure of routes or areas.”		
All	Fluid Minerals	Exemptions related to fluid minerals - All ADPPs will consider NPT Guidance	PMS	ADPP
All	Consistency	Mitigation team will review buffer sizes between ADPPs to validate the science and provide recommendations for consistent buffers.	Frank/Science Team (USGS)	9/8/14
All	Consistency	Disturbance and Monitoring Sub-team to continue work on disturbance framework striving for a simple formula.	Frank / Vicki / Gordon	9/8/14
All	Consistency	Develop a template for priority management/habitat to PAC crosswalk. This would include a map showing an overlay of priority habitat/management and general habitat/management with the PACs.	Kathy and Matt	9/22/14
All	Clarity	Define loose language (e.g., “if technically and economic feasible...” what is technical feasibility?)	Ed	
All	Consistency	Grazing management and monitoring is not consistent across plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review rangeland health science (e.g. Connelly vs. Coates). Is it appropriate to cite this current science or reference best available science to allow for flexibility to adjust as we learn more? Ensure grazing programs have an objective statement about maintaining or improving sagebrush habitat in order to provide an intent for standards and monitoring. 	SOL	ASAP
All	Fluids? RDFs? Energy Development ?	Develop a table summarizing existing conditions for development and for RFDs for Great Basin by population.	Matt, Frank, BLM PMs	9/8/14



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
All	Fluid minerals	Consider incorporating the language from the Lander plan that addresses the approach of prioritizing fluid mineral development outside PACs.	Matt to provide language to SOL for review. PMs incorporate into ADPPs.	ADPP
Oregon	ROW and mining	Review general habitat for infrastructure and mining management direction in population #3 I	Jerry and Joan	8/21/14
All	Habitat maps	BLM State offices should work with USFWS, the Solicitor's Office, and internally when/if they get new maps from their respective State counterparts that identify new or redefined boundaries for GRSB habitat.	BLM State Offices (PMs?) and SOL	On-going
Utah	Restoration	ADPP should include the following language regarding restoration: "Restoration needs to occur in areas where birds are able and likely to re-settle or the ratio of restoration must necessarily increase. One option could be restoration of habitat adjacent to existing populations."	Quincy add to ADPP	ADPP
Utah	ROWs / Corridors	Coordinate with USFWS, the Solicitor's Office, and internally regarding designation of new energy corridors.	Quincy and SOL	ADPP
Utah	Habitat maps	State of Utah has identified new areas that they are labeling as PACs. These new areas were not identified in the DEIS as non-habitat. Need to determine whether BLM can include these areas of non-habitat within newly identified Utah PACs into priority management (red areas on map within PACs).	SOL	ASAP
Utah	Clarity	Add paragraph to the ADPP that explains why 23,000 acres identified in the DEIS as PPMA? is now considered to be within PGMA	Quincy	ADPP
Utah	Policy	For mineral materials, leasable minerals, and non-energy minerals in PPMA, ADPP will consider not allowing expansion of existing mines within 4-miles of leks due to the sensitivity of the fragmented populations in Utah. USFWS to provide science to back it up.	Quincy and Pat	8/21
Utah	Coal Leasing Stipulations	SOL to counsel BLM on appropriateness of applying a 4-mile NSO buffer for coal mining.	SOL	ASAP
Idaho	Clarity	Provide short description of the rationale for three management zones; why those	Brent	ADPP



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
		three zones (and their corresponding management actions) make sense for all resource uses, not just fire; and how management decisions in those three zones meets NPT Guidance (for all threats).		
Idaho	Fluid minerals	The BLM and Forest Service approaches are different; revise for clarity or clearly articulate the reason for the different approaches.	Glen and Brent	ADPP
Idaho	Fluids Minerals	Determine if an area should be closed to oil and gas but open for geothermal because of potential.	SOL	ASAP



*Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting
August 19-21 / Portland, Oregon*

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Brent Ralston

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 9:53 AM
To: Joseph Adamski; Donald Major; Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: FA IB-2014-024: The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin 2014 Conference. November 5-7, 2014, at the Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho
Attachments: FA_IB2014024.pdf

fyi

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **SOEmail, BLM_ID** <blm_id_soemail@blm.gov>
Date: Thu, Sep 25, 2014 at 9:50 AM
Subject: Fwd: FA IB-2014-024: The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin 2014 Conference. November 5-7, 2014, at the Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho
To: Michael Morcom <mmorcom@blm.gov>, "Henry, Susanna M" <shenry@blm.gov>, Thomas Hayes <thayes@blm.gov>, Carol Salo <csalo@blm.gov>, Sylvia Graves <sgraves@blm.gov>, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>, Kurt Wiedenmann <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>, Terrian Wells <twells@blm.gov>, Paul Makela <pmakela@blm.gov>, Ethan Ellsworth <eellsworth@blm.gov>

This IB is addressed to State Directors. Fire and Aviation and Resource and Sciences share the lead.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Corporate, BLM_FA** <blm_fa_corporate@blm.gov>
Date: Thu, Sep 25, 2014 at 6:39 AM
Subject: FA IB-2014-024: The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin 2014 Conference. November 5-7, 2014, at the Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho
To: Jerome Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, BLM_CA Directives <blm_ca_directives@blm.gov>, BLM_NV_NVSO_Mailroom_Team <blm_nv_nvso_mailroom_team@blm.gov>, BLM_ID SOEmail <blm_id_soemail@blm.gov>, BLM_UT SO_Mail <blm_ut_so_mail@blm.gov>
Cc: "Ascherfeld, Sheri L" <sascherf@blm.gov>, BLM_FA_AD_Staff <blm_fa_ad_staff@blm.gov>, BLM_FA_NIFC_BLM <blm_fa_nifc_blm@blm.gov>

Questions or comments should be directed to the contact within the IB.

--

Transmitted by: Yesenia Ramirez-Gil, Mail and File Clerk



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Fire and Aviation
3833 S Development Ave
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354
<http://www.nifc.gov>



September 24, 2014

In Reply Refer To:
1112 (FA100) I

EMS Transmission 09/25/2014
Instruction Bulletin No. FA IB-2014-024

To: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Directors in Oregon, California, Nevada,
Idaho and Utah

From: Acting Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: *The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin* 2014
Conference. November 5-7, 2014, at the Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho

We are facing a critical juncture for public land management in the Great Basin as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decides whether to list the Greater Sage-grouse. The 2014 conference, *The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin*, brings together scientists, agency leaders, rangeland and fire managers and partners directly engaged in the management of sage-grouse habitat in light of rangeland wildfires.

The conference focuses on practical components for dealing with rangeland wildfires in the Great Basin. Speakers, panelists and moderators are individuals engaged in on-the-ground work in sagebrush habitat and/or fire operations. It is our intention to facilitate the diverse dialogue and honest communication necessary to develop innovative solutions to combat this escalating challenge.

We are already seeing policy shift as we allocate more resources to fires threatening sage-grouse habitat. As resource and fire management plans are updated to reflect this natural resource priority, we must develop policies and practices that eliminate some of the threats fire has on sage-steppe habitat. The conference provides a unique forum where we can look at the larger picture and learn from one another about what works and what doesn't.

Staff engaged in the direct management of sage-grouse habitat located in the priority Fire and Invasives Action Team (FIAT) states are strongly encouraged to attend. The conference is a major priority for the Department of the Interior as it shows our commitment to enhancing healthy habitat for sage-grouse.

Who Should Attend from BLM FIAT States:
State Directors
State and District Fire Management Officers

District Managers
Field Managers
Fire and Fuels Specialists
Appropriate Biologists

While we encourage all active partners to attend, space is limited so we are asking you limit your personal invitation to only 20 non BLM partners, federal, state or nonprofit, who you feel would best benefit from this conference. These could include: scientists or staff engaged in sagebrush-steppe management or research responsibilities within the Great Basin, conservation groups engaged in protecting sagebrush-steppe within the Great Basin, Rural Fire Departments, Rural Fire Protection Associations, ranchers and/or elected officials, from local county commissioners to statewide and national office-holders.

Registration, agenda and lodging information is available online at <http://fireandsagegrouse.nifc.gov/>. Questions or comments may be directed to 208-387-5457 or via email to sagegrouseandfire@blm.gov.

Signed by:
Ron Dunton
Acting Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Yesenia Ramirez-Gil
Mail and File Clerk

Distribution:
BLM_FA_AD_Staff
BLM_FA_NIFC_BLM

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 2:45 PM
To: Matthew Magaletti
Subject: RE: FW: Webinar with the States - Please Populate the following slides

So I pulled out the NPT guidance language – will you be adding that back in or do I need to?

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Magaletti, Matthew [<mailto:mmagalet@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 2:44 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: FW: Webinar with the States - Please Populate the following slides

Thank you Brent!

On Thu, Sep 25, 2014 at 4:17 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Here is a heads up on the meeting next Tuesday. I had updated the powerpoint with Idaho information.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Magaletti, Matthew [<mailto:mmagalet@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 1:23 PM
To: Quincy Bahr; Brent Ralston; Joan Suther; Melvin (Joe) Tague
Cc: Joseph Stout; Lauren Mermejo; Kathryn Stangl; Frank Quamen; Stephen Small; Vicki Herren; Stein, Glen -FS
Subject: Webinar with the States - Please Populate the following slides

Hello Great Basin Project Leads,

I apologize for the delay in getting these slides to you, but leadership finally gave us the "ok" to work with this version. As you are aware, the Great Basin Webinar is set for **Tuesday, September 30, 2014 from 12pm to 5pm EST** - Ed should be sending out an email invite with the webinar instructions shortly to your SDs and state Task Force representatives. Each BLM SD will have 30 minutes to discuss their ADPP's 5 slides. The first 3 slides will be populated by the NOC for you. As you will see in the PP presentation attached, Utah's first three slides have already been populated to give you a sense of the type of information that will be in those slides. By Friday, those slides for ID, OR, and NV will be populated. The states were given a list of questions to address (which you will see in the PP) and they also have 30 minutes. They were given the option to either populate their own slides or to verbally present their strategies.

What I need from all of you is to populate the two slides that list the program areas that address the COT Report Threats. In many cases, that threat may not exist in your planning area. If that the case, simply say "not a present and widespread threat." For those program areas that do pertain to the threats in your sub-region, simply state what allocation you are applying to both priority habitat management areas and general habitat management areas and any other information you feel is relevant to the audience. As you will see, the tables do not provide you with much space, so brevity is the key. So here is what I need:

Quincy: Populate tables on slides 13 and 14.

Brent: Populate tables on slides 21 and 22.

Joan: Populate tables on slides 29 and 30.

Joe: Populate tables on slides 37 and 38.

If you can send me back your slides by **COB Friday**, that would be excellent. If you need more time, just give me a call.

I really appreciate all your help in such as short time period.

Thanks,

--

Matthew Magaletti

Planning and Environmental Analyst

Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)

(202) 912-7085

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Matthew Magaletti

Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

DRAFT POWERPOINT
FOR REVIEW

National Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan Great Basin Region Federal and State Coordination Webinar

September 30, 2014

BLM - USFS
Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan



Meeting Objectives

- **Information Sharing:** Review and discuss the BLM sub-Regional (state level) plans and individual State plans for Greater Sage-Grouse conservation to understand the approaches and strategies employed in each state.
- **Clarification:** Identify key questions and information needed for the follow-up face-to-face meetings with the Task Force representatives.
- **Preparation:** Federal and State Coordination Meeting



Meeting Agenda

Welcome (5 minutes)

- *Neil Kornze, BLM Director;*
- *Noreen Walsh, USFWS*
- *Chris Iverson, Deputy Regional Forester;*
- *Virgil Moore, Idaho Department of Fish and Game Director;*
- *Jeremiah Reiman, Wyoming Natural Resource Policy Director*

Strategies common to all BLM/FS sub-regional Proposed Plans/FEISs (10 minutes)

- *Ed Roberson, BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning*

Similar proposed management direction found in each of the sub-regional Proposed Plans/FEISs (10 minutes)

- *Ed Roberson, BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning;*
- *Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director*



Meeting Agenda (Continued)

Individual Review of State & BLM/FS Administrative Conservation Strategies

(1 hour per state/sub-region, 4 hours max)

Nevada/California

- Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director;
- Chris Iverson, Deputy Regional Forester;
- _____, State of Nevada Rep.
- _____, State of California Rep.

Utah

- Juan Palma, BLM Utah State Director;
- Chris Iverson, Deputy Regional Forester;
- _____, State of Utah Rep.

Oregon

- Jerry Perez, BLM State Director
- _____, State of Oregon Rep.

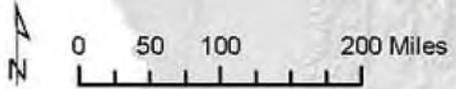
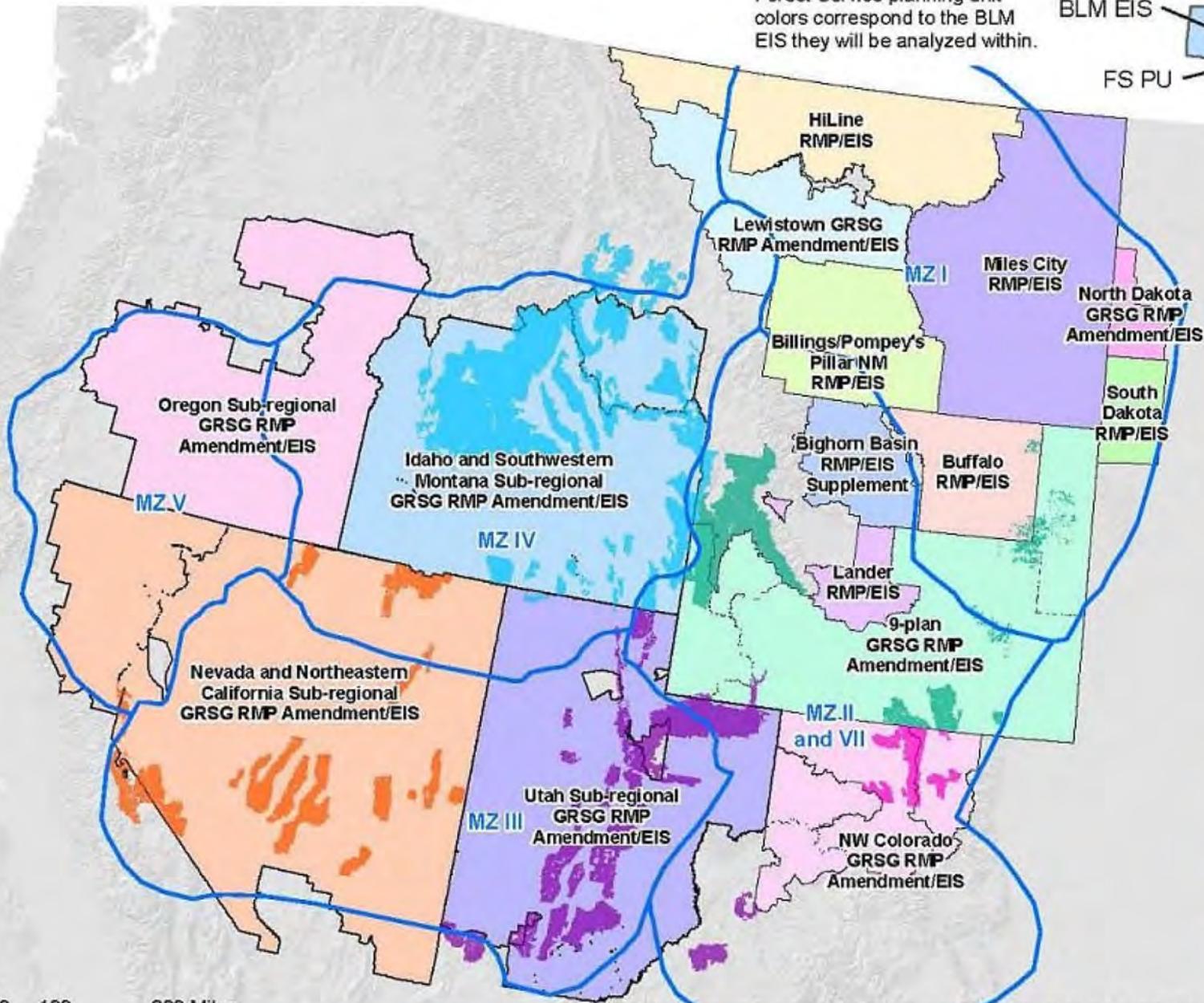
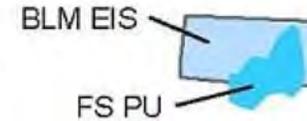
Idaho/Montana

- Tim Murphy, BLM State Director;
- Chris Iverson, Deputy Regional Forester;
- _____, State of Idaho Rep.
- _____, State of Montana Rep.



BLM USFS GRSG Planning Strategy Sub-region/EIS Boundaries

Forest Service planning unit colors correspond to the BLM EIS they will be analyzed within.



Bureau of Land Management, Wildlife Habitat Spatial Analysis Lab
 T:\OC\Wildlife\Projects\GRSG_WOConservationStrategy_CEA_2012\MXD\ProcessingData\FinalLUP_designations_Map_1_2013_DwightR...
 Lara Julijsson, Karla Mayne, Anthony Titolo & Fran...



Strategies common to all BLM/FS sub-regional Proposed Plans/FEISs

- Monitoring Framework
 - Disturbance Cap
- Mitigation Framework
- Adaptive Management Strategy



Similar proposed management direction found in each of the sub-regional Proposed Plans/FEISs

- Land tenure
 - Retention of Federal Lands
- Vegetation Management
 - Prescribed Fire and Post Fire Recovery
 - Conifer Removal
- Focusing developments outside of PACs
 - Infrastructure
- Habitat Management Area Nomenclature



Individual Review of State & BLM/FS Administrative Conservation Strategies

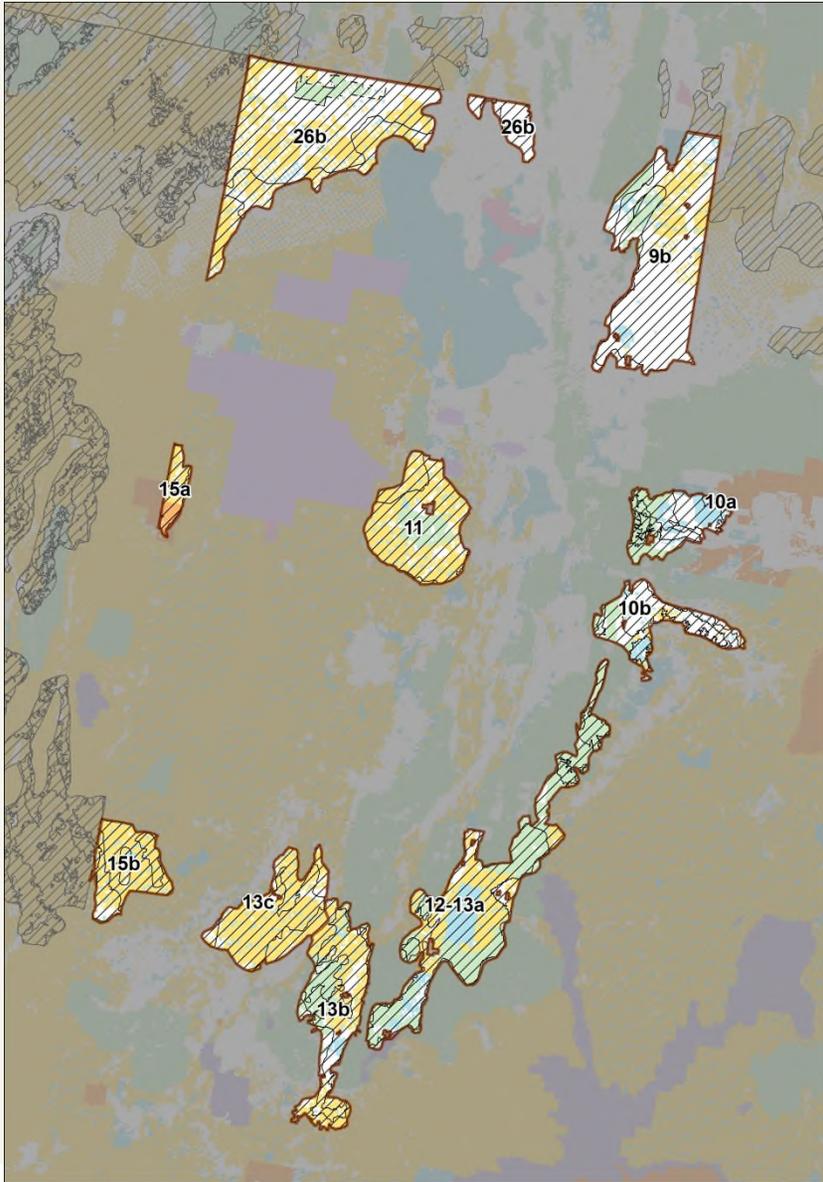
- Overview of Surface Management in the Planning Area.
- Planning Area Relationship to Range-Wide GRSG Habitat
- GRSG Present and Widespread Threats in the Planning Area
- Overview of the Draft Final EIS/Draft Proposed Plan Amendment/Revision



BLM/FS UTAH

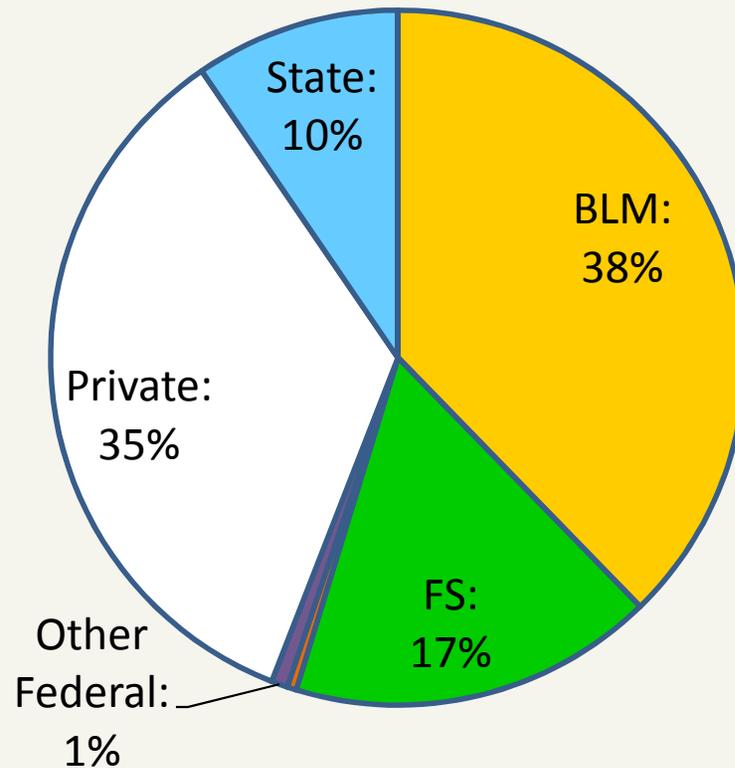


Utah Populations/PACs



*Over 7 Million Acres
of PACs*

PAC Surface Management:



Utah

Planning Area Relationship to Range-Wide GRSG Habitat

- GRSG habitat in the Utah planning area: 7,242,930 acres
- BLM/FS lands with GRSG habitat: 3,313,800 acres
- GRSG habitat in the Utah planning area comprises approximately 5 percent of habitat range-wide.
- Utah provides habitat for less than 5 percent of known male GRSG populations range-wide.



Utah COT-identified Threats

Pop #	Small Size	SB Elim.	Ag. Conv.	Fire	Conifers	Weeds	Energy	Mining	Infrast.	Grazing	Equids	Rec.	Urban.
9b				Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y
9c				Y	Y	Y	L	Y	Y			Y	Y
10a	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	
10b	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
11	Y			Y	L	Y	Y	Y	L		Y	L	
12	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
13a				Y	Y	Y			Y			Y	
13b			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	L	Y			Y	L
13c	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y
15a	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	
15b	Y			Y	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	
26b			Y	Y	Y	Y	L	Y	Y			Y	



Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan

BLM - USFS

Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Land Tenure <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Agriculture conversion, urbanization, and small size.	Both priority habitat management areas and general habitat management areas will be retained in Federal ownership.
Wildland Fire Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Fire	
Vegetation Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> conifer removal and weeds.	
Fluid Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Energy	<i>NPT Guidance: No Surface Occupancy in Priority, Open with Moderate Constraints in General.</i>
Solar/Wind ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Energy	<i>NPT Guidance: Exclusion in Priority, Avoidance in General.</i>
Wild Horses and Burros <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Free Roaming Equids	



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Mineral Materials <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
Non-energy Leasable Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Infrastructure	<i>NPT Guidance: Exclusion for major ROWs and Avoidance to minor ROWs in Priority, Avoidance for major ROWs and Open for minor ROWs in General.</i>
Recreation <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Recreation	
Livestock Grazing <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Grazing	
Disturbance and Adaptive Management	





State of Utah Conservation Strategy



- 1. What are the key elements of your state's conservation strategy?
- 2. Does your state strategy apply to state and private lands? If so, how would it be implemented (e.g., through an executive order, legislation, or voluntary conservation measures)?
- 3. How does your state strategy address mitigation, monitoring, and adaptive management?
- 4. What elements of your state's strategy has the USFWS supported and do they address the COT Report objectives?



Questions and Discussion



BLM/FS IDAHO & SW MT



Idaho/SW MT Populations/PACs

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



BLM - USFS
Sage-Grouse Planning Agency



Idaho Planning Area Relationship to Range-Wide GRSB Habitat

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Idaho/SW MT COT-identified Threats

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Land Tenure <i>Address COT Threats: Agriculture conversion, urbanization, and small size.</i>	Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas will be retained in Federal ownership.
Wildland Fire Management <i>Address COT Threats: Fire</i>	Priority Habitat Management Areas are the highest priority for suppression and rehabilitation activities. BLM and FS will support development of Rural Fire Protection Associations and include in suppression activities. BLM & Forest Service will complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Assessments with partners.
Vegetation Management <i>Address COT Threats: conifer removal and weeds.</i>	Habitat Management Objectives are identified for GRSG habitat which include decadal treatment objectives for conifer (juniper) removal and annual grass treatments. BLM & Forest Service will complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Assessments with partners to identify areas of concern for weeds and invasive species and develop management strategies to address.
Fluid Minerals <i>Address COT Threats: Energy</i>	Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas are subject to No Surface Occupancy, General Habitat Management Areas are Open with GRSG constraints.
Solar/Wind ROWs <i>Address COT Threats: Energy</i>	Solar and Wind Development are Excluded in Priority Habitat Management Areas, Avoided in Important Habitat Management Areas and Open in General Habitat Management Areas.
Wild Horses and Burros <i>Address COT Threats: Free Roaming Equids</i>	No expansion of herd management areas would be allowed in Priority Habitat Management Areas. Manage Herd Management Areas to Appropriate Management Levels (AML). Incorporate habitat management objectives into herd management plans.



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Mineral Materials <u>Address COT Threats:</u> <i>Mining</i>	<p>Priority Habitat Management Areas are closed to new site authorizations. Existing sites are open subject to required design features, and seasonal timing restrictions.</p> <p>Important Habitat Management Areas are Open to new site authorizations subject to criteria minimizing ore eliminating effects to GRSG and required design features, seasonal timing restrictions appropriate lek buffers.</p> <p>General Habitat Management Areas are Open to new site authorizations subject to required design features, seasonal timing restrictions and appropriate lek buffers.</p>
Non-energy Leasable Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> <i>Mining</i>	<p>Priority Habitat Management Areas are Closed to leasing.</p> <p>Important Habitat Management Areas are Open to leasing subject to GRSG and standard stipulations.</p> <p>General Habitat Management Areas are Open to leasing subject to GRSG and standard leasing stipulations.</p>
ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> <i>Infrastructure</i>	<p>Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas are Avoidance for both major and minor ROWs.</p> <p>General Habitat Management Areas are Open for major and minor ROWs.</p>
Recreation <u>Address COT Threats:</u> <i>Recreation</i>	<p>Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas no new construction of Recreation sites unless there is no impact to GRSG.</p>
Livestock Grazing <u>Address COT Threats:</u> <i>Grazing</i>	<p>Incorporate habitat management objectives into livestock grazing permits. Prioritize Priority Habitat Management Areas for permit adjustment when not meeting Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines.</p>
Disturbance and Adaptive Management	<p>The plan includes a 3% Disturbance Cap in Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas.</p> <p>The plan includes adaptive management soft and hard triggers for both population and habitat and includes responses associated with engagement of a soft or hard trigger.</p>





State of Idaho & Montana Conservation Strategies

- 1. What are the key elements of your state's conservation strategy?
- 2. Does your state strategy apply to state and private lands? If so, how would it be implemented (e.g., through an executive order, legislation, or voluntary conservation measures)?
- 3. How does your state strategy address mitigation, monitoring, and adaptive management?
- 4. What elements of your state's strategy has the USFWS supported and do they address the COT Report objectives?



Questions and Discussion



BLM OREGON



Oregon Populations/PACs

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



BLM - USFS
Sage-Grouse Planning and Monitoring



Oregon Planning Area Relationship to Range-Wide GRSB Habitat

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Oregon COT-identified Threats

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Land Tenure <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Agriculture conversion, urbanization, and small size.	Both priority habitat management areas and general habitat management areas will be retained in Federal ownership.
Wildland Fire Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Fire	
Vegetation Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> conifer removal and weeds.	
Fluid Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Energy	<i>NPT Guidance: No Surface Occupancy in Priority, Open with Moderate Constraints in General.</i>
Solar/Wind ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Energy	<i>NPT Guidance: Exclusion in Priority, Avoidance in General.</i>
Wild Horses and Burros <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Free Roaming Equids	



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Mineral Materials <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
Non-energy Leasable Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Infrastructure	<i>NPT Guidance: Exclusion for major ROWs and Avoidance to minor ROWs in Priority, Avoidance for major ROWs and Open for minor ROWs in General.</i>
Recreation <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Recreation	
Livestock Grazing <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Grazing	
Disturbance and Adaptive Management	





State of Oregon Conservation Strategy



- 1. What are the key elements of your state's conservation strategy?
- 2. Does your state strategy apply to state and private lands? If so, how would it be implemented (e.g., through an executive order, legislation, or voluntary conservation measures)?
- 3. How does your state strategy address mitigation, monitoring, and adaptive management?
- 4. What elements of your state's strategy has the USFWS supported and do they address the COT Report objectives?



Questions and Discussion



BLM/FS NEVADA



Nevada Populations/PACs

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



BLM - USFS
Sage-Grouse Planning and Monitoring



Nevada Planning Area Relationship to Range-Wide GRSB Habitat

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Nevada COT-identified Threats

**PENDING
NOC WILL
POPULATE**



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Land Tenure <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Agriculture conversion, urbanization, and small size.	Both priority habitat management areas and general habitat management areas will be retained in Federal ownership.
Wildland Fire Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Fire	
Vegetation Management <u>Address COT Threats:</u> conifer removal and weeds.	
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Wild Horses and Burros <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Free Roaming Equids	



Overview of Draft Proposed Plan Amendment

Program	BLM & FS Draft Proposed Plan
Mineral Materials <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
Non-energy Leasable Minerals <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Mining	<i>NPT Guidance: Closed in Priority, Open in General.</i>
ROWs <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Infrastructure	<i>NPT Guidance: Exclusion for major ROWs and Avoidance to minor ROWs in Priority, Avoidance for major ROWs and Open for minor ROWs in General.</i>
Recreation <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Recreation	
Livestock Grazing <u>Address COT Threats:</u> Grazing	
Disturbance and Adaptive Management	





State of Nevada & California Conservation Strategies

- 1. What are the key elements of your state's conservation strategy?
- 2. Does your state strategy apply to state and private lands? If so, how would it be implemented (e.g., through an executive order, legislation, or voluntary conservation measures)?
- 3. How does your state strategy address mitigation, monitoring, and adaptive management?
- 4. What elements of your state's strategy has the USFWS supported and do they address the COT Report objectives?



Questions and Discussion



Brent Ralston

From: Timothy Murphy
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2014 11:46 AM
To: Foss, Jeffery
Cc: Peter Ditton; Kathy Mondor; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: [Update] Hold--Sage Grouse State Director Update

Would greatly appreciate your coverage at the 10/8 session

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 25, 2014, at 9:58 AM, "Foss, Jeffery" <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:

Tim

Earlier this AM I asked a similar question of Ed as to what is planned for upcoming sage grouse meetings for State Directors.

Brent and I are doing our best to track what is being scheduled but the communication has been limited and lots of moving parts.

If you want, I can attend the October 8th meeting but I do need to be back in Boise by the morning of October 9th as Carol and I have a long scheduled trip to Jackson Hole we are taking from afternoon of October 9 and will be back in the office after the Columbus Day holiday, Oct 14.

Hope your time away has been restful.

Jeff

On Thu, Sep 25, 2014 at 9:20 AM, Timothy Murphy <tmurphy@blm.gov> wrote:
GB related calls and meetings are a bit of a challenge to track so please take a close look. If Ed responds to Juan that should help with current scheduling. From Ed's note the Sept 30 Great Basin webinar will dominate the day 10-3 MT. Kathy, please ask IT to have our large monitor connected to a PC and speaker (mic or phone too if that is needed). Please inquire with Cally, Virgil, Dustin about joining us. I gave a heads-up to Cally.

Oct 8 is the face to face with states. GB meeting is morning. Location Tba.
Jeff, I plan to stay with my plan to travel to CDA (too many prior cancellations).

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Palma, Juan" <jpalma@blm.gov>
Date: September 23, 2014 at 2:58:59 PM MDT
To: "Roberson, Edwin" <eroberso@blm.gov>
Cc: Don Simpson <dsimpson@blm.gov>, Amy Lueders <alueders@blm.gov>,

Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov>, Ruth L Welch <rwelch@blm.gov>, Timothy M Murphy <tmurphy@blm.gov>, Jerome Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, "Ellis, Steven A" <sellis@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: [Update] Hold--Sage Grouse State Director Update

Ed,

I know you have a 100 things going on all at once, but I want to make sure I do not disappoint you by spacing out an important meeting that either I need to prepare for or need to attend.

I'm hearing (can you or your staff help me confirm) of a few meetings upcoming for sage-grouse:

- 1:00 MDT Friday (9/26) meeting for State Directors with WO/DOI discussing policies to apply for the GRSG sub-regions - Do you want me at this meeting? Are there materials or an invite that have been sent out?
- Webinars for State Directors to brief the States on the ADPPs (September 30) - about 25 minutes for SDs to present the BLM and FS ADPPs from a 4-5 slide PowerPoint, followed by 30 minutes from the States to present the state's conservation efforts.
- Webinar for the Great Basin on September 30th
- Webinar for the Rocky Mountain on October 3rd.
- I'm hearing that the Governor's Task Force meeting on October 8-9 would not include the State Directors, but just the WO and Departmental staff.

I may have not captured all the various meeting dates and times and the expectation for me at these meetings, and so forth. Will there be a conference call to let me know what is expected of me at these various meetings.

Also, how and from whom will I hear that the Utah issues have been either resolved or not. Is the expectation that I resolve the Utah issues here in Utah or is someone working at some orbiting sphere above me solving some of these issues?

Thanks.

-Juan

On Fri, Sep 19, 2014 at 3:29 PM, Roberson, Edwin <eroberso@blm.gov> wrote:
Dear Sage-Grouse State Directors,

I wanted to catch you all up on some activities that have occurred since our two federal family roll-up meetings and evolving plans for our meetings with the states to discuss our plans. I have put a hold notice on all of your calendars for a proposed conference call next Friday and 3 pm Eastern Daylight Time. I will provide additional information next week about the call but wanted to set a placeholder now. I also wanted to provide you some information before the call.

First, I want to let you know that our national sage-grouse team spent 2.5 days here in DC working through the action items and decisions from the roll-up meetings. In this regard, we are making progress on some of the key consistency areas--adaptive management, disturbance, buffers, livestock grazing, no net

unmitigated loss, transmission corridors, ACECs, conservation summaries, cumulative effects analysis, etc. I will be meeting with Noreen Walsh, Chris Iverson and Jim Lyons next Tuesday afternoon to get their feedback on the issues and approaches. Then we will brief Neil, Steve and you all on where we are before we meet with the states.

Regarding the proposed meetings with the states, there has been a refinement of the plans since we met in Portland and Denver. Jim has worked with Virgil Moore on a proposal to have two webinars instead of two face to face meetings that you all would need to attend. One webinar would cover the Great Basin plans and one for the Rocky Mountains. The Great Basin webinar would be held on Tuesday, September 30th 12-5 PM EST and the Rocky Mountain webinar Friday, October 3rd from 12-5PM EST. The Sage Grouse Team is working on the webinar information and will provide that to you next week. We are hoping for (and counting on) you all to participate as you have been the primary spokesperson for your plans with the Governor's office and it only makes sense that you provide the overview of your plans.

The face-to-face meeting with the States are proposed to follow the Governors' Sage-Grouse Task Force meeting October 7th and 8th. With your busy schedules we will not be requesting that you attend these face to face meetings but if you would like to you are more than welcome. We are working with the same hotel where the Task Force meeting is being held to secure the same meeting room the WGA has secured as well as a block of rooms. The Great Basin meeting would be on the afternoon of the 8th from 1:30 - 5:30 pm and the Rocky Mountain meeting 9-1PM. The location of these meetings is TBD.

As you will see below from Noreen's email, FWS is having an ESA webinar on October 2nd, which will affect our dates. We are working on firming up the dates, agenda, attendees and other logistics, but hope this helps you with logistics and the next steps ahead. I will keep you posted as we move forward. Thanks, Ed

From: Noreen Walsh [mailto:noreen_walsh@fws.gov]
Subject: GRSG: invitation to 10/2 meeting/webinar on ESA policy

Dear Sage-grouse Task Force Members,

As you know, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is currently working on a status review for the greater sage-grouse leading to our 2015 decision. The status review follows the process outlined in Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and must address a

number of scientific and related policy issues. We would like to take this opportunity to provide to our state and federal partners an overview of the ESA status review process and related policy issues. We will cover these policy issues as background, so the content of the policy presentations will not be specific to the greater sage-grouse.

We will be hosting this meeting in the Mountain-Prairie Regional Office in Lakewood, Colorado and online through a webinar. You and your staff are welcome to join either in person or via webinar.

During the course of this one day meeting, we will address:

- The Endangered Species Act (ESA) Status Review Process

- Potentially Relevant ESA Policies (the basics of the policies, how they are applied under the ESA, frequently asked questions about the policy)
 - Listable Entity and Distinct Population Segment (DPS)
 - Significant Portion of the Range (SPR)
 - Foreseeable Future
 - Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts (PECE) when Making Listing Decisions

- Overview of the Service's approach to the greater sage-grouse status review

DATE: **October 2, 2014**

TIME: 9:00 am MT – 4:00 pm MT

LOCATION: Mountain Prairie Regional Office (1st Floor, Eagle Room B),

134 Union Blvd

Lakewood CO 80228

WEBINAR:[1] <http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?sigKey=mymeetings&i=443154588&p=LEADER&t=c>

PHONE: 877-357-9157 (code: 996-0360)

We greatly appreciate your commitment to greater sage-grouse conservation and your interest in the 2015 status review. Please feel free to circulate the invitation to your interested staff, and encourage people to join the webinar in common locations so we don't run out of connection capability.

An identical invitation has been sent to sage-grouse state wildlife agency directors.

Please contact Nicole Alt (303-236-4213) with any questions.

Best regards,

Noreen

Noreen Walsh

Regional Director

Mountain-Prairie Region

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

--

Jeff Foss

Deputy State Director- Resources, Idaho BLM

1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709

208-373-3800

jfoss@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Havlina, Douglas
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 4:34 PM
To: Vanessa Stepanek; Adamski, Joseph; Andrew Johnson; Bobo, Matthew; Bradley Washa; Bridget Clayton; Clinton McCarthy; Craig Goodell; Crane, Mace; David Repass; Dawn M Davis; Doug Havlina; Earl (Tom) Rinkes; Erin Jones; Frank Quamen; Gina Ramos; Glen Burkhardt; Gordon Toevs; Herren, Vicki; Ielmini, Michael -FS; Jason Pyron; Jay Kerby; Jeanne Chambers; Jeremy Maestas; Johanna Munson; John Carlson; John Wilson; Jolie Pollet; Karen Prentice; Kenneth Collum; Kit Muller; Krista Gollnick; Lauren Mermejo; Laurie -FS Kurth; Louis Brueggeman; Major, Donald; Melvin Tague; Metzger, Timothy J -FS; Michael Pellant; Pamela Murdock; Peter Gower; Quincy Bahr; Ralston, Brent E; Randall Sharp; Rex McKnight; Sandra Gregory; Stephen Small; Suther, Joan M; tburcsu; Tom Rinkes; William Brown; Wuenschel, Amarina E -FS
Subject: FIAT call #3 notes and action items
Attachments: Call_3_Action Items.docx

attached.

Thanks, Doug



Bureau of Land Management

FIAT Info call minutes, action items

Call #3

9/23/2014

Folks Calling In: Mike Pellant, Karen Prentice, Tom Rinkes, Glen Burkhardt, John Wilson, Shawn Servoss, Verlin Smith, Wayne Wetzel, Louis Brueggeman, Mace Crane, Theresa Burcsu, Krista Gollnick-Waid, Dave Mueller, Andrew Johnson, Don Major, Paul Makela, Ethan ?, Joe Tague, Sandy Gregory, Craig Goodell, Joe Tague, Sandy Gregory, Laurie Kurth, Tim Metzger, Doug Havlina

Key Messages from FIAT call 3:

FIAT Team Updates:

- Central Oregon FIAT (Craig Goodell) – Craig is planning first meeting for next week in Prineville, and doing some GIS prep.
- Northern GB and Snake/Salmon/Beaverhead (Joe Adamski) – Getting data prepped and polling team members for meeting dates
- Southern Great Basin (Sandy Gregory) - Team is meeting Thursday. Exploring a template to document meetings and progress.
- Western Great Basin (Ken Collum) – Working with partners on Step 2

Program Lead Updates:

- Fuels Mgmt (Krista Gollnick-Waid) – Working to line up a geodatabase which would be complimentary to NFPORS to track the spatial data and feature classes of FIAT projects
- Fire Operations (Rex McKnight) – no report
- Habitat Restoration and Recovery – Vicki Herren is working with Gina Ramos to identify a vegetation representative from WO220
- ESR (Jeremy Kruger) – no report



BIN Topics:

- Table 4 of the R/R GTR will be buffed out by a small team led by Mike Pellant. He'll select the group which will include folks with field exposure.
- ATTENTION TEAM LEADS: The EMPSi contact for meeting documentation assistance is Peter Gower (peter.gower@empai.com, phone = 775-323-1433). Call him directly.
- WebEx for FIAT teams will be Friday, October 3, 0900 mountain.

Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
Compare the two sagebrush cover layers (FIAT Step 1 and BLM Disturbance and Monitoring)	Matt Bobo	9/25
Complete a call to discuss the NFPORS/FACTS/geodatabase topic involving BLM and USFS	Karen, Krista, Doug, Laurie	Schedule by 9/25
Get vegetation rep from WO 220	Vicki and Gina	9/26
Post Reno powerpoints to sharepoint site	Doug	9/24
Assemble short team to revise Table 4 in the Chambers GTR	Mike	10/2
Reach out to adjoining States and Districts to get those folks committed to the Northern Great Basin FIAT	Joe Adamski	10/1
Schedule FIAT overview WebEx for FIAT teams	Doug	9/23

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2014 4:49 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-09-02.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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San Francisco, CA 94108
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, September 01, 2014 8:45 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates – Matt/Kathy
2. Roll up and Tier II/CEA Update – Frank/Drew
3. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting – David and PMs

4. Schedule
5. Action Items from past calls – see below
6. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls:

None

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

September 2, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Joe Tague, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Seth Flanigan, UT; Brent Ralston, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Vicki Herren, WO/NOC; Doug Havlina, NIFC; Frank Quamen, NOC; Johanna Munson, WY; Matt Magaletti, WO

USFS: Randy Sharp; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Matt: Follow up with Sarah Shattuck regarding WHB gather management actions.
- Project Leads: Review Wild Horse and Burro goals, objectives, and actions from NV/CA to see what can be incorporated into each subregional plan.
- Lauren: Follow up with Lee Corum and Frank regarding best available science for buffers.
- Doug: Send FIAT information sharing call information with Lauren.

Meeting Minutes

WO Updates

- Continuing work on the buffers table. USFWS webinar tomorrow prior to Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting. Discussions related to disturbance white paper; team has agreed upon 4 disturbance measures. Forest Service staff are in Washington to talk about WO review and protest schedule and process.
- Lauren reviewed federal family notes which include all the follow up tasks. Waiting for WO and SOL review. Hope to distribute them by Wednesday.
- Lauren will send the complete Wild Horse and Burro goals, objectives, and actions from NV/CA plan. Project leads should review these and see what you can incorporate.
- Oregon received advice from their regional SOL to not put in the action on gathers. Matt will follow up with Sarah.

NOC updates

- Have been working on assignments from Great Basin federal family meeting, such as the buffer assignment. Asked for USGS input– they will look at buffers and make recommendations on what is the best available science.

- USFWS also looking at science behind buffers, highlighting concerns about duplicating efforts. Lauren will follow up with Lee Corum (USFWS) and discuss with Frank.
- Challenging meetings regarding disturbance cap and where it's applied (e.g., the Biologically Significant Unit). USFWS is still concerned about disturbance around leks.
- Preparing for Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting next week.

Subregional Updates

- In general, all subregions are awaiting further guidance that is anticipated to result from the Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting.
- Oregon sent disturbance and mitigation appendices out to cooperators and internal team to review.
- ID/MT trying to finalize proposed plan, following up on certain items after federal family meeting.
- UT is working on disturbance monitoring plan, disturbance inventory, and inventory of existing rights table.
- Inventory of existing rights is intended to help inform the USFWS of the magnitude of existing rights, give a reference point. May need to caveat that data may change as more information becomes available.
- NV/CA – preparing numbers for existing authorizations.
- USFWS data request regarding conservation efforts – Vicki has been working on this to get a strategy in place. Existing authorizations may help to address their request regarding threats. Robin Sell will be on a 4 month detail at NOC to help coordinate the data call.

Forest Service Update

- Glen and Chris in DC to meet with Forest Service leadership and provide a briefing. Generally finished with the Great Basin draft planning language, though waiting on additional information from NV/CA.
- Reviewing the response to comment reports, and waiting for the latest UT report.
- Lauren has an updated Great Basin Region summary of allocations table. Madelyn will compare this table with the Forest Service plans. Some NV/CA details may be unknown.

Other

- Fire and Invasives IM signed by Ed last week. Training session is scheduled for 9/16-18 in Reno.
- FIAT– will have the first information sharing call today. Doug will send the information to Lauren. It is scheduled for every Tues from 1-3 pm Mountain.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 4:17 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-09-09.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from our call yesterday morning.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 2:10 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

We will likely have a short call as a number of the invitees will be at the Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
2. Roll up and Tier II/CEA Update

3. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
4. Schedule
5. Action Items from past calls – see below
6. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls:

- Matt: Follow up with Sarah Shattuck regarding WHB gather management actions.
- Project Leads: Review Wild Horse and Burro goals, objectives, and actions from NV/CA to see what can be incorporated into each subregional plan.
- Lauren: Follow up with Lee Corum and Frank regarding best available science for buffers.
- Doug: Send FIAT information sharing call information with Lauren.

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

September 9, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Joe Tague, NV; Brent Ralston, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR

USFS: Rob Mickelsen

EMPSi: Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

EMPSi

- EMPSi will check CommentWorks to determine which subregions received comments about soil crusts and will develop a response.

Meeting Minutes

Review of Consistency with Other Plans

- How are all subregions reviewing for consistency with other plans?
 - ID/MT will look at county sage-grouse plans and will flag inconsistencies. Will not go through all county land use plans, though Brent has reviewed these in a cursory manner. Intends to put a brief statement in Chapter 2 (referencing an appendix) to discuss where the county sage-grouse plans are incorporated or inconsistent. Intend to meet with counties individually after plans are final and in the review process.
 - OR asked Cooperating Agencies for inconsistencies with their land use plans and did not receive anything specific.
 - NV/CA had a similar experience as Oregon. They do not intend to go through the county land use plans.
 - Until we have a ROD with a decision, we are not inconsistent with any plan. At what point do we need to do this review?

Soil Crust Analysis

- Public comments received on the DEIS asked for additional analysis of effects to soil crust from livestock grazing. Are all subregions including additional analysis?
 - Subregions decided that additional, in-depth analysis is not needed, though all should acknowledge that there could be effects to soil crust.
 - EMPSi will check in CommentWorks to determine which subregions received this comment and will develop a response indicating that a detailed impact analysis is not

appropriate at the planning scale given the lack of data across the subregions. A more detailed impact analysis would occur at the implementation or site-specific scale.

Wild Horse and Burros

- In Oregon, had a discussion about limiting grazing in circumstances where wild horse and burros were unmanageable. Including as an adaptive management provision. Other subregions are not including this. NV/CA includes a request for emergency gather funds if not at AML.

VDDT Modeling Update

- Vegetation modeling reports are done. Rob will be meeting with Craig this week and creating a spreadsheet with outputs that will be shared. Will show the COT population area for each subregion, initial habitat conditions relative to desired conditions, and required treatment needed to get to desired conditions.
- Compared to the first run 1) LANDFIRE data shows more GRS habitat in better condition than the first vegetation map. First – 60% meeting; now – 79% meeting; 2) changes in vegetation types: more WY sagebrush and low sagebrush. Less treatment required because habitat conditions start out better.
- Acres imply precision that is not there. Rob suggested showing a percentage of sagebrush that needs to be treated, but participants felt that the USFWS probably will want to see numbers. Consider rounding to nearest thousand.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 6:39 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-09-23.docx

Hi all,

Attached are notes from this morning's call. Also, below is the guidance Carol-Anne provided regarding inclusion of commenter names in the comment report. We can discuss more on the next Great Basin call if needed:

1. Without a doubt, include everyone that submitted a unique letter or meeting comment card (these are the 300-ish letters that were not submitted via a form letter site). This would include a reference to a group's master form letter (e.g., "Sierra Club – Campaign Letter")
 - a. List these names in triple column after the report. E.g.,

Adams, Angie	Garrison, Carol-Anne	Prohaska, Holly
Batts, David	Holmgren, Derek	Ricklefs, Chad
	Zaccherio, Meredith	
 - b. Do the cooperating agency, organizations, user groups, etc. listing as the first table; individual names as the second table.
2. Do not include the form letters. Why? Because, they're all the same and we cover them in the "Sierra Club – Campaign Letter" reference. We do still track the names of the form letter submitters (unique or not) as part of the decision file records, and we can make a reference to "names being available upon request" or something similar in the front matter text of the report/appendix.
3. Easiest way to get the names for listing, run a comment works report – this way we're assured of including all the names that appear in the report. This will also catch anyone that include unique, substantive comments in a form letter.

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: David Batts

Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 2:51 PM

To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharpay@att.net' (sharpay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'

Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts

Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213

participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
 - Overview of outcomes from Federal Family meetings
2. Tier II/CEA Update
3. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
 - Update on any subregional decisions related to NPT guidance or other management
 - Chapter 3 data; need for updating
4. Administrative Record – managing for two RODs
5. Public comment report, status and protocol for listing names of commenters (unique vs. form letters)
6. Schedule
7. Action Items from past calls
8. Other topics?

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

September 23, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Joe Tague, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Brent Ralston, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Matt Magaletti, WO; Vicki Herren, WO

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- Oregon RDF NTT comparison table

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- PMs: Coordinate with your State Directors to get invites for the Friday call and webinar next week.
- PMs: Respond to Matts request for additional information on adaptive management.

EMPSi

- Send information regarding commenter names for the comment response report.

Meeting Minutes

Policy Recommendations from Off-Site Meeting

- Vicki Herren is now in the WO.
- Off-site meeting last week to follow up after the two federal family meetings. Created a set of additional action items and policy recommendations for NPT.
- Policy recommendations are being sent to Ed this afternoon. Meeting on Friday (3-4 pm EST) with State Directors to review recommendations and schedule. PMs should contact their State Directors for the invite. Schedule is pending approval in the Department office so Matt can't share yet, but PMs will not need to have WO review documents ready until after holidays.
- The following are the policy recommendations:
 - No net unmitigated loss – recommend that everyone will utilize this concept. Does not impact GBR, but the RMR states will include (except WY).
 - Lek buffer – USGS will have their recommendations to BLM by October 6. Provided list of scientific review panelists included academics, state representatives, federal agencies. SOL is reviewing this list.
 - CEA # 1 - Important Management Zones in ID will be grouped with General Management Zone for calculations. In the narrative, state that they do have more restrictive management. Brent does not feel like this makes sense because they could be managed as Core in the future. SOL opinion would rather group with the less

restrictive allocation to be on the safe side. If a concern, Brent should discuss with Tim, who could voice concerns during the Friday meeting.

- CEA #2 – Originally the CEA was going to be run utilizing the preferred alternative data. Will now use the ADPP data since it is available for all plans. Expect subregions will submit ADPP data to NOC by October 22.
- Changing nomenclature – PPMA, PGMA becomes Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA), General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA), and Important Habitat Management Areas (IHMA). UT concerned because a lot of areas aren't habitat but may someday become habitat. RMR (including WY) agreed to use the terminology.
- Working with states – First will have two separate webinars: GBR webinar on Tuesday, Sept 30 12-5 pm eastern; RMR on Friday, Oct 3, 12-5 pm EST. This will be a state director responsibility, but PMs will attend and their input will be needed. Working on what is required, but likely will need 4 slides (map with acres/percentages; relationship of the subregion to the rangewide conditions; then discuss the ADPP). Very high level summary, 1 hour per state. BLM will include FS in their discussion.
- Matt may ask PMs for input on slides later this week with a very quick turn-around.
- Three objectives for these webinars:
 - Information sharing: reviewing and discussing BLM/FS ADPPs and state plans
 - Clarification: key questions for a follow-up face-to-face meeting
 - Preparation for task for meeting
- Then, task force meetings October 8th and 9th which will require Department-level involvement. State Directs will not be there. States will also share what they are doing.
- Process for publishing proposed plans – eliminate Regional Management Team and NPT briefings in place of one interagency + director briefing combined.
- Due to the webinars, there will be no call next week.

Adaptive Management and RDFs

- Adaptive management- big discussion last week and reviewed the sideboard tables as a group. Will need a hard wired response to triggers – more of an issue in RMR, but also applies to OR. Matt will email everyone additional questions.
- Matt emailed the RDF table from OR – how RDFs from NTT were addressed in the proposed plan. Instead of utilizing word docs, PMs should use that excel spreadsheet.
- There are three exceptions that describe when we don't have to use an RDF. Group agreed to include this text in their documents.

Updates from the NOC

- Disturbance: Made progress 2 weeks ago. Settled on scales and where the disturbance cap and fire apply. USFWS said that it should be applied to sagebrush availability (except for WY). Wanted to have a follow up call to determine how disturbance will be calculated. However, attendees have limited time, so may have to wait until later in October. In the meantime, Vicki, Gordon, Frank will try to finalize white paper.

- Brent and Joe should discuss the reservation lands (shown differently in NV and ID). ID does not have management on these lands, but they are included in disturbance calculation. ID met with tribes last week who approved and supported their plan.

Subregional Updates

- Oregon working on things that they can; coordinating with other subregions.
- IDMT – no updates.
- UT – working with SOL on some items. Waiting from direction regarding some other items.
- NVCA – FIAT meetings – think that the project leads understand the FIAT, but some misunderstandings within teams. Need to keep teams focused and on task. Hope to make a lot of headway over the next month. Done with first part of assessments early in November.
- Table 2 – call on Friday to discuss methodologies to make sure that all subregions are consistent. The goal of the table is to put the threat from various disturbances in perspective. Joe will send meeting invite to David and Glen.

Forest Service Updates

- None. All plans in for review.

Other

- CEA webinar in about 3 weeks to review Buffalo sample CEA.
- Comment reports – David will send a recommendation for how to publish names. Will discuss further at the next call.

Brent Ralston

From: Pyron, Jason
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 4:30 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bockting; Patricia Fosse; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; John Carlson; Katie Powell; Brent Esmoil; Jeff Berglund
Subject: Re: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

Brent,

Thanks for providing some increased clarity on this. Looking forward to keeping the process moving forward...

Jason

On Mon, Sep 22, 2014 at 12:11 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Jason,

Most of the management actions described in the ADPP (administrative draft proposed plan) apply to both Idaho and Montana equally. There are a few sections where we know difference do exist and they have been identified as separate in the ADPP. These include fluid mineral direction in action FLM-1; coordination with State Agencies in actions CC-2 and CC-4; adaptive management direction in the adaptive management section (5) and disturbance cap description and measurement in section (6).

The differences have already been described in FLM-1 and CC-2 & CC-4 for those decisions. The adaptive management and disturbance cap decisions still need developed for the sw Montana portion of the sub region, which I understand John Carlson is working on.

In addition Kelly Bockting is reviewing all the sections of the ADPP to ensure that proposed decisions for sw Montana are reflected in the existing management actions and if not to identify specific areas of the ADPP where additional sw Montana direction is needed.

At the meeting we will specifically discuss the know incompletes (adaptive management and disturbance) as well as additional identified areas needing clarification (those areas Kelly or John identify), plus we will step through the EIS to identify any additional areas of needed information to adequately reflect and display sw Montana (i.e. Chapters 3 & 4).

Brent Ralston

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office

208-373-3812

From: Pyron, Jason [mailto:jason_pyron@fws.gov]

Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 11:44 AM

To: Brent Ralston

Cc: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bocking; Pat Fosse; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; John Carlson; Katie Powell; Brent Esmoil; Jeff Berglund

Subject: Re: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

Brent et al,

I've passed this along to Jeff Berglund (my counterpart in MT) who will also be attending the meeting. To ensure that this meeting is efficient and productive, it would be great to have the MT specific proposed direction (BLM & FS) a week or two in advance. I recognize that there may still be some issues that are not completely resolved (e.g. adaptive management), but hopefully by this time these are pretty limited.

Thanks,

Jason

On Fri, Sep 19, 2014 at 2:38 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

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Brent Ralston

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Jason Pyron

Sage-Grouse Coordinator - Candidate Conservation

Idaho Fish & Wildlife Office

1387 S Vinnell Way, Room 368

Boise, Idaho 83709

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jason_pyron@fws.gov

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jason_pyron@fws.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Mickelsen, Robert -FS
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 12:49 PM
To: Brent Ralston; Jason Pyron
Cc: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bockting; Patricia Fosse; jccarlso@blm.gov; Katie Powell; Brent Esmoil; Jeff Berglund
Subject: RE: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

In the trailing messages it looks like there was a question regarding the FS Proposed Plan as well. With regard to the FS Proposed Plan, all the Desired Conditions, Objectives, Stds. And Guides will apply to the B-D NF similar to the Idaho Forests. Any differences would be related to differences in how habitat is mapped in each of the states. We are waiting to see what the decision will be for disturbance and AMS.

Robbert Mickelsen
US Forest Service
National Greater Sage Grouse Team Member
Idaho-SW Montana Liaison
208-557-5764



From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 12:11 PM
To: Jason Pyron
Cc: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bockting; Patricia Fosse; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; jccarlso@blm.gov; Katie Powell; Brent Esmoil; Jeff Berglund
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Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

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Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 11:44 AM

To: Brent Ralston

Cc: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bockting; Pat Fosse; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; John Carlson; Katie Powell; Brent Esmoil; Jeff Berglund

Subject: Re: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

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Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2014 12:05 PM
To: 'Mickelsen, Robert -FS'
Subject: RE: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

Rob,

I think that would be great, because I think those are really the two pieces that need the attention. I'm not sure there are really any other concerns coming out of Montana or management actions that Montana needs to do differently than disturbance and adaptive management.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Mickelsen, Robert -FS [<mailto:rmickelsen@fs.fed.us>]
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2014 8:42 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

Hey Brent,

Just wondering, if it would be advantageous to have a discussion about Adaptive Management and Disturbance Calculation with both B-D staff and BLM staff after the BLM Proposed Plan discussion? If the NPT gets us the decisions on these topics in the next 2 weeks we might be ready to have the discussion with regard to Montana.

Robbert Mickelsen
US Forest Service
National Greater Sage Grouse Team Member
Idaho-SW Montana Liaison
208-557-5764



From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2014 2:39 PM
To: Cornelia Hudson; Kelly Bockting; Pat Fosse; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; jccarlso@blm.gov; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; brent_esmoil@fws.gov
Subject: IDswMT Proposed Plan for Dillon FO Area

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Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

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Brent Ralston

From: Halford, Anne
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2014 9:03 PM
To: meredith.zaccherio@empci.com
Cc: Paul Makela; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: FW: Biological soil crust follow up
Attachments: BSC_draft_language_SG_DEIS.docx

Meredith - Here is some verbiage that could be used. I think the Oregon comment response is reasonable. Please let me know if you would like to discuss further.

Anne

Anne Halford
BLM State Botanist\Restoration Ecologist
1387 S. Vinnell Wy.
Boise, ID 83709

Email: ahalford@blm.gov
Phone: State Office: Mon. - Wed. (208) 373-3940,
Snake River Birds of Prey NCA: Wed.-Fri. (208) 384-3335

On Thu, Sep 11, 2014 at 12:33 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Can you guys follow up on this comments and provide some language for Chapter 3 as suggested to Meredith for inclusion in the FEIS, please cc me with that language as well.

Thanks!

Brent Ralston

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office

208-373-3812

From: Meredith Zaccherio [mailto:meredith.zaccherio@empci.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2014 12:01 PM

To: 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'jtague@blm.gov' (jtague@blm.gov); sharpay@att.net

Cc: Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; David Batts; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Meredith Zaccherio

Subject: Biological soil crust follow up

I looked further into the biological soil crust discussion we had on Tuesday. Utah did not receive any comments on biological soil crusts, but NV/CA, ID/MT, and OR did. Here is what I suggest:

- 1) Review your DEIS for discussion of biological soil crust. Consider adding a statement to Chapter 3 (vegetation or soils section) to the effect that biological soil crusts have numerous ecological functions, including resistance to invasive annuals. Be sure to review and cite appropriate literature such as Ponzetti et al. 2007, Deines et al. 2007, and Serpe et al. 2006. These three papers were specifically cited by environmental groups to defend their comments.
- 2) Add statement to Chapter 4 GRSG in the nature and type of effects that livestock grazing could impact (trample, break up, degrade, etc) biological soil crust.

Regarding comment response, Oregon currently has a succinct and I think appropriate response: "Biological soil crust information has been added to Section 3.xx. Impacts on soil resources from livestock have been clarified in Section 4.xx." Per our discussion, I will add a sentence: "A detailed analysis of impacts to biological soil crusts is not appropriate at the land use plan scale and further impacts will be analyzed on a site-specific basis during project implementation." I will put this response for all three subregions.

Any thoughts or revisions, please send them to me for consideration!

Thanks,

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
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Biological Soil Crusts - Chapter 3 DEIS – suggested text

Biological soil crusts are an important component of a broad range of ecological sites in the Intermountain West. They function as a living mulch by retaining soil moisture, increasing organic matter and discouraging annual weed growth (Eldridge and Greene 1994, Belnap and Gillette 1997, 1998, Belnap 2001, McKenna-Neumann *et al.* 1996, Rosentreter *et al.* 2007). Biological soil crust communities are more prevalent at lower elevations compared to higher elevations with greater precipitation where vascular plant growth precludes biological crust development (Belnap 2001). Specific to soil erosion, biological soil crusts protect interspatial surface areas by occupying open areas between larger plants (Belnap *et al.* 1997). Biological crust condition and cover is also a direct function of the ecological health of the plant community and the NRCS “National Range and Pasture Book” identifies biological soil crusts as a critical ecological attribute to be used as an indicator of rangeland health (USDA 2003). Anthropogenic disturbances have been documented to impact the diversity and function of these communities (Robinson, Ponzetti *et al.* 2013, Peterson 2013).

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2003. *National Range and Pasture Handbook. Revision 1 - December 2003.* Grazing Lands Technical Institute, USDA-NRCS.
http://www.monocounty.ca.gov/cdd%20site/Planning/Projects/Documents/CompleteHandbook_001.pdf

Belnap, J.K. 2001 IN: USDI. BLM. Biological crusts – ecology and management. Technical Reference 1730-2 BLM/ID/ST-01/001+1730.

Belnap, J., and D.A. Gillette. 1997. Disturbance of biological soil crusts: impacts on potential wind erodibility of sandy desert soils in southeastern Utah, USA. *Land Degradation and Development* 8: 355-362.

Belnap, J., and D.A. Gillette. 1998. Vulnerability of desert soil surfaces to wind erosion: impacts of soil texture and disturbance. *Journal of Arid Environments* 39: 133-142.

Dienes, L, Rosentreter, R., Eldridge, D. Serpe, M.D. 2007. Germination and seedling establishment of two annual grasses on lichen-dominated biological soil crusts. *Plant and Soil*. Volume 295, [Issue 1-2](#), pp 23-35.

Eldridge, D.J., and R.S.B. Greene. 1994. Microbiotic soil crusts: a review of their roles in soil and ecological processes in the rangelands of Australia. *Australian Journal of Soil Research* 32: 389-415.

McKenna-Neuman, C., C.D. Maxwell, and J.W. Boulton. 1996. Wind transport of sand surfaces crusted with photoautotrophic microorganisms. *Catena* 27: 229-247.

Peterson, E.B. 2013. Regional-scale relationship among biological soil crusts, invasive annual grasses, and disturbance. *Ecological Processes* 2013, 2:2

Robinson, E.D, Ponzetti, J.M, Bakker, J. 2013. Long-term changes in biological soil crust cover and composition. *Ecological Processes*. *Ecological Processes* 2013, 2:5. Springer-Verlag. 10 pgs.

Brent Ralston

From: Stangl, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2014 3:04 PM
To: David Batts; Bret Birdsong; Edwin Roberson; Sarah Greenberger; Steven Ellis; Neil Kornze; James Lyons; Juan Palma; Theresa Rabot; Noreen Walsh; Matthew Magaletti; Frank Quamen; Michael Bean; Amy Lueders; Nancy Haug; Chris Iverson; Jerome Perez; Edward Boling; Timothy Murphy; Jamie Connell; Brent Ralston; John Carlson; Lauren Mermejo; Joseph Stout; Johanna Munson; Sarah Shattuck; Jesse DElia; Pat Deibert; Dennis Mackey; Glenn Stein; Stephen Small; Joan Suther; Quincy Bahr; rrodriguez@fs.fed.us; Larry Crist; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Jon Raby; rmickelson@fs.fed.us; Paul Henson; Ted Koch; Michael Fris; Michael Haske; KATHRYN.GUILLOU@ogc.usda.gov; Richard Hannan; Karin Christensen; Madelyn Dillon; jeffery_dillion@fws.gov; Tim.griffiths@mt.usda.gov
Subject: Great Basin FF Meeting Notes
Attachments: NOTES-GRSG GBR Fed Family Mtg PDX_2014_08_19-21.pdf

Hello,

I am sending this email on behalf of Ed Roberson. Please find the Great Basin FF meeting notes attached. Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for taking the time to participate in this productive meeting.

Kathy



Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting

August 19-21, 2013

BLM Oregon State Office, Portland

Summary Meeting Notes

Outcomes and Action Items: See Attachment A: Greater Sage-Grouse Great Basin Federal Family Meeting - Summary of Outcomes and Action Items

Attendance: See Attachment B, Sign-In Sheet

Handouts: Information Packet (Agenda and Population Summary Tables) and Map Packet

PowerPoint Presentations: See Attachment C

These notes represent a summary of the discussion and decisions made during the meeting. They are not intended to be a transcript or verbatim record. All outcomes are noted; any outcomes requiring additional action are summarized in Attachment A.

Notes submitted by: David Batts, EMPSi

Introductions and Opening Remarks

- Neil Kornze, BLM Director. This is a very important meeting to assess all the hard work over the last few years. This effort is unique, and this meeting is an important opportunity to share BLM and Forest Service efforts and to get input on USFWS expectations.
- Noreen Walsh, USFWS Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region. There is no single action that will have a greater impact on the sagebrush ecosystem than these amendments, given that federal lands cover 64 percent of the sage-grouse range. Three key things to consider moving forward:
 - (1) COT Report sets the baseline of the objectives USFWS wants to achieve for the Greater Sage-Grouse by Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs).
 - (2) Do not focus on the “minimum” to address the threat, especially in Great Basin where fire is such a large threat.
 - (3) This meeting is not about the listing, but will help inform the listing process. USFWS wants the BLM and Forest Service to tell the story of how the actions in the plans equate to conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse.
- Chris Iverson, Forest Service Deputy Regional Forester. This planning effort is complex and second to none. There has been a lot of coordination, and we are looking forward to outcomes. Recognizing that Forest Service regulations and guidance have some different requirements, the Forest Service is working closely with the BLM for consistent management.
- Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director. Solutions for the Great Basin are very different from the Rocky Mountain Region due to fire. We need to focus on the solutions in the Great Basin. A lot of smart people have coordinated to arrive at workable solutions. We need to continue to trust each other for a common goal of conserving the Greater Sage-Grouse.



Process, Expectations, and Outcomes

Jim Lyons, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals Management, DOI

- This process has been a marathon. We need to work hard as a team to get across the finish line together. NRCS is also a critical partner with the BLM, Forest Service, and USFWS. The Secretary of Interior's expectation is that we will work together and across departmental boundaries to avoid a listing.
- Key discussion points from PowerPoint Presentation (see Attachment C)
 - A key finding of COT Report was to “stop the bleeding.” Maintain the integrity of PACs is the critical foundation for sage-grouse conservation.
 - The finish line is a healthy viable population that survives over a long period of time and avoids the need for a listing.
 - Objectives for this meeting are to:
 - Identify threats for each population/PAC within a planning area.
 - Determine how each Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) addresses each threat.
 - Discuss the adequacy of land use allocation decisions; focus on inadequacies and and/or inconsistencies.
 - The challenge is to figure out creative ways to focus development outside of PACs.
 - The BLM will issue two RODs, one for Great Basin and one for Rocky Mountain, that tell the story for conservation.
- Key questions moving to the finish line:
 - Do the ADPPs adequately address conservation threats in the COT report?
 - Are conservation strategies consistent (outcomes) and rational?
 - How do the state Greater Sage-Grouse plans align with federal ADPPs?
 - Are cumulative effects adequate to conserve the Greater Sage-Grouse?
- This is more than protecting a species; it is conserving an important ecosystem that supports many species.

Michael Bean, Counselor for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, DOI.

- A determination of “warranted for listing” does not mean that Greater Sage-Grouse will be listed if the factors used for the warrant determination are addressed.
- Federal land is a critical part of Greater Sage-Grouse conservation because of the large amount of habitat on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands. State plans are also important. The BLM and Forest Service ADPPs can provide guidance for the states.



Agenda Review and Logistics

- Ground Rules: Be frank, honest, and open; Be respectful; Be decision-oriented; Be succinct; Be clear.
- This is an outcome-based meeting:
 - If there is agreement in this room, the agreement needs to hold outside of this room.
 - If there is lack of agreement, identify what the issue is and what needs to happen to get the issue resolved at this meeting.
 - If there is a lack of information, we need to have a plan to get that information for this meeting.
- Roundtable brainstorming of concerns about the meeting:
 - We will not arrive at consistency across ADPPs.
 - There is a lack of clarity, and we will leave not knowing what the ADPPs would achieve.
 - The ADPPs will not having a common narrative.
 - Different agencies will not be willing to step out of our traditional roles.
 - There will be an expectation that big decisions will be left to the local level.
 - We will not devise the strongest conversation strategy.
 - We will leave thinking we have a shared understanding when there is not.
 - We will not able to patch the holes in the ADPPs.
 - Subject matter experts are not engaged.
 - We will not be able to meet the schedule and deadlines.

BLM Approach to Developing Administrative Draft Proposed Plans (ADPPs)

Ed Roberson, Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, BLM

- See PowerPoint presentation (Attachment C)
- The ADPPs contain different ways of defining habitat that align with state definitions.
- For this roll-up meeting, we pulled up the threats and applied the allocations to the populations.

Forest Service Approach to Developing their DPPAs

Chris Iverson, Forest Service Deputy Regional Forester

- The Forest Service planning team reviewed the 5 draft EISs that involved the 19 National Forest Service units for inconsistencies and are striving to achieve consistency among them. We are developing a Forest Service proposed plan.
- Forest Service is working under some other laws and regulations that that have different requirements than the BLM, including viability analysis and preparation of biological evaluations. In general, this has resulted in more conservative allocations and actions.
- The Forest Service proposed plan is written in the Forest Service planning language (e.g., desired future conditions, standards, and guidelines), which is similar to, but different from the BLM language.
- The Forest Service planning team is striving for consistency with BLM and state plans.
- RODs will likely be at the regional forester level. The number of RODs is still being discussed in terms of how best to tell the Forest Service story.



Major Changes between BLM/Forest Service DEIS' and ADPPs in Great Basin

Lauren Mermejo, Great Basin Regional Project Manager

- See PowerPoint presentation (Attachment C).
- We are addressing public comments and incorporating substantive comments into the ADPPs.
- We are updating ADPPs based on public input, new information, and coordination with cooperating agencies and state/federal partners.
- There will be many changes in the ADPPs, resulting in more consistency.

5-Minute Overview by BLM State Directors

- **Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director.** There has been a lot of coordination between BLM, Forest Service, and USFWS. About 16 percent of the population and habitat is in Nevada. Issues to be resolved through the ADPP process include: (1) not including the 3 percent disturbance cap. (2) More protection for preliminary general habitat due to the proximity of the preliminary general habitat to priority habitat. In Nevada, the habitat and PACs do not align very well as the PACs cannot be replicated. The state has moved away from the using the current PAC boundaries. The Nevada/California ADPP includes hard and soft triggers for adaptive management, and buffers for seasonal restrictions and springs and seeps. State is developing a habitat credit system; the BLM will likely adopt this credit system.
- **Nancy Haug, BLM California State Director.** The State of California is looking at the habitat credit system being developed in Nevada. California management is well integrated with the Nevada approach.
- **Jerry Perez, BLM Oregon State Director.** Oregon has about 14.8 million acres of habitat, of which about 10.2 million are on BLM-administered lands. Oregon has about 10 percent of habitat range wide. Wildfire has consumed about 1.8 million acres (not all sagebrush) and represents a major threat. Predation was brought up a lot in public comments. Buffers range from 1 to 4 miles depending upon habitat type. Oregon's ADPP is using the decadal 3 percent disturbance threshold, with no more than 1 percent in 10 years. Preliminary priority management area (PPMA) covers the PACs and lines up well. Preliminary general habitat is outside PACs. There is a lot of consistency with the state efforts; except on renewables where the BLM's ADPP is more restrictive.
- **Juan Palma, BLM Utah State Director.** Utah has a lot of local Greater Sage-Grouse conservation groups, and the BLM maintains a strong relationship with them. The state is complex in management needs, as shown by the fact that it is in two Greater Sage-Grouse planning regions (Great Basin and Rocky Mountain), three WAFWA zones, and 11 PACs. The PACs match with preliminary priority areas and the state Greater Sage-Grouse areas. There are some acres of preliminary general habitat in PACs, but it is limited. There are two populations in Utah that are not identified in the COT report as PACs. In total, 99.2 percent of breeding birds are covered by the preliminary priority habitat. Utah can apply no net unmitigated loss to preliminary priority habitat, but it will be very difficult to apply no net unmitigated loss to preliminary general habitat.
- **Tim Murphy, BLM Idaho State Director.** The subregion has 12 percent of the habitat range wide and 15 percent of the population. Idaho has three management zones: core, important, and general. The no net unmitigated loss requirement is included in the ADPP. Combined, core and important management zones cover all of the PACs. There is ongoing monitoring in Idaho and maps are updated. Idaho is planning to use the 3 percent disturbance cap across Core and Important habitat in the ADPP.



- **Jamie Connell, BLM Montana State Director.** Over half of BLM-administered lands in the Montana part of the Idaho/Montana subregion are in priority habitat. The existing 2006 Dillon RMP has a lot of strong protections for Greater Sage-Grouse but will be amended for new science and guidance. Core areas match the state priority areas. Montana is striving to be consistent with the Montana state plan that is still under development.

Global Discussions for all Sub-regions and Outcomes

- Defining scale for management and analysis: Priority/General Habitat and PACs
 - There are different scales of defining habitat: priority/general habitat is being used for planning purposes. The COT report identified PACs as important areas, and USFWS is generally using PACs for evaluation.
 - National Policy Team decided that priority and general habitat within the PACs is the focus of the ADPPs.
 - In Nevada, there is not a good overlap between preliminary priority habitat and PACs for reasons noted above. The final EIS will include analysis of the new Coates map, which will better represent the PACs in Nevada.
 - How do we handle preliminary general habitat within PACs? USFWS is okay with lesser protection on preliminary general habitat but if the preliminary general habitat is in a PAC, it could mean that the management would not be meeting the intent of the PACs. Idaho, Utah, and Nevada have this situation. USFWS has anticipated that new science (e.g., Coates map) may change the 2013 PACs. (see additional discussion on PACs in Utah below in section *Populations fully within Utah Sub-region [9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b]*)
 - USFWS noted that it will be easier for the listing analysis if the plans contain a crosswalk between management of priority and general habitat and PACs.
 - **OUTCOME:** It is agreed that sub-regions will continue to use priority and general habitat (core and important for Idaho) as the geographical delineator for management measures and analysis, but that all plans will include a crosswalk that overlays priority and general habitat with PACs.
- We do not need to have consistency in preliminary general habitat between ADPPs, but we do need to make sure there is logic between the political boundaries.
- Inconsistency issue: USFWS emphasized that differences in direction across jurisdictional boundaries without biological rationale are an issue that needs to be addressed.
- We discussed the approach of closing low potential areas to development and leasing. Closing low potential areas may provide certainty.
- Disturbance: Discussion of difference between use of terms “threshold” and “cap”. There is not supposed to be a difference, but the two terms imply a difference. The disturbance framework will define specifics of the cap/threshold.
 - **OUTCOME:** Agreed that all plans use the term “disturbance cap”.
- USFWS has concern about management direction for grazing not being quantifiable and detailed enough to understand how habitat will be protected or enhanced.
 - **OUTCOMES:** (1) SOL and a grazing group will review actions and provide guidance.



WAFWA Management Zone V

Populations Solely within Oregon (17 and 24)

- Small isolated parcels: BLM and Forest Service have limited authority to address this threat, with the primary tool being land retention. All ADPPs retain preliminary priority habitat. Discussed that not all ADPPs explicitly state that preliminary general habitat will be retained. Retaining preliminary general habitat is not part of National Technical Team (NTT) Report, and may not be analyzed in the range of alternatives.
 - OUTCOME: We developed common language for land retention to be incorporated into the ADPPs; see Attachment A.
- Fire and fuel treatments: USFWS is concerned about the use of fire as a treatment in a less than 12 inch precipitation zone. Fire is an important tool to treat some invasive species; the ADPPs provide a process to evaluate the risk. The ADPPs need a clear criteria outlining when fire will be used.
 - OUTCOME: We developed common language to be incorporated into all ADPPs; see Attachment A.
- Conifer removal: The Oregon ADPP has a buffer for conifer removal to 0 percent cover within 1 mile around leks, and less than 5 percent in 20 years. ADPPs vary in how they address conifer removal; some use buffers and some use a criteria-based process. The challenge with a standard buffer (e.g., 4-mile) is that conditions vary by state; for example, some areas in Idaho and Oregon likely have Douglas-fir within 4 miles.
 - OUTCOME: We developed a common goal to be incorporated into all ADPPs; see Attachment A.
- Weeds and annual grasses: ADPPs rely on the FIAT report to guide BLM/Forest Service management; how accurate is the FIAT report? There is concern about the regulatory certainty. The timeline for the FIAT assessment of the first set of priority areas is January 2015, so there will be results prior to the RODs.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Energy: Energy development is not a widespread threat for these populations. We discussed whether low potential areas should be closed. There were concerns that changes in technology could change potential. A plan that closes areas makes a stronger statement for regulatory certainty, so closing low potential does not “cost” much. Applying NSO stipulations offers a high degree of protection but waivers, exemptions, and modifications increase uncertainty. For Oregon, there is a process that involves USFWS in any waivers, exemptions, and modifications to reduce uncertainty. There is not consistency in the use of waivers, exemptions, and modifications between sub-regions. If more certainty is needed in Oregon, they could close areas with low potential.
- OUTCOME: We agreed that the ADPPs will include language that is consistent with National Policy Team (NPT) guidance (only the one exception would be allowed but waivers or modifications would not.)
- Mining: OUTCOME: We agreed that the current draft of the Oregon sub-region’s ADPP meets NPT guidance.



- Infrastructure: All Great Basin ADPPs have avoidance criteria for ROWs (Utah, Oregon, Nevada/California are the same; Idaho has different criteria that applies to all anthropogenic disturbances). Avoid, minimize, and mitigate is the process for all sub-regions.
 - OUTCOME: We agreed that the Oregon sub-region's ADPP meets NPT guidance.
- Grazing: Oregon's ADPP considers closing some RNAs to grazing based on certain plant types that are important to Greater Sage-Grouse. There is concern about the certainty of the management actions.
 - OUTCOME: We will form a team to evaluate grazing actions.

Western Great Basin Population (#31)

- Fire: Same as discussed for *Populations Solely within Oregon*.
- Conifers: In Nevada, ADPP provides that the FIAT Report will prioritize conifers with input from the VDDT objectives, which provide the measureable objectives. Future habitat conditions were projected and amount of acres for treatment to meet sagebrush objectives were estimated. There is inconsistency between the Nevada and Oregon approaches (Oregon has buffers defined by distance).
 - OUTCOME: We developed common language to be incorporated into all ADPPs; see Attachment A.
- Weeds: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Mineral Materials: There is inconsistency between Oregon and Nevada for preliminary general habitat. Nevada provides more protection than NPT Guidance because preliminary general habitat in Nevada is adjacent to preliminary priority habitat and within PACs, while preliminary general habitat in Oregon is outside PACs and more scattered.
 - OUTCOME: Oregon will review decision to determine if the ADPPs should consider closing preliminary general habitat to mineral materials
- Infrastructure: There is inconsistency in direction for preliminary general habitat for minor ROWs.
 - OUTCOME: Oregon will review the decision to determine if the ADPP should analyze closing preliminary general habitat (exclusion areas) for ROWs
- Grazing: Nevada and Oregon are consistent with the exception of Oregon RNAs. Coates is the best science for Nevada. Connelly is best science for Oregon. If new science comes out, management would be adjusted to it. Improper grazing is the threat, not grazing. Forest Service is defining the structure that is desirable and managing for it. USFWS will be most comfortable with any action that incorporates and manages for future science on Greater Sage-Grouse.
 - OUTCOME: (1) The BLM will review rangeland health and need to tie to Connelly, Coates, and future science. (2) Oregon and Nevada (and any other subregions that want it) will send grazing management sections of their current ADPPs to SOL for review.
- Free Roaming Equids: Modifying AML could mean lowering them to meet Greater Sage-Grouse objectives.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Energy: The waivers, exceptions, and modifications are limited in priority and less restrictive in preliminary general habitat. Management direction in the current draft of the ADPPs for this population only uses the one exception from the NPT in priority habitat.



- OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the current draft of the ADPP for this population in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.

WAFWA Management Zone III

Populations Solely within Nevada/NE California Subregion (14, 15c, and 30)

- Isolated/Small Size and Agricultural Conversion: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Fire: Same as discussed for *Populations Solely within Oregon*
- Conifers: Same as discussed for *Western Great Basin Population (#31)*
- Weeds and Annual Grasses: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Energy: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction meets NPT Guidance for priority habitat and exceeds guidance for general habitat.
- Mining (Locatables): All areas are open to locatables and the BLM ADPP is not recommending any withdrawals. Nevada has about 37,000 acres in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat under mining plans of operation, which is about 1 percent of habitat. The disturbance cap is not applicable to mining. USFWS would like to see recommendations for withdrawal of all habitats that do not have mining claims.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction meets for preliminary priority habitat and for preliminary general habitat in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Infrastructure: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction meets NPT Guidance for priority habitat and exceed guidance for preliminary general habitat.
- Grazing: OUTCOME: Same as discussed for *Western Great Basin Population (#31)*
- Free Roaming Equids: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Recreation (travel and transportation): Forest Service has designated routes. The BLM is working with a mix of existing and designated routes. USFWS is also concerned about the fire ignition risk from travel, along with impacts from travel (e.g., fragmentation).
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that each ADPP should clearly describe the current authority for temporary closures as a travel management tool to reduce fire ignition risk.

Populations fully within Utah Sub-region (9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)

- Non-habitat in Utah PACs:
 - PAC polygons were drafted to be slightly larger where there was preliminary priority habitat that might provide for “opportunity” areas. That is why there is non-habitat in the PACs. The state incorporated these areas and views them as possible mitigation sites.
 - 99.2 percent of breeding males are within PACs (only 30 males are in preliminary general habitat). About 33 percent of the birds are in the NE PAC (adjacent to Wyoming).
 - The State of Utah refers to PACs as Greater Sage-Grouse Management Areas.
 - Non-habitat areas in PACs are not classified as general or priority management areas, so there are no direct management allocations/actions for them in the preferred alternative that was analyzed in



the Draft EIS. Some are important for connectivity, some could be treated as opportunity areas, and some are truly non-habitat (e.g., four-wing saltbrush communities).

- Discussed possibility of reclassifying these non-habitat areas within PACs.
 - Red areas could be included as some type of management areas, recognizing that some of these areas are not habitat (e.g., cliffs and saltbrush). This would help manage these areas for connectivity.
 - Commit to assessing these areas and, if they are being restored, look into making management changes (through the appropriate FLPMA/NEPA process).
 - If the intent is to make these areas priority habitat, it should be classified as such.
 - **OUTCOME:** SOL will work with Quincy to conduct a legal review to determine room for incorporating non-habitat into priority management.
- Isolated/Small Size and Agricultural Conversion: Preliminary general management area varies because it is No Action plus no net unmitigated loss and the No Action is different between plans.
 - **OUTCOME:** Same as discussed for *Populations solely within Oregon* (#17 and 24)
- Fire: **OUTCOME:** Same as discussed for *Populations solely within Oregon* (#17 and 24)
- Conifers: **OUTCOME:** Same as discussed for *Western Great Basin Population* (#31)
- Weeds and Annual Grasses: Invasive species should be noted as a threat in population II, even though it was not recognized in the COT Report.
 - **OUTCOME:** We reached agreement that the management direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
- Energy - Solar and Wind: Utah is different than NPT Guidance on wind in PGMA. NPT Guidance is avoidance for PGMA; ADPP is proposing open. We discussed if PGMA within PAC should be exclusion and outside PAC open. Noted that the PGMA within the PACs have disturbance and few birds.
 - **OUTCOME:** We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward recognizing the explanation in the Population Summary table as to why the PGMA is open to wind.
 - **OUTCOME:** Utah will add a paragraph in the plan stating that the 23,000 acres of PGMA were not PPMA because of the following reasons: there is a xxx kV transmission line covering xx acres, etc.
- Energy – Fluid Minerals: current draft of ADPP for this population (Utah subregion) is different from the NPT Guidance on PGMA in that it defers to No Action direction with no net unmitigated loss. Added 1/640 criteria.
 - This approach does not try to redirect development. We discussed if ADPPs should give priority to leasing on lands outside priority management areas subject to valid existing rights. In Utah there are three priority areas that have high oil and gas potential. This information should go in the conservation summary and in Chapter 2.
 - There is inconsistency with buffers between all the ADPPs. This variation is due to regional and local science and conditions.
 - USFWS feels that some of the language in the energy section (and the ADPP in general) has some undefined language that should be defined and tightened up (e.g., “if technically feasible...” what is technical feasibility?)
 - **OUTCOMES:**



- We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate, recognizing the explanation in the Population Summary table as to why the PGMA is open to fluid minerals.
 - Create summary table of buffer sizes between ADPPs for different programs. BLM science team lead at the NOC will review and try to come up with more consistency in the buffer applications through science.
 - Define loose language (e.g., “if technically feasible...” what is technical feasibility?)
- Mining (Mineral Materials): PPMA is closed to new development but allows for existing development, unless it is occurring within 1 mile of a lek. USFWS recommended a 4-mile lek buffer to protect nesting and lek habitat for leasable and salable mining. The ADPP is meeting NPT Guidance, plus a 1-mile buffer, but the greater 4-mile buffer is being requested per USFWS due to the fragmented populations. A more fragmented population is more vulnerable. In Montana, the analysis showed that removing the smaller gravel pits resulted in more truck traffic and air impacts.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction is acceptable with the addition of not allowing expansion of existing mines within a 4-mile buffer of a lek.
 - ACTION: In Utah, the BLM will apply the NPT Guidance in Utah for mineral materials, leasable minerals, and non-energy minerals in PPMA and will not allow the expansion of existing mines within 4-miles of leks due to the isolation and fragmented populations in Utah.
- Energy – Coal: The current drafts of all ADPPs in the Great Basin did not do new suitability analyses. SOL has provided guidance that the BLM has the discretion to limit coal development. Utah will consider going with a 4-mile NSO buffer upon further coordination with SOL.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction is acceptable with the consideration of a 4-mile NSO buffer due to the isolation and fragmented populations in Utah.
 - ACTION: SOL to consult with the BLM on applying a 4-mile NSO buffer for coal mining.
- Infrastructure – Transmission and ROWs:
 - We discussed whether differences in ADPP from NPT guidance for PGMA that are identified as being open for a major transmission line is appropriate. Similar issue as discussed for Energy-Wind (see above).
 - The rationale is reasonable. For minor ROWs, the avoidance criteria are being revised to address access to private property.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate recognizing the explanation in the Population Summary table as to why the PGMA is open to major transmission lines.
- Infrastructure – Corridors: Current draft of Utah sub-region’s ADPP would undesignate some corridors and would propose some new corridors, some of which are in PPMA. There was no way to route the corridors to completely avoid PPMAs. The reason for one of the new corridors is to steer future development and concentrate development in order to protect habitat from future transmission lines in PPMA. Graphically, it is hard to explain why the BLM is proposing new corridors in PPMA. NPT Guidance is that no new corridors will be designated and NTT says to co-locate lines.
 - OUTCOME: USFWS, SOL, and BLM Utah will review and determine if designating new corridors is appropriate for this effort.
- Recreation: USFWS has requested a 4-mile buffer (1) seasonally for dispersed recreation (e.g., camping, and motorized travel), and (2) no new campgrounds. Dispersed recreation and camping would be very difficult to effectively enforce.



- **OUTCOME:** We reached agreement that the travel management allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate. We will tighten up language on new development. No need for the 4-mile buffer for dispersed recreation.

Populations fully within Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana sub-region (18, 23, 25, and 27)

- Isolated/Small Size: Idaho has the same issues as other sub-regions.
- Fire: Prescribed fire is a sparsely-used tool.
 - **OUTCOME:** Same as discussed for *Populations solely within Oregon* (#17 and 24)
- Conifers: Idaho is using the same actions as other sub-regions and has the same consistency questions as other sub-regions.
- Weeds/Annual Grasses: Idaho's concerns regarding weeds and annual grasses are the same as other sub-regions.
- Energy – Solar and Wind: Idaho's ADPP does not follow the NPT Guidance. Solar and wind have minimal potential in Idaho, however.
 - Solar would need to meet development criteria. Monitoring and adaptive management are also being used at 10 percent and 20 percent triggers. The “important area anthropogenic disturbance criteria” are “and’s” not “or’s”. Once the 20 percent threshold is met, Important becomes Core. The cause of impacts is determined at 10 percent.
 - The same “technical feasibility” refinement is needed as in other sub-regions.
 - Idaho is still working out details of triggers with Governor's board. FEIS needs to be clear that the BLM decision is not going through Governor's board.
 - Forest Service is consistent with NPT guidance.
 - We need to be able to dovetail management actions into state plan direction in order to facilitate implementation.
 - USFWS would like a clear explanation of why Idaho is using the three-tier process and how it complies with NPT Guidance, or why any differences would benefit Greater Sage-Grouse.
 - **OUTCOME:** Although management for solar energy development is still inconsistent with NPT Guidance, we reached agreement that the allocation direction in the current draft of the ADPP can move forward.
 - **OUTCOME:** The BLM will prepare a written explanation on the three-tiers of habitats and how they apply to all resource uses (not just fire) and how the three tiers benefit Greater Sage-Grouse.
 - **OUTCOME:** Idaho will examine using 1 percent disturbance per 10 years (which is similar to Oregon).
- Energy – Fluid
 - Forest Service and the BLM have different management strategies. This is a USFWS consistency concern whenever BLM and Forest Service differ.
 - Land is closed to fluid minerals development or such development is subject to NSO stipulations in the ADPP. Anthropogenic disturbance criteria will be applied to waivers, exceptions, and modifications.
 - Closure is mostly in low and no potential fluid areas, because we do not want to shift development to non-BLM-administered lands with important habitat.



- The ADPP is consistent with NPT, with the exception of “exception criteria”. Exception criteria is replaced by anthropogenic disturbance development criteria. One area with high potential is closed.
- Anthropogenic disturbance development criteria are used as a screen. This is not a rationale for its use, but rather a different management alternative.
- Core and Important habitat are split out in order to manage for fire and invasive species.
- OUTCOME: Management for fluid minerals is still inconsistent.
- OUTCOME: “Minimum impact” should be explained in anthropogenic disturbance development criteria.
- OUTCOME: Idaho will reexamine consistency with adjacent state(s) regarding small area(s) of management.
- OUTCOME: Idaho broke geothermal out from other fluid minerals in ADPP due to differences in potential. So land can be open to geothermal and closed to oil/gas. SOL will coordinate with BLM on this issue.
- OUTCOME: Idaho agreed to use the one exception from the NPT for fluid minerals in Core and Important habitat in addition to its avoidance criteria.
- High Voltage Transmission and Minor ROWs. OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate.
- Livestock Grazing: OUTCOME: Same as Population #31
- Free-roaming Equids: OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate.

SW Montana Portion of Idaho and SW Montana Sub-region (19-22)

- Weeds and Annual Grasses: The BLM will incorporate the FIAT as an appendix.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the allocation direction in the ADPP is adequate.
- Grazing: Discussion on grazing Standards and Guides and whether they provide regulatory certainty. The Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF) will be incorporated to assess whether grazing is affecting Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. USFWS noted that if the regulatory language is the same as in 2010, it will be difficult to say there is more regulatory certainty. It would be best for ADPPs to have stronger direction. The monitoring plan will be part of all the ADPPs.
 - OUTCOME: We reached agreement that the direction in the ADPP is adequate.

Population 26a – Northern Great Basin, Sub-regions: Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon

There are differences in management strategies between jurisdictional boundaries (e.g., wind and mineral materials). A good example is the difference between fluid minerals management in northern Nevada, where ADPP applies NSO stipulations, and Idaho, where ADPP closes areas to fluid minerals development. We discussed that the conservation benefit would be the same on the landscape since there will not be any ground disturbance.



Resource Specific Direction for ADPPs

Land Retention in General Habitat

Proposed policy statement: "Lands classified as PAC, priority habitat, and general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation benefit to the Greater Sage-Grouse or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the lands have no habitat value and that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse."

Discussion: We will remove PAC because plans are focused on priority and general habitat; analysis has not been done by PAC. USFWS noted that not including PAC could result some "important" lands being disposed. The BLM and Forest Service need to include Idaho Important habitat. Language is meant to address disposal; it is not intended to set priorities for land acquisition. It was proposed that the following be removed "...lands have no habitat value..." and replaced with "...lands have no direct or indirect adverse impact on the conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse within the population."

OUTCOME: We agreed to adopt the revised Land Retention Policy, which must be reflected in the ADPPs.

"Federal lands identified as PAC, priority habitat, important habitat (Idaho only), and general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse¹ will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation benefit to the Greater Sage-Grouse or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the lands have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse."

¹ Each sub-regional EIS may contain different classifications for these habitat types.

Language for <12" Precipitation Zone

Use of prescribed fires to manage sagebrush habitat in low (less than 12 inch) precipitation zones is not supported in the scientific literature for two primary reasons: habitat restoration is extremely difficult, particularly in low moisture scenarios, and purposefully introducing the primary threat to the sagebrush ecosystem within the Great Basin presents a risk of unintentional fire escape with resulting negative impacts. Pat pulled existing language from the four ADPPs and combined them into a statement that is proposed to go in all ADPPs for consistency.

- Avoid using prescribed fire in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat unless evaluation of site-specific conditions demonstrate that there would be a net benefit for sage-grouse. If prescribed fire is used in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, include an analysis in the NEPA document that indicates how Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives will be addressed and met by its use, why alternative techniques were not selected, and a risk assessment to address how potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat would be minimized.
- If prescribed fire is to be used at the implementation level, at a minimum, the burn plan will indicate how Conservation Objective Team/land use plan objectives would be addressed and met and why alternative techniques were not selected.
- Avoid prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment in Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species, or in areas with a potential for post-fire exotic annual dominance. However, after other treatment opportunities have been explored and as site specific variables allow, prescribed fire



could be used in these areas to meet specific fuels objectives that would maintain, improve, or restore Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in PPMAs (e.g., creation of fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer reduction treatments, used as a component with other treatment methods to combat annual grasses and restore native plant communities).

- Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality.

Discussion: This approach keeps the tool but provides the sideboards for use. The language could be condensed, but the concept is good.

OUTCOME: We agreed to add the language into all ADPPs.

What is Successful Restoration? A Utah Issue

The BLM commits to restoration of the habitat. The measure of success is restoration of the habitat (using existing tools like the HAF). USFWS would like to see measure of success be restoration of habitat and use by the Greater Sage-Grouse. This higher standard is needed due to the fragmented and small populations. There might be a hybrid approach based on adjacency. This is a range-wide issue on mitigation and what is meant by no net loss; this ties into the mitigation strategy.

Proposed approach: Restoration needs to occur in areas where birds are able and likely to re-settle or the ratio of restoration must necessarily increase. One option could be for restoration of habitat adjacent to existing populations.

OUTCOME: We agreed on the intent of the proposed approach.

Oregon General Habitat Island within Priority Habitat – Should management be the same?

This applies to infrastructure and mining development on roughly 100 acres of preliminary general habitat. Oregon is following the NPT Guidance for General Habitat in these islands, and is not proposing to manage them as Priority habitat.

Discussion: The ADPP will need to make sure to include justification for why the islands are treated differently. Every little difference included in the plans makes it more difficult to tell the story and does not send a strong conservation message.

OUTCOME: No change.

Conifers

There was inconsistency between Oregon and Nevada approaches: Nevada is based on Coates, and Oregon is based on Baruch-Mordo; both are using local science.

Distance of 1-mile buffer vs. 4-mile: Oregon's ADPP will use the 1 mile buffer based on science and added a citation to the revised text.



Proposed revised text for Oregon's ADPP: Remove encroaching juniper within 1.0 mile (Baruch-Mordo) of occupied or pending leks. Prioritize treatment leks based on lek count data, lek complexes and distribution of juniper. Treat phase 1 and early phase 2 juniper areas and other areas to benefit breeding and nesting sage-grouse, create movement corridors, and improve late brood-rearing habitat.

Discussion: The science can support different buffers. There will not be consistency locally due to science. All ADPPs have committed to best available science, VDDT, and FIAT so they are incorporated by reference in this topic.

Common Goal: Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied sage-grouse habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and tools like VDDT and the FIAT report will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated.

OUTCOME: All plans to incorporate the intent of the common goal into their ADPPs. Actions to achieve objective should be based on best available science.

Waivers, Exceptions, and Modifications

The BLM has stringent CFRs for oil and gas leasing and development, which serve as sideboards. The NPT Guidance for priority areas is either closed or open subject to NSO with specific exemptions including review by an interagency team (no waivers or modifications). The NSO is applied to the lease and the exemption for the APD subject to NEPA. We discussed that NSO with exemptions seems to deviate the intent for protecting the surface. No exemption is a clear message; if exemption is needed, it should be short and simple for clarity. For communication, we should work the language into something like NSO with exemptions following this process 1, 2, 3.... (vs. open with major stipulations).

See handout of comparison of language in the plans. All are consistent with NPT Guidance and relatively consistent across the states within preliminary priority habitat except for Idaho, which allows for exceptions with mitigation. Idaho does not have an interagency team review of exemptions.

OUTCOME: We need consistency in NSO and exemptions. All ADPPs agree to adopt NPT Guidance. (Montana is verifying).

Buffers

USFWS provided a quick overview of the science of buffers. Disturbance within 1-mile of lek can impact breeding. Most literature is focused on 4-mile around lek for disturbance. The Wyoming 0.6-mile buffer is not a standalone buffer; it includes density and mitigation requirements along with impact analysis to demonstrate no impact. Environmental factors (e.g., topography) influences the buffer the birds actually need.

See handout Comparison of Lek Buffers Presented in Great Basin ADPPs. There are different buffers between sub-regions and between the BLM and Forest Service; some have references to science for the buffers. All sub-regions need to reference science. The national monitoring group could review this.

OUTCOME: The monitoring team will review buffers to validate the science and look for if and where there is a need for consistency.



ACTION: Frank will coordinate with the monitoring team and have results by the Rocky Mountain Region Federal Family meeting.

Disturbance

Frank provided an overview of the disturbance process that would be used to measure the 3 percent disturbance cap. Disturbance is the relationship between the amount of sagebrush on the landscape and anthropogenic disturbance. Habitat degradation is measured over sagebrush potential (not where sagebrush exists).

Disturbance by potential = Habitat Degradation / Areas of biotic potential (contains sagebrush or could in the future).

Disturbance by PAC= Habitat Degradation / PAC (or can be for any unit)

Sagebrush availability = Existing vegetation type / Areas of biotic potential

We need a common scale and a common method that the public can understand.

We are working on establishing the meaningful scale (unit for measurement against the cap). For broad and mid-scale, there are the range, management zones, and populations. Biological significant units are an intermediate scale. Fine and site scale includes PAC, leks, winter range, and project level.

The NTT referenced a surveyed section as the scale.

The finer scale better represents the impact on/benefit to Greater Sage-Grouse.

The simplest approach is a consistent scale and one formula:

- Disturbance by unit = Habitat Degradation / PAC (or can be for any unit)

OUTCOME: Disturbance and Monitoring Subteam to define a common scale based on this input.

Overview of Plans – Jim and Sarah

Summary of major outcomes common to all ADPPs:

1. The BLM and Forest Service have reviewed all threats to the Greater Sage-Grouse as identified by the COT report and will develop and implement measures to eliminate or mitigate those threats on a landscape-level, in a coordinated manner, across the remaining range of the species based upon the findings and recommendations of the COT report, the NTT report, and best available science.
2. The BLM and Forest Service will retain all priority and preliminary general habitat lands currently under federal management and manage these for the benefit of the Greater Sage-Grouse.
3. The BLM and Forest Service will avoid and/or minimize further surface disturbance of PACs through closures or NSO stipulations applied to any further leasing and development of resources. Where valid existing rights could lead to surface disturbance, the BLM and Forest Service will work with lease holders to consolidate and limit further infrastructure in PACs in order to reduce the impacts of development where they may occur.



4. The BLM and Forest Service will eliminate or limit further development of rights of ways (e.g., transmission lines and pipelines) in PACs in order to minimize impacts. Efforts will be made to route transmission lines outside of PACs or, where this is not technically feasible, will use the least impactful route possible and mitigate for the full effect of the development.
5. All development on preliminary priority and general habitat will be mitigated to ensure no net unmitigated loss of habitat for the Greater Sage-Grouse.
6. The BLM and Forest Service will set specific, quantifiable objectives and timeframes for rangeland improvement and vegetative management to address the negative effects of improper grazing on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat.
7. The BLM and Forest Service will place a priority on the prevention and suppression of rangeland fires and the restoration of rangelands impacted by fire using the FIAT report to guide the development of priorities. Prescribed fire will not be used as a fire prevention tool in regions of less than 12 inches of precipitation unless certain defined exceptions are met. The agencies will use motorized travel restrictions, when appropriate, to aid in fire prevention.

Schedule

- Rocky Mountain Region Federal Family meeting will be in Denver (NOC) September 9th-11th.
- Engaging states in late September. The idea is to have a 2-day meeting with the Great Basin states and a 2-day meeting with the Rocky Mountain Region. The goal is to identify inconsistencies between federal and state plans, and identify remedies.
- Governor's Task Force will meet in early October.
- The BLM and Forest Service will resolve differences between plans as appropriate, after state meetings.
- Finalize ADPP and data.
- Data roll-up and conduct the cumulative effects analysis for each plan.
- Proposed Plans/Final EISs will be released winter 2014.
- Protest and Governor's Consistency Review.
- Idaho and Utah may have Section 7 consultation.
- RODs will be issued winter 2014/early spring 2015. One ROD for Great Basin and one for Rocky Mountain.
- Discussion: Need to talk to NOC about printer timelines.

Adaptive Management, Mitigation, and Monitoring via State Directors

NPT Guidance provides direction and has had legal review.

Oregon – Oregon's proposed adaptive management plan is based on habitat and population with hard and soft triggers. The hard trigger for population is 5-year moving average, 20 percent. Habitat is based on habitat loss; below 60 percent is the soft trigger, and below 30 percent is the hard trigger. When the hard trigger is reached, no more permitting will be allowed.

Idaho – Idaho worked closely with the State and USFWS. The adaptive management plan addresses the greatest threats. The soft trigger is a 10 percent decrease in population in any conservation area; identify cause and remedy. The hard trigger is 20 percent and would move Important habitat to Core habitat management.



Utah – Utah is working closely with State and on same page. The adaptive management plan is in compliance with NPT Guidance. Utah has a 7-year rolling average. Utah would likely follow the Nevada process.

Nevada/California – Nevada/California is working with the State. The plan includes hard and soft triggers for population at three different scales (lek, lek cluster, and biologically significant unit). Nevada/California is working with partners on population triggers. For habitat, the trigger is at two scales, lek and lek cluster. Nevada State is developing a mitigation credit system; California is looking to adopt this system.

Montana – Montana's adaptive management plan is still under development; Montana is committed to working within NPT Guidance. The state is not helping to develop triggers since they do not yet have a State Plan.

Closing Remarks

Noreen Walsh

1. COT sets the framework of reference for listing; therefore, PACs are a key geographic unit.
 - Need to address non-habitat in PACs.
 - Crosswalk of management to PACs is important.
 - PAC needs to be part of the analysis and part of the story.
2. Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health is a concern and will be scrutinized. The BLM and Forest Service need to be clear on standards and timeline. Overall, the ADPPs need to be different from what the USFWS saw in their 2010 plan reviews.
3. Clarity is needed to demonstrate to others that these ADPPs provide conservation certainty.
 - Changes in boundaries across stateliness will make telling the story difficult. While there might be a reason, we need to assess if it is worth doing it that way.
 - Use only two terms: preliminary priority habitat and preliminary general habitat.

Jim Lyons

This meeting has had beneficial outcomes and will help inform the Rocky Mountain Region. If we can demonstrate that we can work across jurisdictions, it will be a milestone. Talking points from the meeting:

The BLM, Forest Service, and USFWS leadership met in Portland this week to discuss our progress to date and the work that remains to develop a comprehensive, range-wide strategy for Greater Sage-Grouse conservation in the context of our multiple-use and sustained yield mission.

We had an intense and focused meeting. We made good progress in reviewing the BLM and Forest Service ADPPs and in determining what we need to do to address any remaining gaps and inconsistencies in the plans

We have one more meeting of the Federal Family to review the Rocky Mountains ADPPs in 2 weeks.

We look forward to meeting with the states to compare notes, to share our ADPPs, to review the state plans for state and private lands, and to see how we can work together to strengthen our ADPPs and our cumulative Greater Sage-Grouse conservation efforts, where needed.

We're optimistic that we can meet our goal of a landscape-level conservation strategy to conserve the Greater Sage-Grouse and avoid the need to list the species as threatened or endangered.



Much done and much work yet to do.

But working together with the states, we believe we can get there.

Neil Kornze

We appreciate all the hard work. We appreciate the State Director's creativity. Ed will lead consistency and edge mapping. Thanks to Noreen's and USFWS's input; continue to state your needs. We appreciate the DOI perspectives.

1. By end of the process, it will not be business as usual.
2. This is a great opportunity to implement the future of landscape planning.
3. The BLM is guided by the principle of multiple use and sustained yield; the agency has focused on the multiple use but needs to revisit sustain yield.



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**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
All	Land Tenure / Retention	<p>The following land retention policy text should be included into the ADPP for land retention and related management actions should be adjusted as appropriate:</p> <p>"Lands classified as priority habitat and general habitat (or habitat classification appropriate for the sub-region) for Greater Sage-Grouse will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation benefit to the Greater Sage-Grouse or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse."</p>	PMs to incorporate as written into ADPP	ADPP
All	Vegetation Management/ Prescribed Fire	<p>Incorporate the following language regarding when fire would be used as a vegetation treatment tool for areas with <12" precipitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using prescribed fire in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat unless evaluation of site-specific conditions demonstrate that there would be a net benefit for sage-grouse. If prescribed fire is used in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, include an analysis in the NEPA document that indicates how Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives will be addressed and met by its use, why alternative techniques were not selected, and a risk assessment to address how potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat would be minimized. • If prescribed fire is to be used at the implementation level, at a minimum, the burn plan will indicate how Conservation Objective Team/land use plan objectives would be addressed and met and why alternative techniques were not selected. • Avoid prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment in Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species, or in areas with a potential for post-fire exotic annual dominance. However, after other treatment opportunities have been explored and as site-specific variables allow, prescribed fire could be used in these areas to meet specific fuels objectives that would maintain, improve, or restore Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in PPMAs (e.g., creation of fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer reduction treatments, used as a component with other treatment methods to combat annual grasses and restore native plant communities). 	<p>Lauren to consolidate language</p> <p>PMs to incorporate into ADPP</p>	ADPP



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality. 		
All	Disturbance	All ADPPs should refer to the “disturbance cap” instead of disturbance threshold.	PMs incorporate into ADPPs	ADPP
All	Conifers/Veg Management	Incorporate the following common goal for conifer removal: “Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied sage-grouse habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and tools like VDDT and the FIAT report will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated.”	PMs to incorporate as written into ADPPs	ADPP
All	Fire	<p>Ensure ADPPs discuss the current authority for temporary closures as a travel management tool to reduce fire ignition risk.</p> <p>“In PPMA and PGMA, temporary closures will be considered in accordance with 43 CFR subpart 8364 (Closures and Restrictions); 43 CFR subpart 8351 (Designated National Area); 43 CFR subpart 6302 (Use of Wilderness Areas, Prohibited Acts, and Penalties); 43 CFR subpart 8341 (Conditions of Use).</p> <p>Temporary closure or restriction orders under these authorities are enacted at the discretion of the authorized officer to resolve management conflicts and protect persons, property, and public lands and resources. Where an authorized officer determines that off-highway vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources, the affected areas shall be immediately closed to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence. (43 CFR 8341.2) A closure or restriction order should be considered only after other management strategies and alternatives have been explored. The duration of temporary closure or restriction orders should be limited to 24 months or less; however, certain situations may require longer closures and/or iterative temporary closures. This may include closure of routes or areas.”</p>	PMs to verify this is discussed in Chapter 2.	ADPP
All	Fluid Minerals	Exceptions related to fluid minerals - All ADPPs will consider NPT Guidance	PMS	ADPP
All	Consistency	Mitigation team will review buffer sizes between ADPPs to validate the science and provide	Frank/Science	9/8/14



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
		recommendations for consistent buffers.	Team (USGS)	
All	Consistency	Disturbance and Monitoring Sub-team to continue work on disturbance framework striving for a simple formula.	Frank / Vicki / Gordon	9/8/14
All	Consistency	Develop a template for priority management/habitat to PAC crosswalk. This would include a map showing an overlay of priority habitat/management and general habitat/management with the PACs.	Kathy and Matt	9/22/14
All	Clarity	Define loose language (e.g., “if technically and economic feasible...” what is technical feasibility?)	Ed	
All	Consistency	Grazing management and monitoring is not consistent across plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review rangeland health science (e.g. Connelly vs. Coates). Is it appropriate to cite this current science or reference best available science to allow for flexibility to adjust as we learn more. Ensure grazing programs have an objective statement about maintaining or improving sagebrush habitat in order to provide intent for standards and monitoring. 	SOL	ASAP
All	RDFs	Develop a table summarizing existing conditions for development and for RDFs for Great Basin by population.	Matt, Frank, BLM PMs	9/8/14
All	Fluid minerals	Consider incorporating the language from the Lander plan that addresses the approach of prioritizing fluid mineral development outside PACs.	Matt to provide language to SOL for review. PMs incorporate into ADPPs.	ADPP
Oregon	ROW and mining	Review general habitat for infrastructure and mining management direction in population #31.	Jerry and Joan	8/21/14
All	Habitat maps	BLM State offices should work with USFWS, the Solicitor’s Office, and internally when/if they get new maps from their respective State counterparts that identify new or redefined boundaries for GRSB habitat.	BLM State Offices (PMs?) and SOL	On-going
Utah	Restoration	ADPP should include the following language: “Restoration needs to occur in areas where birds are able and likely to re-settle or the ratio of restoration must necessarily increase. One option could be restoration of habitat adjacent to existing populations.”	Quincy add to ADPP	ADPP
Utah	ROWs / Corridors	Coordinate with USFWS, the Solicitor’s Office, and internally regarding designation of new energy corridors.	Quincy and SOL	ADPP



**ATTACHMENT A:
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE GREAT BASIN FEDERAL FAMILY MEETING - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Applicable Sub-regions?	Topic or Resource Program	Outcome and Action	Who?	When?
Utah	Habitat maps	The FWS PACs in Utah are based entirely on State of Utah "Sage-Grouse Management Areas," which include areas labeled "non-habitat" and "opportunity areas" that do not provide habitat for sage-grouse. The FWS expressed interest in the BLM managing some of these areas as priority in the ADPP. Need to determine whether the BLM can include "opportunity areas" of non-habitat within the Utah PACs into priority management (red areas on map within the PACs).	SOL	ASAP
Utah	Clarity	Add paragraph to the ADPP that explains why 23,000 acres identified in the DEIS as PPMA is now considered to be within PGMA	Quincy	ADPP
Utah	Policy	For mineral materials, leasable minerals, and non-energy minerals in PPMA, ADPP will consider not allowing expansion of existing mines within 4-miles of leks due to the sensitivity of the fragmented populations in Utah. USFWS to provide science to back it up.	Quincy and Pat	8/21
Utah	Coal Leasing Stipulations	SOL to counsel BLM on appropriateness of applying a 4-mile NSO buffer for coal mining.	SOL	ASAP
Idaho	Clarity	Provide short description of the rationale for three management zones; why those three zones (and their corresponding management actions) make sense for all resource uses, not just fire; and how management decisions in those three zones meets NPT Guidance (for all threats).	Brent	ADPP
Idaho	Fluid minerals	The BLM and Forest Service approaches are different; revise for clarity or clearly articulate the reason for the different approaches.	Glen and Brent	ADPP
Idaho	Fluids Minerals	Determine if an area should be closed to oil and gas but open for geothermal because of potential.	SOL	ASAP



*Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting
August 19-21 / Portland, Oregon*

Attachment B: Sign-In Sheet



*Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting
August 19-21 / Portland, Oregon*

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**Great Basin Federal Family Meeting
Portland, Oregon August 19-21, 2014
Sign-In Sheet**



Date August 19, 2014 Location: BLM Oregon State Office

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*Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting
August 19-21 / Portland, Oregon*

Attachment C: PowerPoint Presentations



*Greater Sage-Grouse Federal Family Meeting
August 19-21 / Portland, Oregon*

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BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan

National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan

Federal Family Meeting
Portland, Oregon

August 19-21, 2014

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

1

Presentation Overview

- Context for GRSG conservation plan
- Efforts to date
- Roll-up process
 - Objectives for this meeting
 - Expectations and Essential Outcomes
- Next step – engaging the states

BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

2

Background

- **March, 2010** : FWS “warranted but precluded” determination – requires “regulatory certainty”
- **December, 2011**:
 - Federal/state partnership meeting convened by Sec. Salazar/governors
 - December 2011, BLM releases NTT report
- **February, 2013**: USGS issues baseline report “Summary of Science, Activities, Programs, and Policies That Influence the Rangewide Conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse”
- **March, 2013**: FWS issues Conservation Objectives Team (COT) report under direction of SGTF



GRSG Conservation Plan Objective

“... to develop recommendations on how to best *advance a coordinated, multi-state, range-wide effort to conserve the sage-grouse, including the identification of conservation measures to ensure the long-term viability of the species.*”

From: Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Objectives: Final Report. February 2013.



Key Findings in the COT report

“Stop the bleeding” –

1. “Maintenance of the integrity of PACs is the essential foundation for sage-grouse conservation”
2. “Important habitats outside of PACs be conserved to the extent possible”
3. “Requires eliminating activities known to negatively impact sage-grouse and their habitats or re-designing these activities to achieve the same goal”



Reinforcing Findings in the NTT report

“New Paradigm”

... Management priorities will need to be shifted and balanced to maximize benefits to sage-grouse habitats and populations in priority habitats.

Adequacy of management adjustments will be measured by science-based effectiveness monitoring of the biological response of sage-brush landscapes and sage-grouse populations. Ultimately, success will be measured by the maintenance and enhancement of sage-grouse populations well into the future.”



Reinforcing Findings in the NTT report

"New Paradigm"

... Management priorities will need to be shifted and balanced to maximize benefits to sage-grouse habitats and populations in priority habitats.

Adequacy of management adjustments will be measured by science-based effectiveness monitoring of the biological response of sage-brush landscapes and sage-grouse populations. Ultimately, success will be measured by the maintenance and enhancement of sage-grouse populations well into the future."



Reinforcing Findings in the NTT report

"New Paradigm"

... Management priorities will need to be shifted and balanced to maximize benefits to sage-grouse habitats and populations in priority habitats.

Adequacy of management adjustments will be measured by science-based effectiveness monitoring of the biological response of sage-brush landscapes and sage-grouse populations. Ultimately, success will be measured by the maintenance and enhancement of sage-grouse populations well into the future."



Key Milestones

Milestone	Date
✓ All draft EISs published/ public comment periods closed	Spring 2014
✓ Administrative draft proposed plans (ADDPs) produced	June/July 2014
✓ Draft plan data converted to geospatial displays in order to permit review of conservation strategies in response to identified threats for each PAC/population	July/August 2014
BLM/FWS planning teams meet to review plans for consistency, adequacy, and cumulative conservation response to threats in each PAC	Aug 2014
States join conversation to review plans and evaluate combined conservation effort in response to PAC threats	Aug/Sept 2014
Land use plans revised in response to joint plan review	Fall 2014
Proposed land use plan revisions / final EIS protest periods and governor consistency reviews	Fall 2014
Land use plan records of decision are signed	Late Fall 2014/ early 2015



Objectives of this Meeting

- 1. Identify threats to Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) for each PAC/population within the BLM/FS planning area as identified in the COT Report**
- 2. Determine how each BLM and FS plan addresses these threats through land use allocations and other conservation actions**



Objectives of this Meeting (continued)

3. Discuss the adequacy of the land use allocation decisions and other conservation measures to address these threats and any changes in plans required to address inadequacies and/or inconsistencies in response
4. Provide clear and specific guidance to develop draft final administrative plans that are adequate to address the threats to each GRSG population identified in the COT Report

Table 2. Sage-grouse quasi-extinction risk (from Garton *et al.* 2011), and threats, by management zone and population. Populations are those defined by Garton *et al.* (2011), although in some cases sub-populations were identified to help refine threat characterization (see Figure 3). Population estimates and quasi-extinction risk estimates are from Garton *et al.* (2011). Threats are characterized as: Y = threat is present and widespread, L = threat present but localized, N = threat is not known to be present, and U = Unknown.

Population	Unit Number	Population Abundance and Estimated Quasi-extinction Risk					Management Zone	Threats												
		<200 Males/500 Birds	% Chance of <50 birds/20 males in 2037	% Chance of <500 birds/200 males in 2037	% Chance of <50 birds/20 males in 2107	% Chance of <500 birds/200 males in 2107		Isolated/Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-Roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
Management Zone I: Great Plains																				
		9.3	11.1	22.8	21															
Dakotas (ND, SD)	1	N	4.6	39.5	44.6	66.3	I	Y	L	L	Y	U	L	Y	Y	Y	L	N	N	N
Northern Montana (MT)	2	N	0	0	0.2	2.0	I	N	L	L	L	N	L	Y	N	Y	Y	N	L	N
Powder River Basin (WY)	3	N	2.9	16.5	85.7	86.2	I	N	L	N	L	L	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	L
Yellowstone Watershed (MT)	4	N	0	8.1	55.6	59.8	I	N	L	Y	L	L	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	L	N

Conservation Threats: Zone I



APPENDIX A—MANAGEMENT ZONE AND POPULATION RISK ASSESSMENTS

See Figure 3 for a map of management zones and populations.

MANAGEMENT ZONE I: GREAT PLAINS

This management zone consists of four sage-grouse populations as identified by Garton *et al.* (2011), including the Dakotas, Northern Montana, Powder River Basin, and Yellowstone Watershed populations. All of these populations cross state or provincial boundaries. Garton *et al.* (2011) predicted an 11.1 percent chance this Management Zone will fall below 200 males by 2037, and a 24.0 percent chance it would fall below 200 males by 2107. Privately-owned lands are a major constituent of sagebrush landscapes in the Great Plains (66 percent), followed by BLM (17 percent), and then other ownerships (Knick 2011). After Management Zones II and IV, this zone contains some of the most connected networks of sage-grouse leks in the range (Knick and Hanser 2011). On the other hand, sagebrush habitat in 37 percent of this zone is 75-100 percent similar to sagebrush habitat in areas where extirpation has occurred (Wisdom *et al.* 2011). Generally, areas in this zone that are least similar to extirpated parts of the range include the western portions of Northern Montana and Powder River populations and the southeast corner of the Yellowstone Watershed population (Wisdom *et al.* 2011, Figure 18.5).



Conservation Threats: Dakotas Population



Dakotas

The Dakotas's population occurs on the far eastern edge of the range of sage-grouse. Much of the population occurs in the Cedar Creek Anticline. Garton *et al.* (2011) reported the minimum male count for this population at 587 and predicted a 66 percent chance that this population would dip below 200 males in the next 100 years. Population counts in 2012 for North and South Dakota were approximately 300, so this population as a whole very likely still exceeds 500 birds. Priority areas for conservation (PACs) in North and South Dakota are connected by general habitat consisting of limited sagebrush habitat. Sage-grouse movements generally occur east and west between the Dakotas's population and Montana. Connectivity between the sub-populations occurs through Montana's portion of the population (Knick and Hanser 2011). This area was identified as a PAC in Montana due to historically high density of sage-grouse and for the seasonal habitat it provides for birds from North Dakota, a likely conduit for genetic connectivity. The area is heavily influenced by oil and gas development and conversion of native rangeland to cropland is a major threat to the persistence of this sage-grouse population. Over-grazing in localized areas has degraded the sagebrush habitat and can reduce nesting success. Nesting success was positively correlated to grass cover in North Dakota (Herman-Brunson 2007). Overall, this population is small and at high risk.



Conservation Threat Reduction Objectives



Threat Reduction

The following threat reduction objectives and measures are targeted at the habitat threats facing the greater sage-grouse, as identified in the 2010 warranted but precluded finding (75 FR 13910). Successful achievement of these objectives across the species' range will ameliorate the threats to greater sage-grouse, including the Bi-State DPS, and allow for the long-term conservation of the species. In the development of conservation plans to achieve these threat reduction objectives, entities (states, federal land management agencies, etc.) should coordinate with FWS. This will help to ensure that the conservation plans adequately address the threats contributing to the 2010 warranted but precluded finding.



Conservation Measures: Energy



Energy Development

The increasing demand for renewable and non-renewable energy resources is resulting in continued development within the greater sage-grouse range, resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation, direct and indirect disturbance. Development results in sage-grouse population declines.

Conservation Objective: Energy development should be designed to ensure that it will not impinge upon stable or increasing sage-grouse population trends.

Addressing energy development and any subsequent successful reclamation activities in sagebrush ecosystems will require consideration of local ecological conditions, which cannot be prescribed on a range-wide level. Where state sage-grouse management plans have already identified an effective strategy for energy development that meets the above objective, the strategies in those plans should be implemented. In all other situations, the following measures should be considered to avoid, reduce, or mitigate impacts from energy development.

Conservation Measures:

1. Avoid energy development in PACs (Delany *et al.* 2010). Identify areas where leasing is not acceptable, or not acceptable without stipulations for surface occupancy that maintains sage-grouse habitat.
2. If avoidance is not possible within PACs due to pre-existing valid rights, adjacent development, or split estate issues, development should only occur in non-habitat areas, including all riparian structures, with an adequate buffer that is sufficient to preclude impacts to sage-grouse habitat from noise, and other human activities.
3. If development must occur in sage-grouse habitats due to existing rights and lack of reasonable alternative avoidance measures, the development should occur in the least suitable habitat for sage-grouse and be designed to ensure at a minimum that there are no detectable declines in sage-grouse population trends (and seek increases if possible) by implementing the following:
 - a. Reduce and maintain the density of energy structures below which there are no impacts to the function of the sage-grouse habitats (as measured by no declines in sage-grouse use), or do not result in declines in sage-grouse populations within PACs.
 - b. Design development outside PACs to maintain populations within adjacent PACs and allow for connectivity among PACs.
 - c. Consolidate structures and infrastructure associated with energy development.
 - d. Reclamation of disturbance resulting from a proposed project should only be considered as mitigation for those impacts, not portrayed as re-minimization.
 - e. Design development to minimize tall structures (towers, powerlines), or other features associated with the development (e.g., noise from drilling or ongoing operations; Blitckley *et al.* 2012).





Keys to Success

BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan

1. **Retain and restore SG habitats within PACs** (p.37)
2. **Increase occupancy and connectivity between PACs** (p.37)
3. **Restrict or contain fire** (p.40)
4. **Stop the spread of invasive grasses** (p.42)
5. **Avoid energy development in PACs** (p.43)
6. **Avoid sagebrush removal or manipulation** (p.44)
7. **Ensure grazing allotments meet ecological potential and habitat requirements** (p.45)



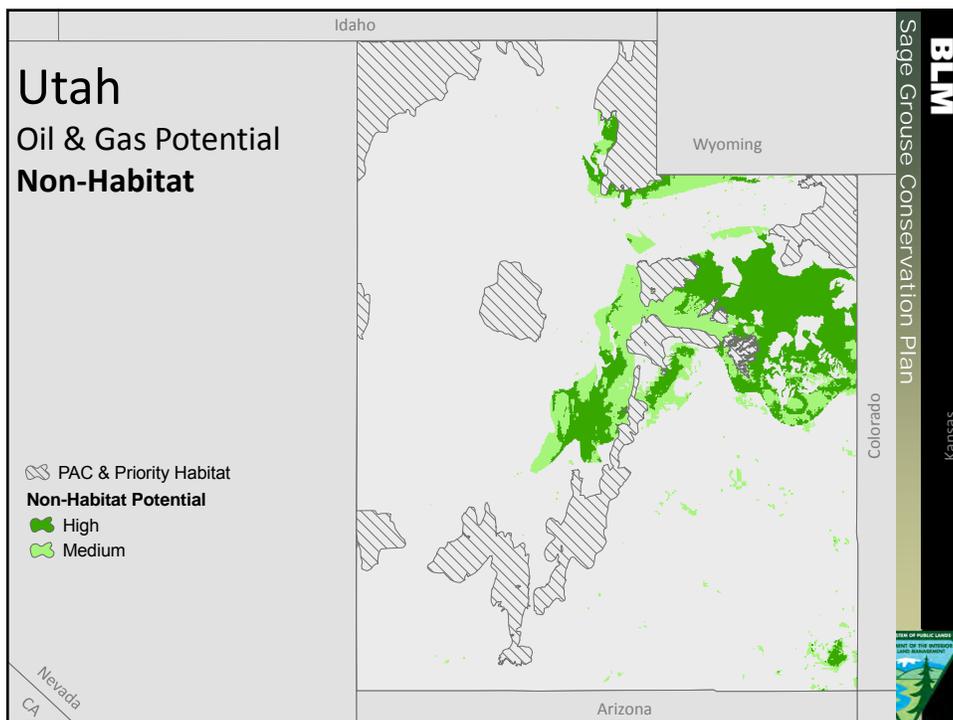
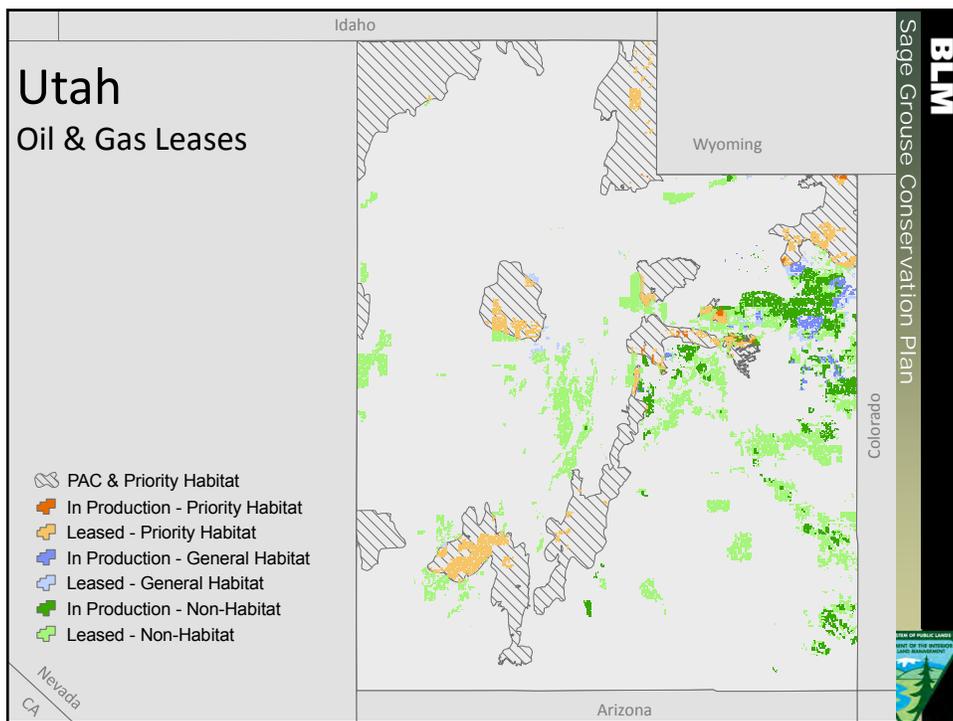


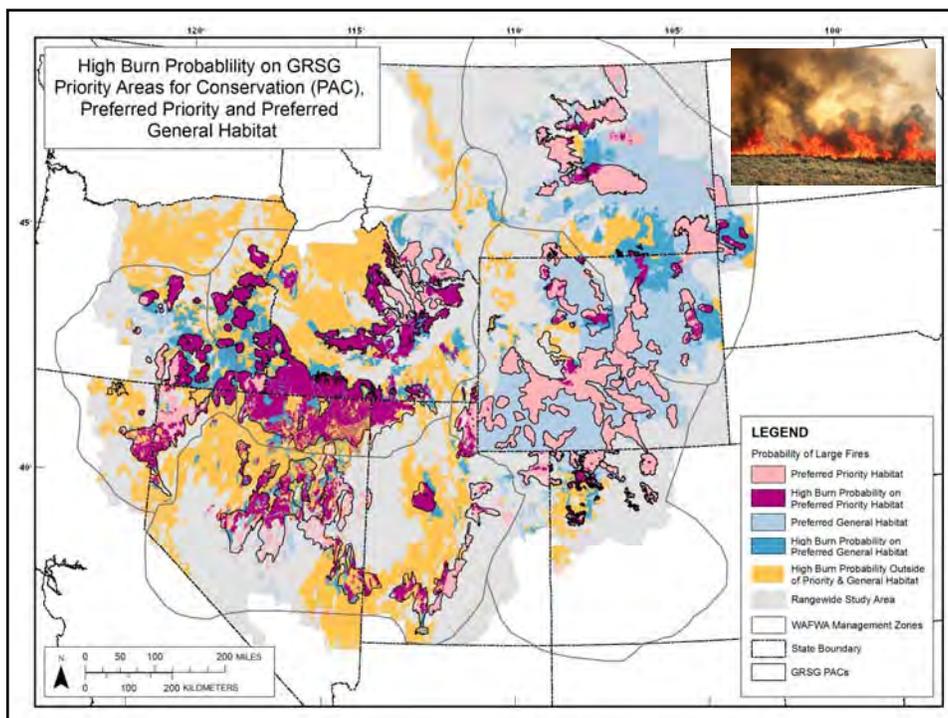
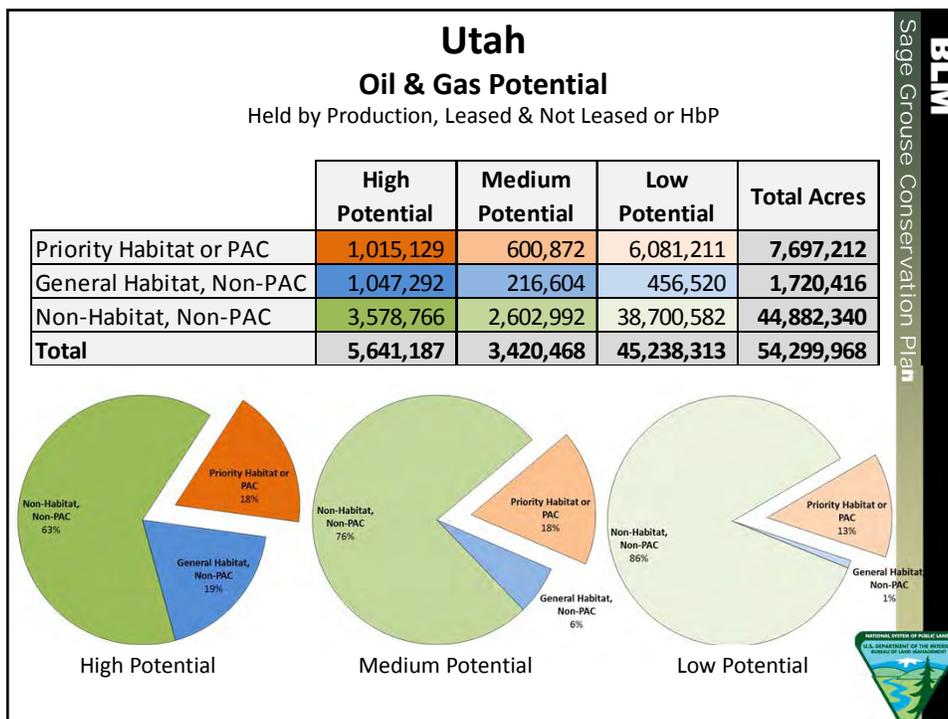
Keys to Success

BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan

8. **Avoid or reduce impacts of range management structures on SG** (p.46)
9. **Protect SG from impacts of free-roaming equids** (p.46)
10. **Avoid further loss of habitat due to agricultural conversion** (p.48)
11. **Avoid new mining activities in occupied habitats and leasing until other suitable habitats can be restored** (p.49)
12. **No new development of infrastructure corridors (e.g., transmission) within PACs** (p.51)







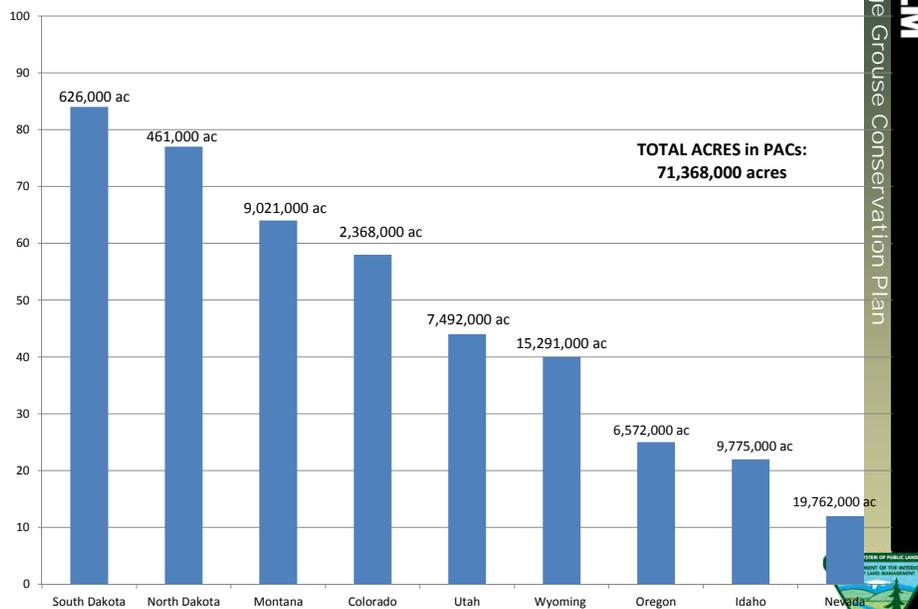
Key Milestones Ahead

Milestone	Date
✓ All draft EISs published/public comment periods closed	Spring 2014
✓ Administrative draft proposed plans in development	June 2014
✓ Draft plan data converted to geospatial displays in order to permit review of conservation strategies in response to identified threats for each PAC/population	July 2014
BLM/FWS planning teams meet to review plans for consistency, adequacy, and cumulative conservation response to threats in each PAC	Aug 2014
States join BLM/FS/FWS planning teams to review plans and combined conservation effort in response to PAC threats	Aug/Sept 2014
Land use plans revised in response to joint plan review	Fall 2014
Proposed land use plan revisions / final EIS protest periods and governor consistency reviews	Fall 2014
Land use plan records of decision are signed	Late Fall 2014/ early 2015

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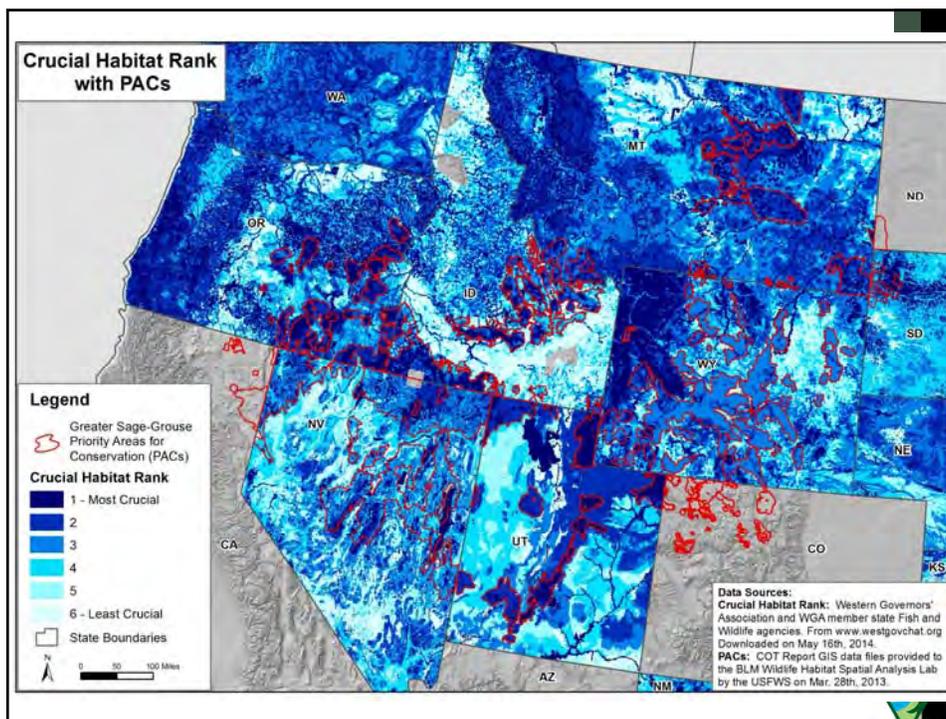


% STATE/PRIVATE LANDS WITHIN SAGE GROUSE PACs



BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan





Key Questions

- Do the BLM and FS plans adequately address the conservation threats identified in the COT report for each population?
- Are the conservation strategies consistent and rational?
- Can differences be justified?
- How do state SG conservation plans align with federal plans?
- Is the cumulative conservation effort (BLM/FS/states) adequate to conserve the species?



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Summary



Remaining tasks:

1. Roll up of BLM/FS plans
2. Discussions with states
 - Assess cumulative conservation effort for FS/BLM/state plans for each population and WAFWA zone
 - Revise ADDPs, as necessary
3. Complete final BLM/FS plans
4. Develop regional RODs
5. Deliver to FWS for listing decision



"The ills of the sagebrush ecosystem are well documented. It is considered to be one of the most imperiled of all ecosystems in the United States."

Michael Wisdom, PNW Research Station in La Grande, Oregon



**BLM Approach to Developing
Administrative Draft Proposed Plans**

**Great Basin Federal Family Meeting
“Roll-up”**

August 19, 2014

BLM
Sage Grouse Conservation Plan



Key Milestones Ahead

Milestone	Date
All draft EIS public comments periods closed	Spring 2014
Draft final proposed plans in development	June 2014
“Roll-up” initiated with compilation of draft plan data	Aug 2014
BLM/FS/FWS planning teams meet to review plans for consistency, adequacy, and cumulative conservation response to threats in each PAC	Aug 2014
States join BLM/FS/FWS planning teams to review plans and combined conservation effort in response to PAC threats	Sept 2014
Land use plans revised in response to joint plan review	Fall 2014
Proposed land use plan revisions / final EIS protest periods and governor consistency reviews	Fall 2014
Land use plan records of decision are signed	Late Fall 2014/ early 2015

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Sage Grouse Conservation Plan



Roll-up Process

- The “Roll-up” will evaluate whether the cumulative conservation efforts in the revised draft plans effectively address the conservation threats to GRSG.
- Regional conservation measures within the populations and the results of the allocation data sent to the NOC were used to measure the overall conservation benefits.
- Chapter 2 of the Draft FEISs were reviewed to identify the threats identified in the COT Report.
- Based on Chapter 2 information population summaries were created as to how these threats are being addressed.



Roll-up Results

- Maps and population summaries will be used to inform decisions at the Federal family meetings
- Make any necessary changes to the ADPPs based on decisions resulting from this exercise.
- Meet with the Governor’s representatives to discuss the State’s Plans (Sept./October).



Questions/Discussion



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5

Schedule Discussion Great Basin Federal Family Meeting “Roll-up”



August 21, 2014

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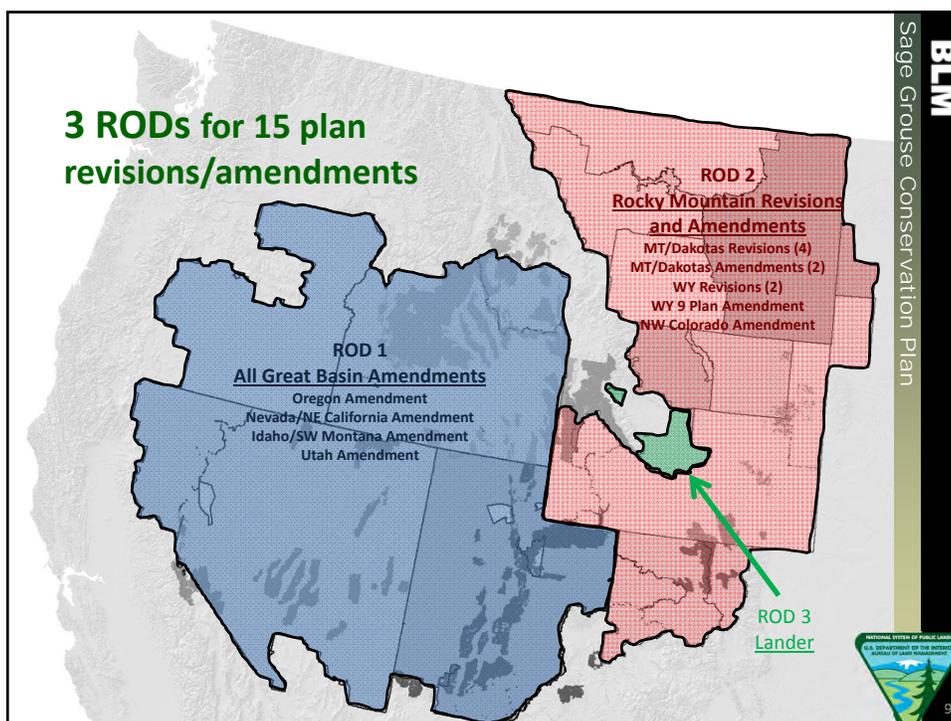
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Roll-up and Planning Process	
Step #	Roll-up/Planning 12 Step Process
1	Sub-region sends memo to AD-200 for review
2	AD 200 reviews memo and contacts sub-regional SD.
2a	Sub-regions send ADPP data to the NOC.
3	NOC completes WAFWA MZ Tier II CEA MZ tables
3a	NOC completes WAFWA MZ Roll-up land use allocation maps
3b	EMPSi completes Tier II CEA MZ analysis and sends analysis to sub-regions
4G	Great Basin Federal Family Roll-up review meetings
4R	Rocky Mountain Federal Family Roll-up review meetings
5	Meeting with States on Final Federal Plans
6	Final Resolution of Federal Plans (if necessary)
7	Directors brief the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary (status update)
8	WO Review Starts
8a	Sub-region responds to WO review comments
8b	WO resolves any pending concerns that arise out of the WO Review
9	National Policy Team Briefing
10	BLM Director's Briefing
11	Secretaries of DOI and USDA Briefing
12	Publish Proposed Plan EISs (Falls on a Friday per EPA requirements)
Step #	Post PRMP/FEIS Planning Steps
13	Protest Period Ends (30 day mandatory protest period)
13a	Protest Resolution Process Ends (45 days - discretionary)
14	Governor's Consistency Review Ends (60 day mandatory governor consistency review)
15	Director's Briefing
16	Secretaries of DOI and USDA Briefing
17	RODs are signed



- ## Getting to the Finish Line
- **WO and SOL reviews and revisions**
 - **Protest response – expecting large number of protests (30-days after NOA for Final EIS)**
 - **Governor’s 60-day consistency review**
 - **Formal Section 7 consultation would require 135 days before ROD**
 - **Potential FOIA requests**
 - **Preparing RODs**





Records of Decisions (RODs)

- **Desire**: tell story of how the cumulative conservation effort from all FS and BLM management actions achieves conservation objectives for the GSG
- **Objective**: minimize the number of RODs to:
 - illustrate how management actions respond to common threats (e.g. fire in GB/oil and gas in RM)
 - demonstrate a coordinated, cohesive strategy
- **Example**: Western Solar Energy Plan
 - cohesive, coordinated, landscape approach
 - one ROD /amended 89 RMPs across 6 states

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NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Key Points!

1. State/federal partners have framed the strategy to conserve the Greater Sage-Grouse
2. Maintaining the integrity of PACs is critical
3. BLM/FS plans must provide a strong foundation for conserving the GRSG, but...
4. State and private lands comprise 1/3 of PACS
5. Scientifically-sound, consistent, coordinated planning across the landscape is essential
6. “Smart” development can conserve the GRSG and preserve development options
7. Working together on this is *critical* to our success

Questions/Discussion





**National Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan
Great Basin Federal Family Meeting**

BLM - Forest Service
Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan

**Portland, Oregon
August 19 - 21, 2014**



**What Have We Been Doing Since The
Last Time We Were In Portland?**

- Addressing public comments on Draft EISs
- Coordinating with Federal and State Partners
- Incorporating changes between the Draft EIS Preferred Alternatives and Administrative Draft Proposed Plans (ADPPs)
 - Great Basin wide changes
 - Subregional changes

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Global Changes for the Great Basin Between Draft and Final EISs

- Augmented the Monitoring Framework
- Refined the Mitigation Strategy
- Included a 3% disturbance threshold in priority habitat
- Committed to No Net Unmitigated Loss in all habitats
- Incorporated an Adaptive Management Strategy with hard and soft triggers
- Integrated the FIAT Report with the Chambers guidelines and provided direction for completing the assessments



Global Changes for the Great Basin Between Draft and Final EISs (cont.)

- Added measurable vegetation treatment objectives from VDDT modeling
- Inserted consistent ROW avoidance criteria
- Incorporated standalone FS DPPAs with a crosswalk to the BLM ADPPs
- Worked through the NPT guidance on consistent allocation decisions
- Will include a cumulative impact analysis to Sage-Grouse by WAFWA management zone



Major Changes Specific to Utah Between Draft and Final EISs

- Changed from a lek centric Preferred Alternative to applying allocation decisions on all PPMA
- Not applying new allocative/resource restrictions (except for FS) to PGMA, but applying no net unmitigated loss to all habitats
- Added 1/640 density disturbance limitation
- Added additional detail and decisions to address the conifer encroachment threat
- Added new designated ROW utility corridors
- Added the Alton Coal Mine area as PPMA (from PGMA in draft)
- Added additional restrictive management actions to reduce prescribed fire and sagebrush removal in sagebrush habitat

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Major Changes Specific to Nevada / California Between Draft and Final EISs

- Reduced number of designated utility corridors within GRS habitat
- Incorporated additional wild horse and burro measures/actions from the Nevada State Plan
- Incorporated goals and objectives and some actions tied to predation from the Nevada State Plan
- Added a 3% disturbance threshold to the Proposed Plan, but are currently asking for a variance
- Made a commitment to work with the State of Nevada on mitigation banking

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Major Changes Specific to Oregon Between Draft and Final EISs

- Changed wind and solar allocations to be more restrictive
- Added specific language to address the key threats in Oregon (conifer encroachment, annual grasses)
- Applied a tiered decadal approach to the 3% disturbance threshold (1% per decade)
- Added more restrictive actions within lek protective zones to General Habitat
- In response to public comment in Research Natural Areas, revised livestock grazing allocations



Major Changes Specific to Idaho/SW Montana Between Draft and Final EISs

- Idaho:
 - Changed oil and gas allocations to be more restrictive in Core Habitat
 - Refined comprehensive avoidance criteria for all anthropogenic activities addressed in the disturbance threshold
 - Incorporated additional specific measures in conjunction with the Idaho State Plan
 - Re-mapped Sage-grouse habitats based on site-specific mapping and ground truthing (approximate change of 300,000 acres less)
- SW Montana:
 - Propose using the DDCT model for disturbance calculations
 - Added more restrictive fluid mineral stipulations
 - Ongoing discussions regarding the use of the FIAT Report and Connelly quantitative vegetation objections table





Population/PAC Groupings

WAFWA Management Zone V

- A. Oregon Sub-region Populations (17 & 28)
- B. Western Great Basin Population (31)

WAFWA Management Zone III

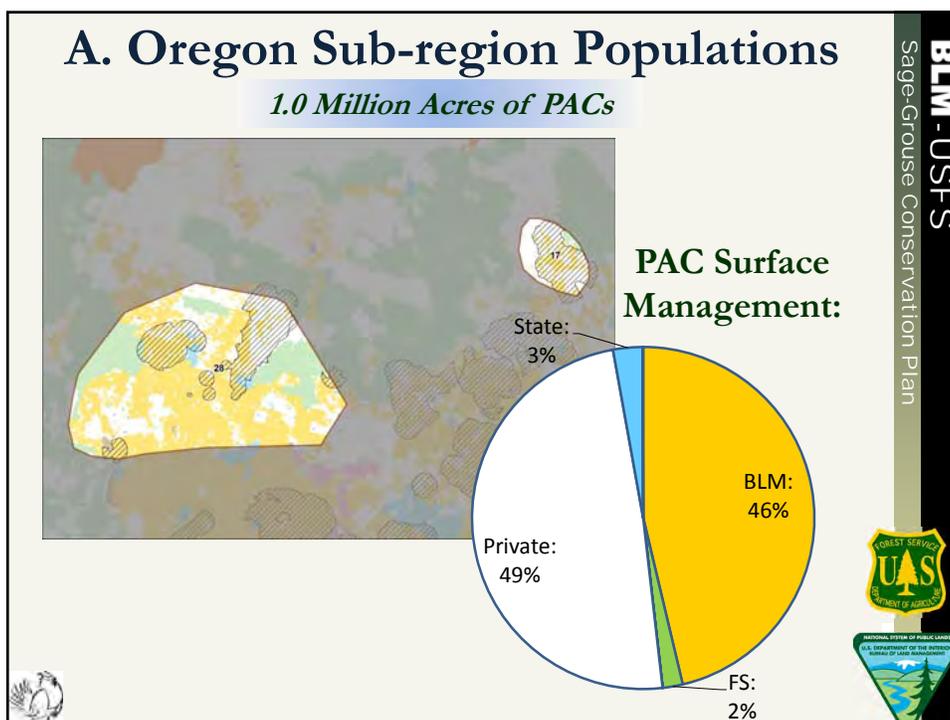
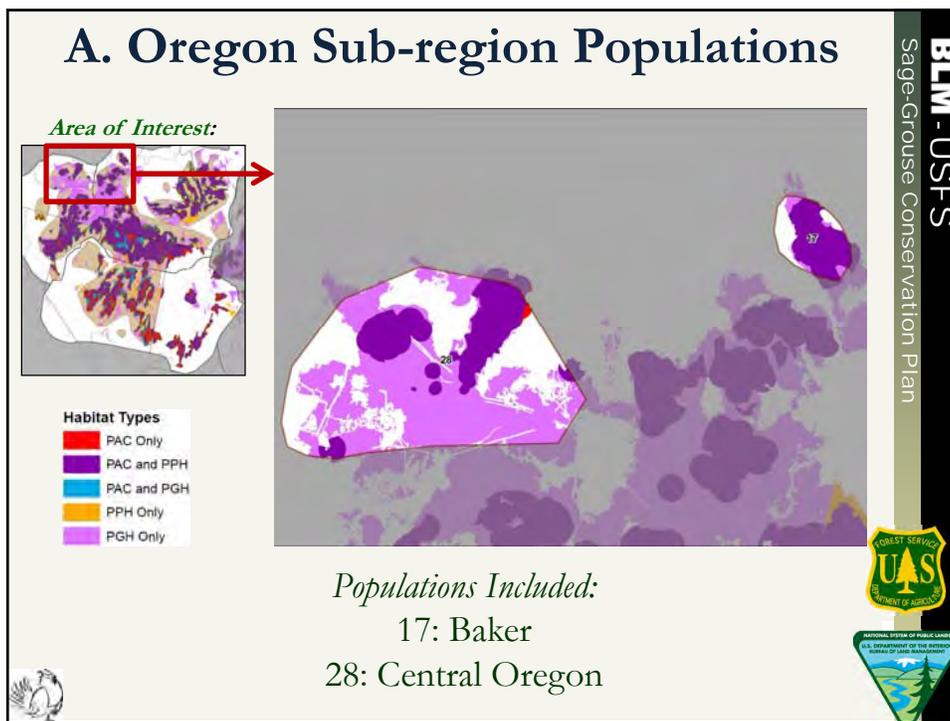
- C. Utah Sub-region Populations (9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)
- D. Nevada/NE California Sub-region Populations (14, 15c, and 30)

WAFWA Management Zone IV

- E. Idaho Sub-region Populations (18, 23, 25, and 27)
- F. Northern Great Basin Population (26a)
- G. Southwest Montana Population (19-22)

27 Populations; ~150 PAC polygons

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A. Oregon Sub-region Populations

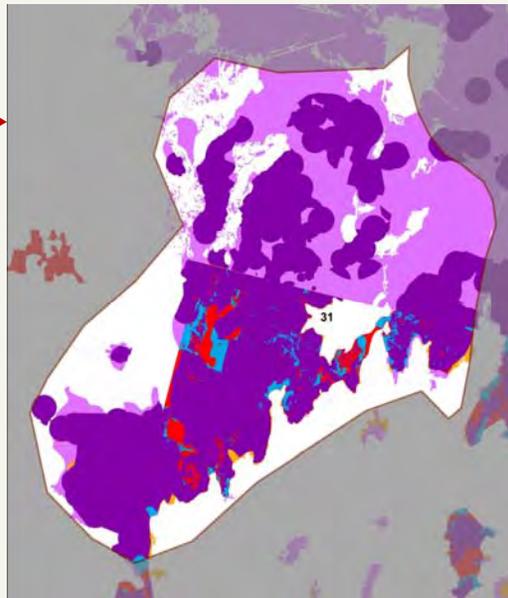
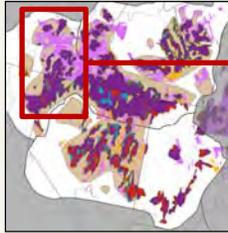
Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
17	Y	Y	Y	Y	L	Y	L	Y	L			L	L
28		L	L	Y	Y	Y	L	Y	L	Y		L	L
✓													

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B. Population 31: Western Great Basin

Area of Interest:



Population Included:
31: Western Great Basin

- Habitat Types**
- PAC Only
 - PAC and PPH
 - PAC and PGH
 - PPH Only
 - PGH Only



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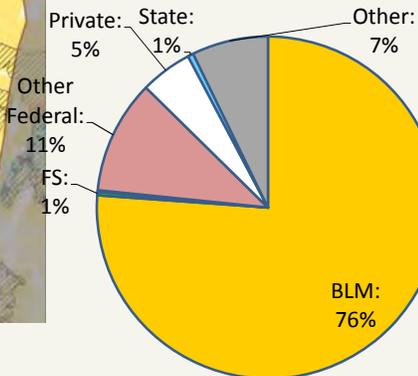



B. Population 31: Western Great Basin

6.9 Million Acres of PACs



PAC Surface Management:

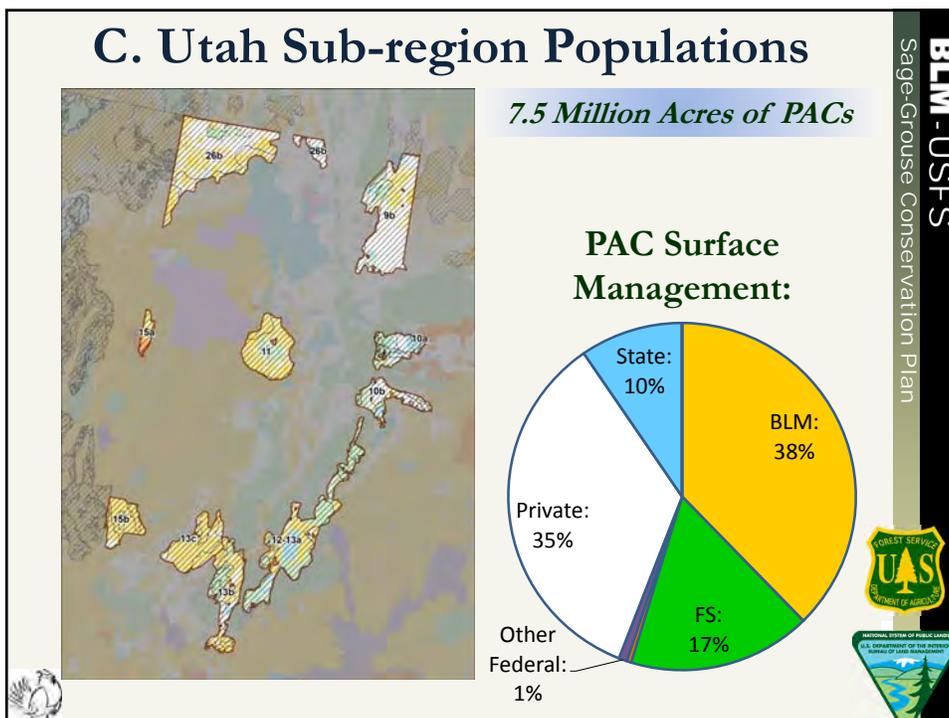
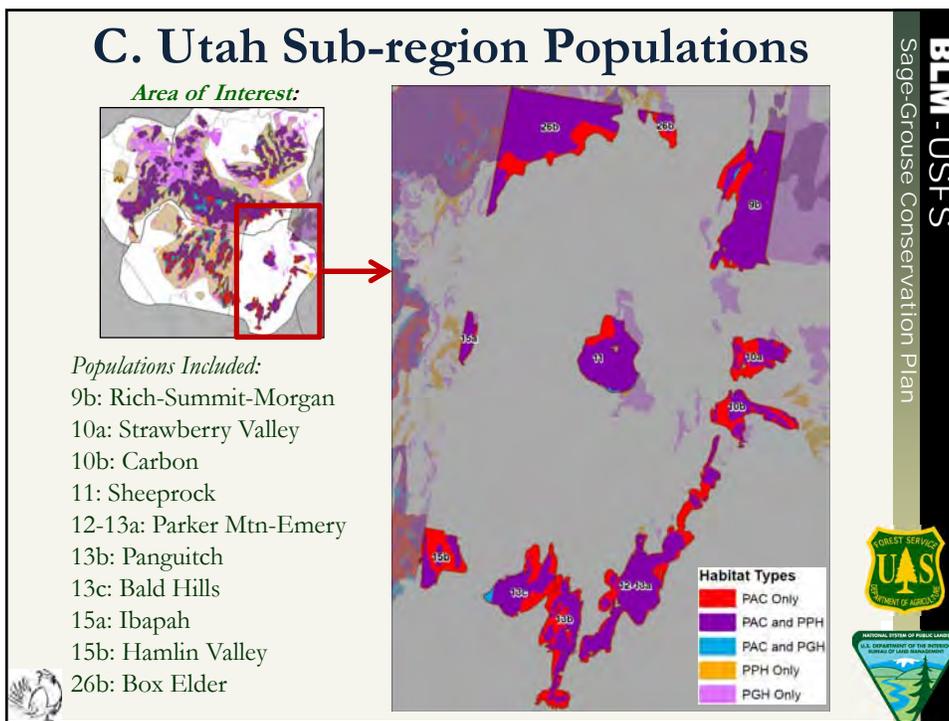


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B. Population 31: Western Great Basin

Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
31		L	L	Y	Y	Y	L	L	L	Y	Y		

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C. Utah Sub-region Populations

Pop #	Small Size	SB Elim.	Ag. Conv.	Fire	Conifers	Weeds	Energy	Mining	Infrast.	Grazing	Equids	Rec.	Urban.
9b				Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y
9c				Y	Y	Y	L	Y	Y			Y	Y
10a	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	
10b	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
11	Y			Y	L	L	Y	Y	L		Y	L	
12	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
13a				Y	Y	Y			Y			Y	
13b			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	L	Y			Y	L
13c	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y
15a	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	
15b	Y			Y	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	
26b			Y	Y	Y	Y	L	Y	Y			Y	
X													









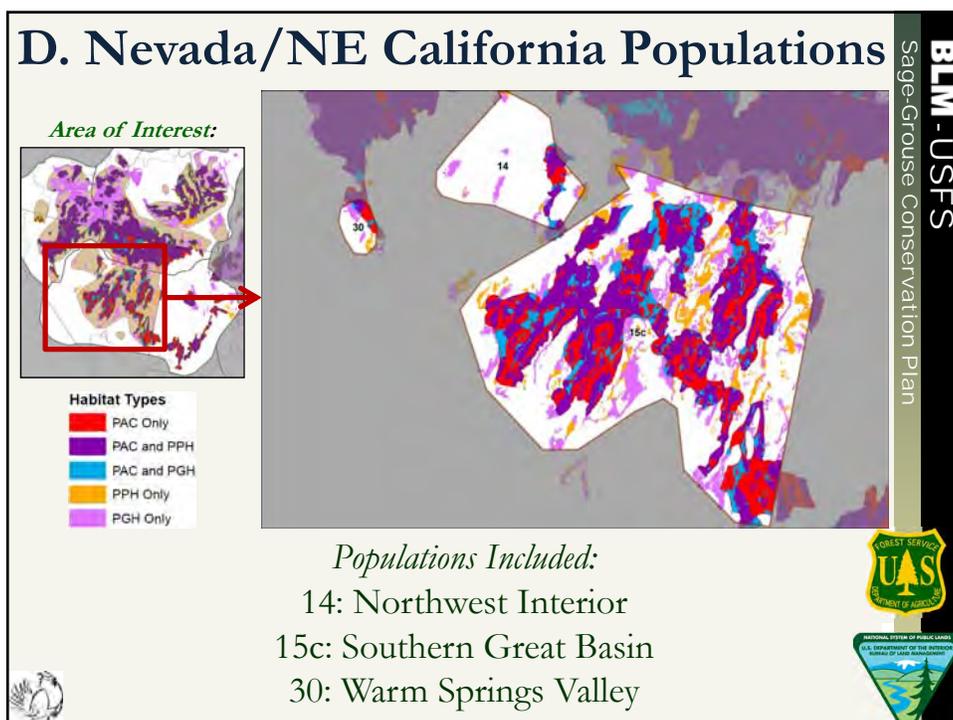


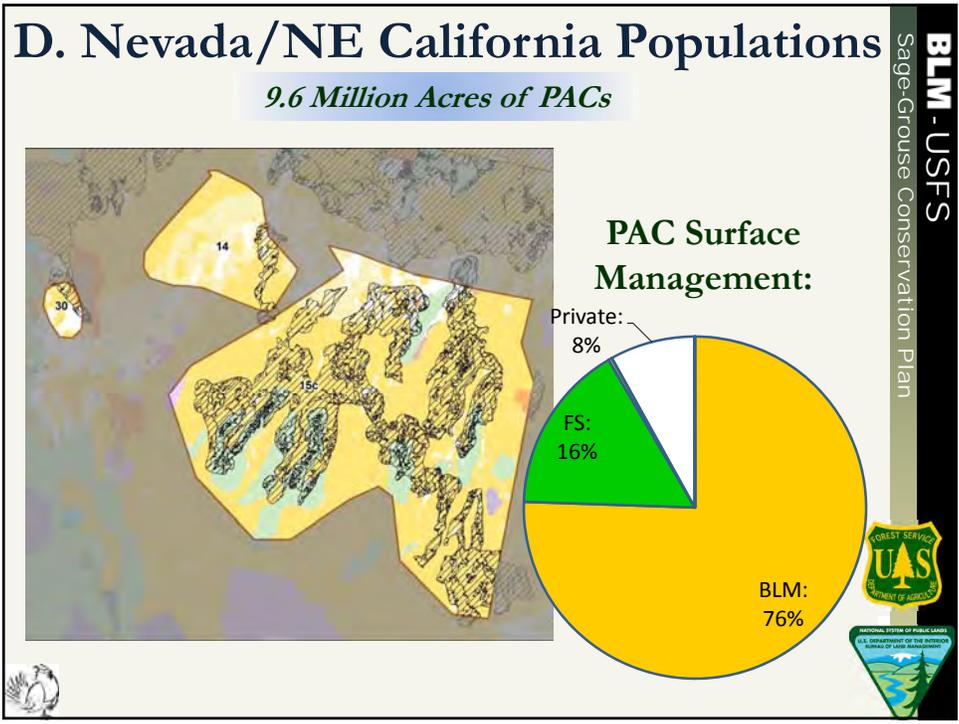






Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan

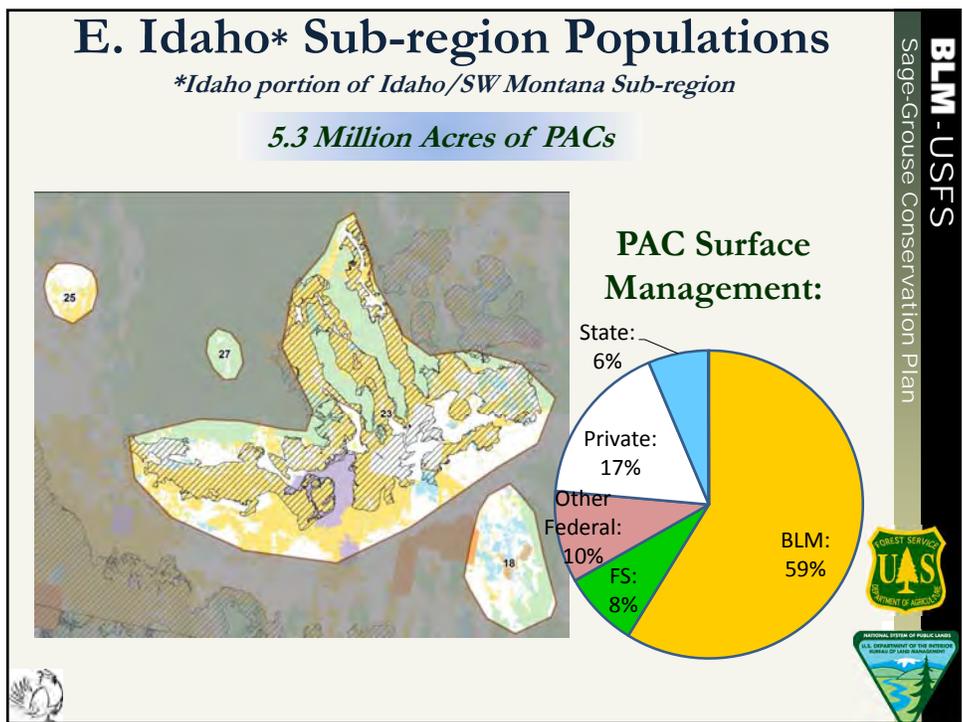
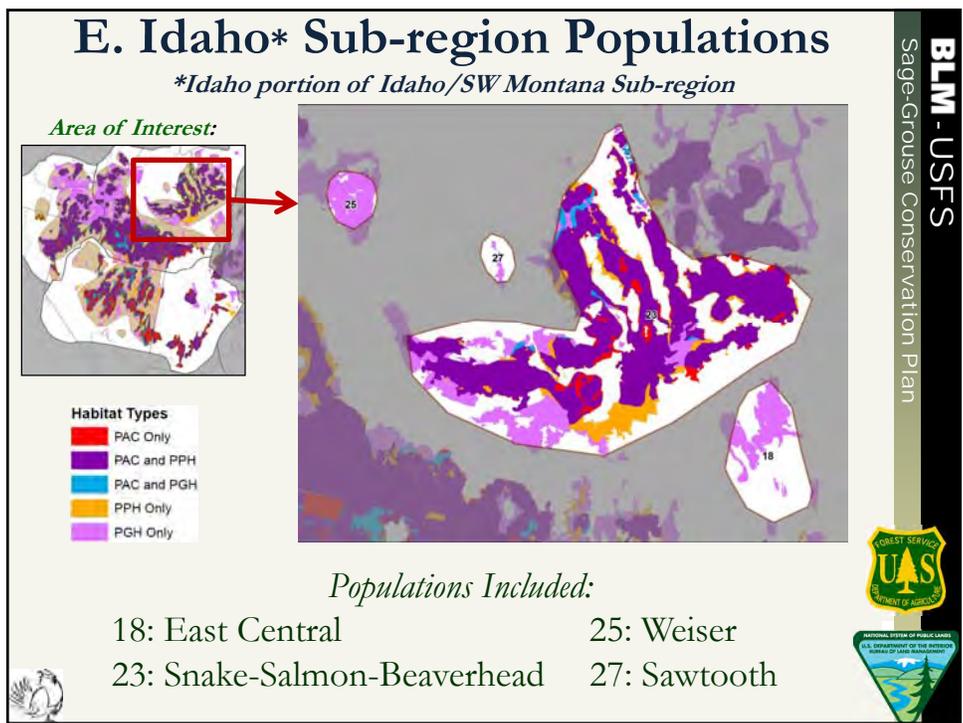




D. Nevada/NE California Populations

Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
14	Y			Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
15c	L	L	L	Y	Y	Y	L	L	Y	Y	Y	Y	
30	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
✓													

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E. Idaho* Sub-region Populations

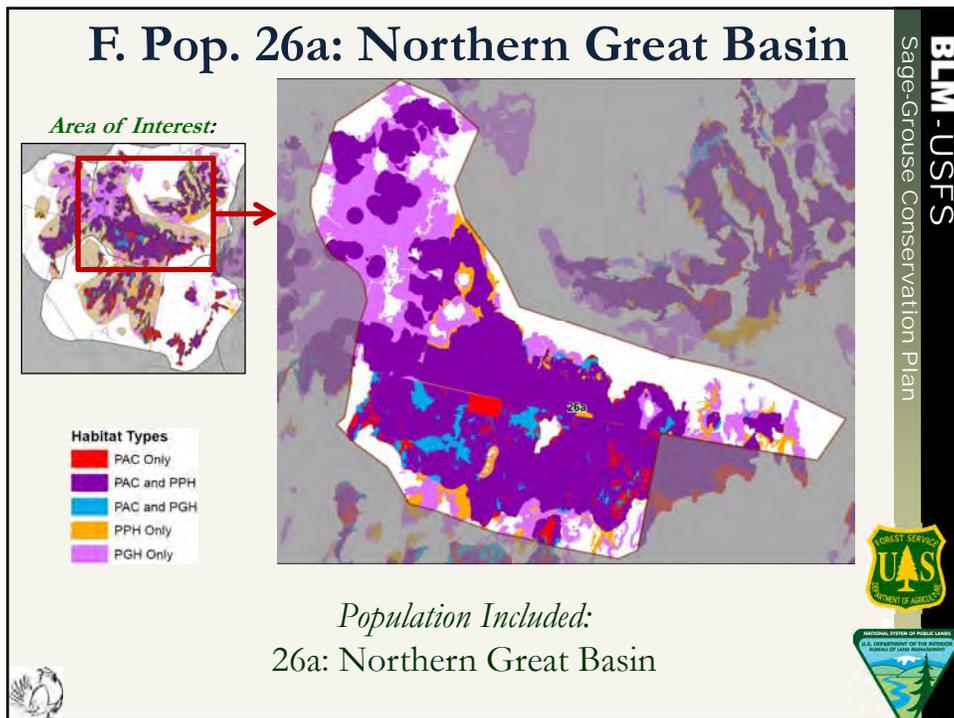
**Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region*

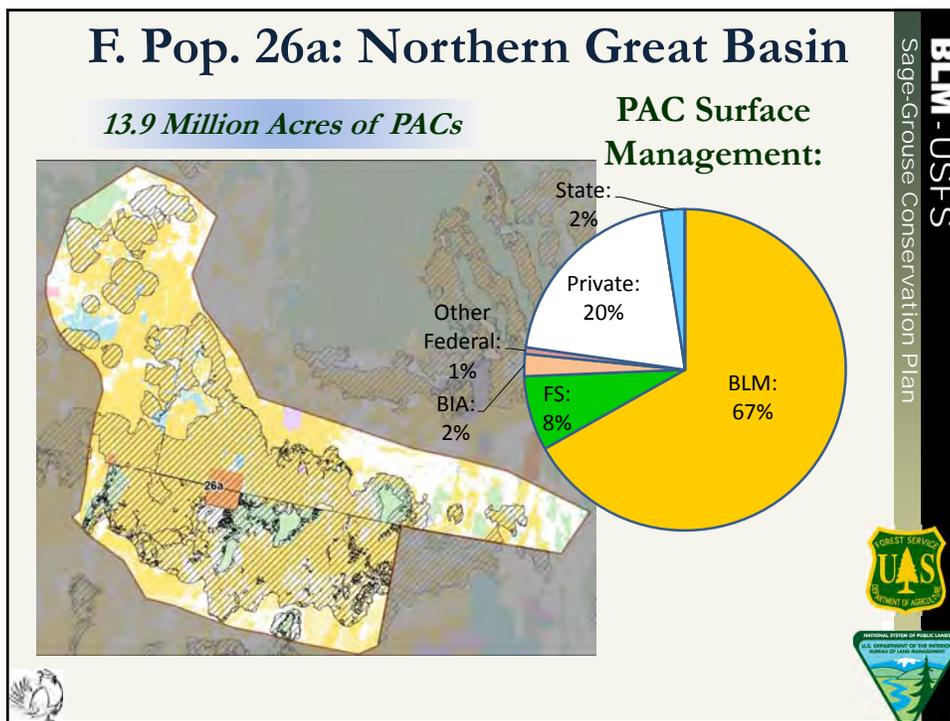
Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
18	Y	L	Y	L	Y	L	Y		Y	Y		L	
23		L	L	Y	L	Y	Y		L	Y	Y	L	
25	Y	L	L	L	L	Y	Y		L	Y		L	L
27	Y	L		L		L			Y	Y		L	
✓													

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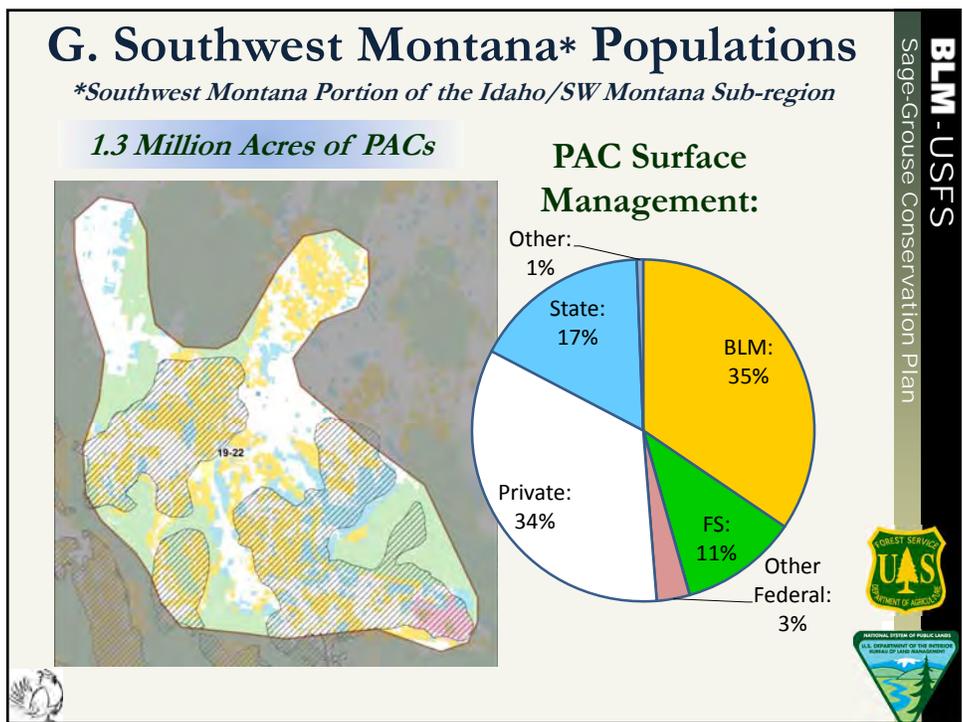
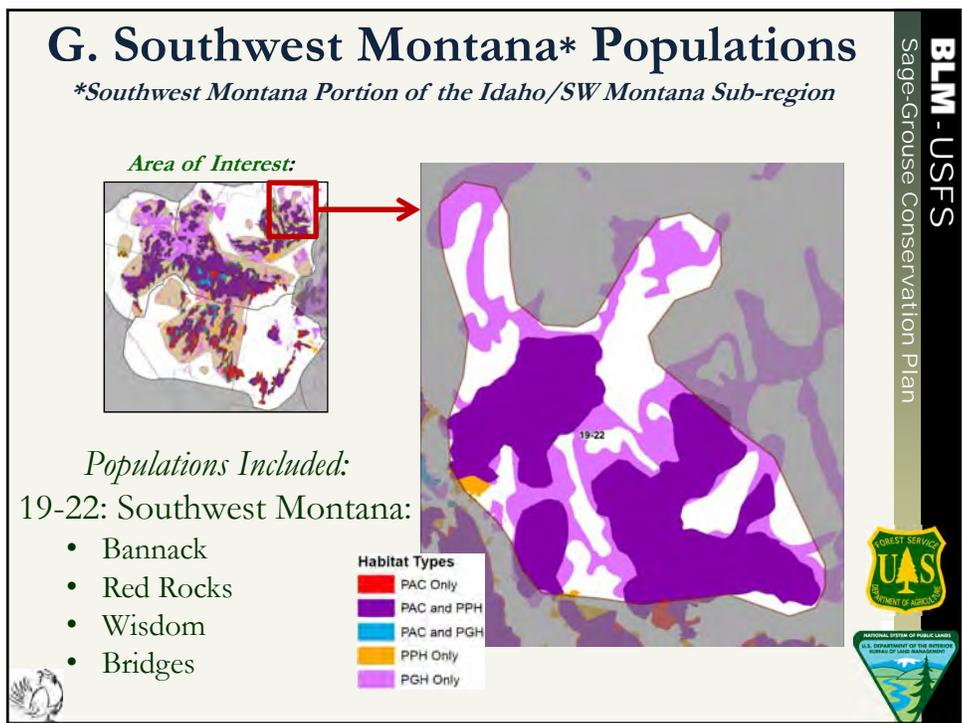




F. Pop. 26a: Northern Great Basin

Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
26a		L	L	Y	Y	Y	L	L	Y	Y	L	Y	Y



G. Southwest Montana* Populations

**Southwest Montana Portion of the Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region*

Population/ PACs #	Isolated Small Size	Sagebrush Elimination	Agriculture Conversion	Fire	Conifers	Weeds/Annual Grasses	Energy	Mining	Infrastructure	Grazing	Free-roaming Equids	Recreation	Urbanization
19-22		L		L	L	Y	L	L	L	Y		L	L
													

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Questions and Discussion



*Thank you to the BLM Wildlife Habitat Spatial Analysis Lab:
Anthony Titolo, Karla Mayne, Shannon Glazer, & Steve Haymes*

BLM - USFS
Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan




Brent Ralston

From: Jeffery Foss
Sent: Thursday, October 09, 2014 6:57 AM
To: Murphy, Timothy
Cc: Peter Ditton; Kurt R Wiedenmann; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Denver mtg- follow up

Amy was not here but Lauren represented her. OR was represented by the DSD, Haske.
Jeff

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 9, 2014, at 6:44 AM, "Murphy, Timothy" <tmurphy@blm.gov> wrote:

Thank you for the travel, attendance, and great representation for BLM ID. Jeff, the notes help a lot, thank you.
Was Amy at the meeting?

On Thursday, October 9, 2014, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:
Mtg attended by Lyons, Bean, Greenberger, Noreen, Dustin n Cally, n State Directors, all states. Steve n Neil had a post mtg last night.

Key points:

- SDs to arrive to ELT day early for Monday mtg on sage grouse
- FWS expressed concerns about 1) how adaptive mgmt will work where populations cross state bdrys and 2) difference in allocations across state bdrys
- Neil asked SDs to work with their SD neighbors to develop a rule set: e.g. If a trigger is tripped in Idaho for a pop that is shared with NV and OR, those states will agree to follow the adaptive mgmt response in Idaho's plan for that population. Other approaches?
- Neil also asked SDs to be prepared at the ELT to address key areas of your plan needing resolution and having a strategy to do that: e.g. Change Idaho plan to match allocation of neighbor or develop a narrative as to how the COT objectives are met with the Idaho allocation. The later is most feasible in most cases... In my view
- I suggested to Neil and Steve that the issue is less of showing how differing allocations across state bdrys are "biologically equivalent", it is more the case of describing how a difference in allocation is not biologically relevant to grouse if the threat in Idaho is very low (e.g. Oil and gas low potential in Idaho).
- need to get list of 12 items (e.g, adaptive mgmt) from ADPPs needing attention and assess how our plan squares up with these issues. I have asked Ed to send that to us.
- best part of meeting was Rich Hanan- Deputy Rgl. Director PNW, say emphatically that "the FWS is 100% behind the 3 zone approach" after my summary of the Idaho plan
- suggest talking w Dustin, Cally, Virgil before the 16th DOI meeting w States... Dustin agrees.

- push to reach closure on plans soon

We can discuss in more detail early next week.

Jeff

Sent from my iPhone

--

Timothy M Murphy
Idaho State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Boise, Idaho 83713
(o) 208.373.4001
(m) 208.850.5270

Brent Ralston

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt
Sent: Thursday, October 09, 2014 2:23 PM
To: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela
Subject: Fwd: Sage grouse Denver mtg

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jeff Foss** <jefffoss@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 8, 2014 at 10:51 AM
Subject: Sage grouse Denver mtg
To: "tmurphy@blm.gov" <tmurphy@blm.gov>, "kwiedenmann@blm.gov" <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>

I discussed the 3 zone approach, why it makes sense, and FWS Rich Hanan, Deputy Regional Director @ Portland said "FWS is 100% behind the 3 zone approach- take that concern offer table" and Jim Lyons agreed

Hopefully, past that issue

FYI
My email continues to be down

Jeff

Sent from Yahoo! Mail for iPhone

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2014 8:31 AM
To: Edwin Roberson
Cc: Jeffery Foss
Subject: RE: Disturbance

Ed,

Sounds like progress one day at a time! Here is the list of criteria that would be applied to anthropogenic disturbance proposed projects that would be evaluated by a team similar to the mitigation approach:

AD-3: Priority Habitat Management Area: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria. In order to avoid surface-disturbing activities in Priority Habitat Management Areas, priority will be given to development (including ROWs, fluid minerals and other mineral resources subject to applicable stipulations) outside of Priority Habitat Management Areas. When authorizing development in Priority Habitat Management Areas, priority will be given to development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse. In addition to the Priority and Important Habitat Management Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the project screening and assessment process:

- a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing development);
- b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat and mitigation would provide a net conservation benefit to the respective Priority Habitat Management Area;
- c. The project would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA (the project would be outside Key habitat in areas not meeting desired habitat conditions or the project would provide a benefit to habitat areas that are functioning in a limited way as habitat);
- d. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Priority Habitat Management Area; or can be either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade) ; or 3) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (i.e. powerlines) (proposed actions would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and associated impacts more than fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.
- e. Development could be implemented adhering to the required design features (RDF) described in Appendix A;
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).
- g. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.

AD-4: Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:

- a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management area; and
- b. The project siting and/or design should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; this may include co-location within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable; and

- c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
- e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs as described in Appendix A.
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).

Brent Ralston
 Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
 Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion Idaho State Office
 208-373-3812

-----Original Message-----

From: Edwin Roberson [mailto:eroberso@blm.gov]
 Sent: Monday, October 20, 2014 3:45 AM
 To: Brent Ralston
 Cc: Jeffery L Foss
 Subject: Re: Disturbance

Brent,
 Thank you for following up with this information. I thought we had a good meeting on Thursday in Boise. We had a call with the State of Oregon on Friday the issue of wind development. The state was looking for criteria to consider for state approvals. I folks them you all had a set of criteria you will run through before approval. I was asked if I could send the list and it protocol. Can you send me the latest. I would appreciate it. Have a great week.
 Ed

Sent from my iPhone

> On Oct 20, 2014, at 12:19 AM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:
 >
 > Jim and Sarah,
 >
 >
 >
 > Last week's discussion with the State of Idaho seemed very productive
 > and helped focus the specific needs we continue to work forward to
 > resolve. The discussion on the Idaho disturbance approach was also
 > valuable and I appreciate the opportunity to describe our approach.
 > It's a complicated subject and not something that is easy to get to the heart of quickly.
 > Attached you'll find a more thorough description of the approach and
 > it's derivation and relation to the appropriate science. – the first
 > ten pages focus on disturbance, the remainder of the document
 > describes Idaho's adaptive management process and calculation.
 >
 >
 >
 > If you'd like any further information or clarification or have
 > questions we can provide additional information.
 >
 >
 >
 > We will continue to work on the 'elevator speech' on disturbance which

- > goes something like this – “*Idaho applies a 3% anthropogenic
- > disturbance cap to priority and important habitat management areas to
- > limit habitat loss and fragmentation; measured within nesting and
- > brood rearing habitats associated with lek areas and critical
- > wintering areas within priority and important habitat management areas
- > and calculated consistent with existing scientific literature”.*
- >
- >
- >
- > Brent Ralston
- >
- > Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
- >
- > Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
- >
- > Idaho State Office
- >
- > 208-373-3812
- > <ID swMT ADPP Appendix G 092914 Disturbance and Adaptive
- > Management.docx>

Brent Ralston

From: Jeffery Foss
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2014 11:45 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: GRSG Habitat Objectives

Good info. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 29, 2014, at 11:41 AM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Tim,

On yesterday's call I heard some talk regarding the Habitat/Vegetation Objectives table we are to include in our GRSG Amendment. We have such a table and the values have been determined based on appropriate research and consistent with the Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF) for GRSG habitat. This table has been included as quantifiable desired conditions that we would manage toward for projects and activities that could affect vegetation conditions.

These would come into play for grazing permit renewals when we complete rangeland health assessments (RHAs), and evaluations to determination whether we are meeting our rangeland health standards. For GRSG our Standard which addresses threatened and endangered and sensitive species habitat would use the HAF assessments to help determine whether this Standard is being met or not. The HAF uses indicators that have been included in the Habitat/Vegetation Objectives table in the GRSG amendment.

The Objectives are desired conditions of the indicators that inform the HAF and help determine whether Standard 8 is met or not in GRSG habitat areas. I would be concerned if we put forward the notion that if one or more of the Objectives is not at the desired condition that necessarily means we have not met our rangeland health standard. In this instance regulations necessitate an evaluation of causal factors and subsequent adjustment in grazing management if grazing were determined to be the cause. This would elevate the condition of an indicator, defined in a plan amendment, to the level of a rangeland health standard, which have been established through formal rulemaking.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Preferred Alternative Comparison

Resource	Oregon	Idaho/SW Montana	Utah	Nevada/NE California
<u>Wild Horse/Burro</u>	Within PPMA review existing HMAPs to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all BLM HMAs.	Develop or amend BLM Herd Management Area Plans and Forest Service Wild Horse Territory Plans to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all BLM HMAs) and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories.	No similar action.	—
<u>Fluid Minerals</u> PPMA PGMA	NSO NSO; CSU; TL	Closed and NSO (depending on potential) Open – NSO near leks (PMMA = Open – NSO near leks)	4 mi NSO; CSU (cap) & Timing, RDFs 1 mi NSO, CSU & Timing, RDFs	NSO NSO w/exception
<u>Locatable</u> PPMA PGMA	Open Open	Require 3809 Plans Require 3809 Plans (PMMA = Require 3809 Plans)	Open Open	Open Open
<u>Renewable-Wind</u> PPMA PGMA	See ROW See ROW	Exclusion Avoidance (PMMA = Avoidance)	Exclusion Avoidance?	Exclusion Exclusion

Preferred Alternative Comparison

Resource	Oregon	Idaho/SW Montana	Utah	Nevada/NE California
<u>Renewable-Solar</u> PPMA PGMA		Exclusion Avoidance (PMMA = Avoidance)	?? ??	Exclusion Exclusion
<u>ACEC</u> Acres	Same as Alt. A – w/ GRSG consideration (PPMA = 200,399 & PGMA = 251,233)	No additional	0	0
<u>Land Tenure</u> PPMA PGMA	Zone 1 Varies (same as Alt. A), which includes 48,595 acres in Zone 3.	Lands currently identified for retention within PPMA would be retained unless disposal of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity of PPMA. ??	Retain public ownership Approximately 5,540 acres would still be available for disposal .	?? ??

Preferred Alternative Comparison

Resource	Oregon	Idaho/SW Montana	Utah	Nevada/NE California
<p><u>Salable</u> PPMA</p> <p>PGMA</p>	<p>Close PPMA to development of new mineral sites.</p>	<p>No new authorizations would be approved within 3 km of an occupied lek.</p> <p>No new authorizations would be approved within 3 km of an occupied lek.</p> <p>(PMMA: Same as PPMA)</p>	<p>The BLM and Forest Service would prohibit mineral material disposal within 1 mile of leks and would close all PPMA's to commercial mineral material disposal.</p>	<p>Allow no new salable mineral material sites in PPMA's.</p> <p>Allow no new salable mineral material sites in PGMA's.</p>
<p><u>Disturbance Cap</u></p>	<p>Apply a 3% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PPMA.</p>	<p>No net unmitigated loss of PPMA's instead of a disturbance cap, except for SE corner where there is fluid mineral potential – then 3% Cap for Oil and Gas (new and old leases)</p>	<p>Protect PPMA's from anthropogenic disturbances so that disturbances cover less than 5% of the area within the PPMA used by a population of GRSG, regardless of ownership. Fire not included.</p>	<p>No net loss</p>

Preferred Alternative Comparison

Resource	Oregon	Idaho/SW Montana	Utah	Nevada/NE California
<p><u>Non-Energy Leasable</u> PPMA</p>	<p>Nonenergy leasable mineral leases are subject to an NSO stipulation in PPMA.</p>	<p>Future leasing and prospecting of non-energy minerals in PPMA is closed.</p>	<p>PPMAs would be closed to new leasing or lease modification of surface nonenergy leasable minerals. New or modified leases in areas outside PPMAs and within 4 miles of an occupied lek located within a PPMA would have use stipulations attached.</p>	<p>Close PPMAs to non-energy leasable mineral leasing.</p>
<p>PGMA</p>	<p>Consider only underground development options with entry outside PPMA and occupied sites found in PGMA.</p>	<p>Lands are available for leasing subject to applicable timing restrictions for exploration activities and initial mine development, subject to mandatory lease stipulations, timing restrictions and CSU.</p> <p>(PMMA: Same as PPMA)</p>	<p>PGMAs within 1 mile of an occupied lek, if the lek is located within a PGMA, would have no surface disturbance stipulations associated with leasing of surface nonenergy leasable minerals.</p>	<p>Close PGMAs to non-energy leasable mineral leasing.</p>

Brent Ralston

From: Annie Daly
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 11:41 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Notes from Tuesday's GRSG IDT meeting
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Mtg Notes 20141104.docx

Hi Brent,

The notes from Tuesday's meeting are attached. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Annie Daly

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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

November 4, 2014 1:00 p.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Jon Beck; Katie Powell; Kelly Bockting; Don Major; Cally Younger; Paul Makela; Annie Daly

Meeting Minutes

Two main issues to discuss:

1. Adaptive management un-triggering
2. Implementation Team/MOU

Un-triggering

- FWS is concerned that BLM will be constantly turning triggers off and on based on where the baseline is and how the sage-grouse population fluctuates around the baseline.
- Habitats will change year to year, but population baselines are calculated on 3 year averages.
- If the number of birds in one year goes above the baseline, that doesn't necessarily remove the adaptive management, because of the 3 year running average. We can make this more explicit in the document.
- Adaptive triggers won't be removed until we're back at the baseline.
- There's also concern regarding MA 5 - if we reevaluate every 5 years, when we look to readjust the baseline we probably won't adjust the habitat baseline that much off of the population baseline. Brent thinks the baseline adjustments will be focused more on where the habitat is on the ground, than on what the amount of habitat or the population number.
- We can't adjust the baseline down, and to adjust it up isn't necessarily the way to go either. The whole idea is we're trying to manage for higher, not just to be at the baseline.
- Keep in mind that even if habitat changes, some of that habitat will not be supporting GRSG at that 5 year period, but there is the potential is that with time and restoration that population could come back.
- 20% loss of key habitat within the nesting/wintering area means any combination of nesting and wintering habitat that adds up to 20%.
- Should we change wording to "nesting and/or wintering habitat"? Or we could say "loss of 20% of key habitat of nesting and/or wintering habitat within the BSU trips the trigger."
- Whether we mean 20% collectively or separately needs to be clarified.
- Paul will re-word this and will send it out to the group.
- We could just say "20% loss of the BSU trips the trigger," since BSU is made of the wintering and nesting habitat. However, what we care about is the sagebrush within the nesting and wintering habitat and there are some polygons of nesting/wintering habitat that include areas without sagebrush.

- If we meant that triggers are tripped at the loss of 20% of core and 20% of important then you could conceivably lose 19% of core and 19% of important and still not trip any hard triggers. However, soft triggers are in place so hopefully we'd be working towards preventing 19%. The soft triggers will spark discussion on how to prevent the hard trigger from being tripped.
- Soft triggers being tripped opens the door for evaluations, discussions, and decisions about what actions should be taken. If you're at 19% you'll be looking at ROWs and other uses a lot more carefully than you would if you were at 5%.

Decision:

- Untriggering- everyone is okay with defining the baseline values in the discussion.
- Paul will reword the "and/or" language and send out to the group.

Implementation team

- Brent emailed out a draft of the implementation MOU.
- This sets up the process though which projects would be vetted.
- Proposals would be run through this process and would receive (or not receive) a recommendation from the Governor/State Director /BLM on whether the project should move forward.
- If all parties agree that the project should move forward, the BLM will analyze impacts and look at mitigation.
- A WAFWA Management Zone Conservation Board is specifically put together at the zone scale to develop a zone strategy that is consistent. This is a BLM-run board with BLM cooperators at the table. After creating the strategy, maybe this board will get together once a year- we don't yet know what this is going to look like.
- We should focus on this board at the state level.
- The strategy should clearly define how the BLM is going to calculate mitigations and offsets.
- Maybe there's no function of this body after making the strategy. Or maybe after 5 years this body reviews the latest science and updates the strategy. This all is yet to be determined.
- This group would be made up of BLM, NRCS, FWS, and FS personnel. The group would develop a strategy and look at a proposal and assess impacts. BLM would sit down with the strategy and would create mitigation measures. Then this would go to a task force that would look at the strategy again, make updates based on new information, and give back a recommendation.
- How the mitigation money gets stepped out could be determined by the task force.
- The geographic location of some of these projects is important too. We may want to keep the money within the WAFWA zones.
- Could consider a mitigation bank, but structuring mitigation like this might require a law because as of now any mitigation money would go into a general fund.
- We could look at other states and see what they're doing so we can see if it's worth it to contract out.
- The challenge with this is coming up with some kind of consistent token with which to measure mitigation measures.

- We will have to look further into all these questions, but not today.
- How much detail needs to go into the final EIS? Not a lot of detail. In the final EIS we can reference that we're going to create this strategy within a year of signing the ROD, but we don't need to go into the details of the strategy itself in the EIS.
- The task force would look at this strategy pre-NEPA, perhaps during scoping.
- Jason and Katie should take a look at what's in the MOU and let us know if this includes the amount of detail we need at this point.

Adaptive Management Triggers

- Twice a year the task force would evaluate the adaptive management piece.
- There would also be a meeting to talk about population triggers.
- Population is a state data collection effort. Data would go directly to the task force and then would be shared with the BLM (though the task force is separate from the BLM).
- The task force would evaluate data and say whether we're far or close to hitting the triggers, then the task force would spit out a recommendation for the BLM.
- BLM would look at that evaluation. If a trigger was tripped there'd need to be some announcement (state director signature might be required) saying that the trigger has been tripped and management is engaged.

Current Status

- We're holding right now because the WO is still looking at some issues and we're waiting to see how the new memo will impact our work.
- Additional clarifications have been made and guidance has been issued, but we're not sure how these will affect us yet.

Updates on previous issues discussed

- PAC boundaries- having some issues, going back and forth with solicitor about this issue. Are taking care of it internally.
- Grazing management issues between the FS and the BLM- have these been resolved?
 - Grazing management direction was perceived as being different because FS has guidelines having to do with vegetation height, whereas BLM doesn't. However BLM did have a requirement to have grazing management requirements that met the needs of the grouse. People were concerned that these weren't consistent. We may receive national feedback. We've already included a vegetation objectives table to address this.
- We've done a good job addressing the 5 Idaho-specific issues about the Proposed Plan.
- Issues about monitoring with regard to adaptive management strategy- FWS wanted more info on how this worked and what we talked about today will help answer some of those questions.
- There are still some questions about regulating habitat triggers.

- Disturbance is somewhat up in the air still. If a different disturbance decision comes out we'll reconvene to discuss it.
- Adaptive management- Governor says Idaho adaptive management is good.
- Lek buffers- these have been shared back to DC and the national office has given everybody's lek buffers to USGS for them to evaluate and see which can be considered based on the science.
- Rights of way- concerns about inconsistencies across state lines- some discussion is going on about this.
- NSO vs. closures discussion is ongoing.
- Mitigation- commitment to create the strategy within a year (this text has been moved from appendices into the proposed plan)

Other

- Some people have asked for more description about the process by which key habitat was created. Could we add a page of information along with the key habitat map and include it in an appendix? Brent will get appendix out and maybe Don can write a paragraph description about key habitat.
- The 2006 State Plan calls the key habitat map by a different name, should we change it to make it consistent?
- Someone heard concerns about how Idaho is managing for 73% population, but that's not accurate- we're managing not for 73%, but for more like 95%, 73% is a red flag.

Action items

- Clarify 3-year baseline language in the document.
- Paul will reword the "and/or" language and send out to the group.
- Jason and Katie will look at the draft MOU and let us know if it includes the level of detail we need at this point
- Brent will get appendix out and Don will write a paragraph description about the development of key habitat.

Brent Ralston

From: Annie Daly
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 11:14 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call
Attachments: ID swMT ADPP BLM Decisions 110514 No Maps_responses.docx

Hi Brent,

The revised file from this morning's meeting is attached. Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks!

Annie Daly

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From: Brent Ralston [mailto:bralston@blm.gov]
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 6:05 AM
To: Annie Daly
Subject: Fwd: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call

Annie,

Here is the file for today's webinar.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>
Date: November 5, 2014 at 10:56:08 PM MST
To: "Arnold, Jenifer L" <jarnold@blm.gov>, "Beck, Jonathan M" <jmbeck@blm.gov>, "Blinn, Laurie A" <lblinn@blm.gov>, "Brown, William B" <wbbrown@blm.gov>, "German, Jesse S" <jgerman@blm.gov>, "Guyer, Vincent L" <vguyer@blm.gov>, "Haight, Scott S" <shaight@blm.gov>, "Haupt, Jon M" <jhaupt@blm.gov>, "Heide, Sarah C" <sheide@blm.gov>, "Hotaling, Richard M" <rhtotalin@blm.gov>, "Jakovac, Gloria R" <gjakovac@blm.gov>, James Barnum <jbarnum@blm.gov>, "Kershaw, Kathi G" <kkershaw@blm.gov>, "Knapton, Brandon L" <bknapton@blm.gov>, "Kuyper, Michael W" <mkuyper@blm.gov>, "Leonard, Stephen P" <sleonard@blm.gov>, "Prestwich, Kasey C" <kprestwich@blm.gov>, "Rawson, Jesse M" <jmrawson@blm.gov>, "Rice, Karen E" <krice@blm.gov>, "Sampson, Dianna L" <dsampson@blm.gov>, "Schoeberl, Bruce C" <bschoeberl@blm.gov>, "Shaw, Elena A" <eshaw@blm.gov>, "Tolness, Denise R" <dtolness@blm.gov>,

"Wood, David" <dwood@blm.gov>, "Wright, Jason S" <jswright@blm.gov>, "Adamski, Joseph J" <jadamski@blm.gov>, Anne Halford <ahalford@blm.gov>, "Bockting, Kelly D" <kbocktin@blm.gov>, "Bohn, Bryce A" <bbohn@blm.gov>, "Braun, Christa M" <cbraun@blm.gov>, "Brooks, Sandra S" <ssbrooks@blm.gov>, "Burkhardt, Glen H" <gburkhardt@blm.gov>, "Carlson, John C" <jccarlso@blm.gov>, Charles Tuss <ctuss@blm.gov>, "Chi, Danielle K" <dkchi@fs.fed.us>, "Collins, Rodney J" <rcollins@blm.gov>, "Colt, Chris J -FS" <ccolt@fs.fed.us>, "Cooper, Natalie M" <ncooper@blm.gov>, "Danly, Lynn A" <ldanly@blm.gov>, Elizabeth Maclean <emaclean@blm.gov>, Ethan Ellsworth <eellsworth@blm.gov>, "Fehlau, Robin S" <rfehlau@blm.gov>, "Foss, Jeffery L" <jfoss@blm.gov>, "Gardetto, Jessica D" <jdgardetto@blm.gov>, "Halford, Fredrick K" <fhalford@blm.gov>, "Jirik, Steven J" <sjirik@blm.gov>, Jonathan Norred <jnorred@blm.gov>, "Lepak, Dominika" <dlepak@blm.gov>, "Makela, Paul D" <pmakela@blm.gov>, "McConnaughey, Diane L" <dmconnaughey@blm.gov>, Meredith Zaccherio <meredith.zaccherio@empfi.com>, "Mickelsen, Robert" <rmickelsen@fs.fed.us>, "Porter, Karen F" <kfporter@blm.gov>, "Quamen, Frank R" <fquamen@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Brent E" <bralston@blm.gov>, Tanya Thrift <tthrift@blm.gov>, "Wiedenmann, Kurt R" <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>, Brent Esmoil <brent_esmoil@fws.gov>, Cally Younger <Cally.Younger@gov.idaho.gov>, Catherine Wightman <CWightman@mt.gov>, "Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID" <Trisha.Cracraft@id.usda.gov>, Don Kemner <don.kemner@idfg.idaho.gov>, "Dustin T. Miller" <Dustin.Miller@osc.idaho.gov>, eugene.schock@id.usda.gov, "Fletcher, Tammy" <tammyfletcher@fs.fed.us>, Jeff Berglund <jeff_berglund@fws.gov>, jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov, Jon Beals <Jon.Beals@osc.idaho.gov>, Katie Powell <katie_powell@fws.gov>, Mike McDonald <mike.mcdonald@idfg.idaho.gov>, "Pyron, Jason" <Jason_Pyron@fws.gov>, "Rapley, Kathleen" <Kathleen_Rapley@fws.gov>, tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov

Subject: FW: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call

Here is the webinar information for our 9-11 a.m. call tomorrow – I've also attached the ADPP with comments that we will be walking through to respond to comments and/or make assignments for response.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Annie Daly [mailto:annie.daly@empfi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2014 3:25 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Meredith Zaccherio
Subject: Webinar information

Hi Brent,
The information for tomorrow's webinar is below. Let me know if you have any questions.
Thank you!

GRSG SR IDT Call

1. Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone on Thu, Nov 6, 8:00 AM Pacific Standard Time

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/299731789>

2. Join the conference call.

Call in number: 877-324-1605 Code: 97575

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Annie Daly

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Idaho and Southwestern Montana Recommendation for Proposed Plan Amendment

1. Summary Description of the Proposed Plan (Plan)

The Proposed Plan represents a management strategy to address Greater Sage-grouse, their habitat and associated threats within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion. The Plan has been developed through a coordinated partnership of BLM, Forest Service, the States of Idaho and Montana and the US FWS.

The Plan incorporates appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. The Plan is also consistent with the objectives described in the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team Report (USFWS 2013) to: ‘Conserve sage-grouse so that it is no longer in danger of extinction or likely to become in danger of extinction in the foreseeable future...’ through ‘Maintaining viable, connected, and well-distributed populations and habitats across [the range of GRSG], through threat amelioration, conservation of key habitats, and restoration activities’.

To achieve these objectives the Plan includes a combination of: Goals and Objectives including vegetation/habitat management objectives to be applied during project development and implementation (Table 3); land allocation decisions (Table 1); delineation of five Conservation Areas (Map 1) to support evaluation of the adaptive management strategy and 3% anthropogenic disturbance cap; delineation of Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas (Map 2) with associated program management direction; a mitigation framework and strategy; development of Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments; and associated monitoring to support these decisions.

Table 1. Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG EIS – Land Allocation Decisions Summary¹

Solar/Wind/Nuclear/Hydropower – Map 3		
Priority	Important	General
BLM: Exclusion (LR-2) FS: Exclusion	BLM: Avoidance (LR-2) FS: Exclusion	BLM: Open (LR-2) FS: Avoidance
Commercial Service Airports – Map 4		
Priority	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-3)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Landfills – Map 4		
Priority	Important	General
Exclusion (LR-4)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Utility Corridors – Map 5		
Priority	Important	General
Existing designated corridors which are land use plan designations (and include Section 368 Corridors), will remain “open” (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement) and can provide an opportunity to be modified with mitigation. Any new disturbance within these corridors would count towards the disturbance cap. All new, modified, or deleted corridors will require a land use plan amendment. (LR-7)	Same as Priority (LR-7)	Same as Priority (LR-7)
Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits – Map 6		
Priority	Important	General
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	BLM: Open (LR-1)

¹ The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion includes portions of Idaho, Montana and Utah. Where differences exist between direction for Idaho and Montana or between BLM and Forest Service, those are noted in the table and within the management action section. The lands within Utah are part of the Sawtooth National Forest and are managed as such; therefore direction for these lands in Utah is the same as that described for the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho.

		FS: Avoidance
Land Tenure Adjustments – Map 7		
Priority	Important	General
Retention with exceptions for exchange; available for exchange with no net loss of GRSG Key habitat within Priority and Important. Not available for disposal. (LR-13)	Same as Priority (LR-13)	Available for exchange only
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Includes Geothermal) – Maps 8 & 9		
Priority	Important	General
Idaho and Montana: Open subject to No Surface Occupancy with a limited exception. (FLM-1)	Idaho: Open subject to No Surface Occupancy with a limited exception. Montana: Not Applicable (FLM-1)	Idaho and Montana: Open subject to Controlled Surface Use and Timing Limitations (FLM-1)
Locatable Minerals – Map 10		
Priority	Important	General
Areas not previously withdrawn are Open.	Areas not previously withdrawn are Open.	Areas not previously withdrawn are Open.
Non-Energy Leasables – Map 11		
Priority	Important	General
Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) are Open subject to standard leasing stipulations. Closed to leasing outside KPLAs (NEL-1)	KPLAs are Open subject to standard leasing stipulations. Areas outside KPLAs are Open subject to standard and greater sage-grouse stipulations (required design features, seasonal timing restrictions). (NEL-1)	Open to leasing with standard and greater sage-grouse stipulations (required design features and seasonal timing restrictions) (NEL-1)
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals) – Map 12		
Priority	Important	General
Closed to new site authorizations. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to criteria. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to

		seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)
Travel Management – Map 13		
Priority	Important	General
BLM Idaho: Limited to Existing (TM-1) BLM Montana: Limited to Designated (Decisions described in Dillon RMP) FS: Limited to Designated	BLM: Limited to Existing (TM-1) FS: Limited to Designated	BLM: Limited to Existing (TM-1) BLM Montana: Limited to Designated (Decisions described in Dillon RMP) FS: Limited to Designated

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Map 1. Conservation Areas within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Map 2. Management Areas within Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Map 3. Wind and Solar Development Allocations
Map 4. Commercial Service Airport and Landfill Development Allocations
Map 5. Utility Corridor Designations
Map 6. Right-of-Way Development Allocations
Map 7. Land Tenure Designations
Map 8. Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations – Oil and Gas
Map 9. Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations - Geothermal
Map 10. Locatable Minerals Withdrawals
Map 11. Non-Energy Leasable Resource Allocations
Map 12. Minerals Materials Allocations
Map 13. Travel Management Allocations

2. Goals and Objectives

- 2.1. GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of GRSG by conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain resilient populations by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG habitats.
- 2.2. GOAL-2: Provide for the needs of GRSG and their habitat while also providing for resource uses in accordance with the agencies' direction for multiple use and sustained yield as described in FLPMA and the NFMA.
- 2.3. GOAL-3: Manage anthropogenic development and human disturbance to minimize the likelihood of adverse population level effects on GRSG.
- 2.4. GOAL-4: Reduce the risk of West Nile Virus or other disease outbreaks from BLM and USFS management actions.
- 2.5. Management Area (MA) - Objective (OBJ)-1: Maintain a resilient population of GRSG in Idaho and Southwestern Montana.
- 2.6. MA-OBJ-2: Designate GRSG management areas and associated management to maintain a resilient population and to designate strategically located adjacent areas to provide a buffer from unpredictable habitat loss such as wildfire to the resilient population areas.
- 2.7. MA-OBJ-3: Identify and strategically protect larger in-tact sagebrush areas and areas of lower fragmentation to maintain GRSG population persistence.
- 2.8. Vegetation (VEG)-OBJ-1: Reconnect and expand areas of higher native plant community integrity/rangeland health to increase the extent of high quality habitat and, where possible, to accommodate the future effects of climate change.
- 2.9. VEG-OBJ-2: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:
 - a. Increasing or enhancing canopy cover and average patch size of sagebrush.
 - b. Increasing the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal habitats.
 - c. Protecting or improving GRSG migration/movement corridors.
 - d. Reducing conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats.
 - e. Improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.
 - f. Reducing the extent of annual grasslands within and adjacent to Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas.Decadal treatment objectives by population area are identified in Table 2.
- 2.10. Habitat Management (HM)-OBJ-1: Maintain or make progress toward at least 70% of lands within PHMAs and IHMAs capable of producing sagebrush at 10-30% canopy cover and conifers absent to uncommon within 1.86 miles of occupied leks.
- 2.11. HM-OBJ-2: Incorporate GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives (Table 3) into the design of projects or activities, as appropriate, based on site conditions and ecological potential, unless achievement of fuels management objectives require additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat and conserve habitat quality for the species or at least one of the following conditions can be demonstrated and documented in the NEPA analysis associated with the specific project:
 - A specific objective is not applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project or activity;
 - An alternative objective is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat (based on appropriate scientific findings); or

- Analysis concludes that following a specific objective would provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for the project being proposed.
- 2.12. FUEL-OBJ-1: Design fuel treatments to restore, enhance, or maintain GRSG habitat.
- 2.13. WHB-OBJ-1: Manage wild horse and burro population levels within the established AML ranges to maintain or enhance GRSG habitat.

Table 2. Estimated Acres of Treatment Needed within a 10-Year Period to Achieve Vegetation Objectives²

Population Area	Mechanical Conifer Treatment (VEG-8)	Mechanical Sage (VEG-2)	Prescribed Fire (VEG-9)	Annual Grass Treatment (VEG-2)
Bear Lake Plateau		1000		
East Idaho Uplands	6000		9000	1000
S Central Idaho/N Snake River and Mountain Valleys	4000	14000	11000	162000
Weiser				13000
SW Idaho	48000	4000	10000	444000
SW Montana	50	50	1200	

Table 3. Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for Greater Sage-Grouse

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATOR	DESIRED CONDITION
BREEDING HABITAT (LEK AND NESTING/EARLY BROOD REARING)		
Lek Security	Proximity of trees ^{7,13}	Trees (i.e., in Idaho mainly juniper, conifers, and does not include old growth juniper, pinyon pine and mountain mahogany; in

² These acreage figures, based on VDDT modeling, represent an objective for treatment over a ten-year (decadal) timeframe to support achievement or progress toward vegetation and habitat objectives [Reference VDDT Appendix]. This accounts for variations in yearly funding availability and does not reflect a maximum acreage for treatment should funding and site specific conditions allow for more or less treatment than described in order to meet vegetation and habitat objectives.

		Montana mainly Douglas-fir) absent or uncommon on shrub/grassland ecological sites within 1.86 miles (3 km) of occupied leks.
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks ¹³	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 328 ft (100 m) of an occupied lek
NESTING/EARLY BROOD REARING^{5,10,12,13,14}		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent ⁸	>80% of the nesting habitat meets the recommended vegetation characteristics, where appropriate (relative to ecological site potential, etc.).
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,8,9,11}	15-25%
	Sagebrush height ⁸ Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	12-31 inches (30-80cm) 16-31 inches (40-80cm)
	Predominant sagebrush shape ¹³	Predominantly spreading shape ⁵
	Perennial grass cover ^{2,8,13} Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	≥10% ≥15%
	Perennial grass height ^{8,9,11,13}	Adequate nest cover
	Perennial forb cover ^{2,8} Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	≥5% ≥10%
	Perennial forb availability ¹³	Preferred forbs are common with several species present ⁶
LATE BROOD-REARING/SUMMER^{1,15} (July-October)¹ Late brood-rearing areas, such as riparian, meadows, springs, higher elevation mesic uplands, etc. may occur within other mapped seasonal habitat areas. Apply late brood rearing/summer habitat desired conditions locally as appropriate.		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent ⁸	>40% of the summer/brood habitat meets recommended brood habitat characteristics where appropriate (relative to ecological site potential, etc.)
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{2,8,}	10-25%
	Sagebrush height ^{8,}	16 to 32 inches (40-80cm)
	Perennial grass canopy cover ^{2,8}	>15%
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ^{2,13}	Preferred forbs are common with several preferred species present ^{6,}
	Riparian meadow habitat condition	Proper Functioning Condition ¹³
WINTER¹ November-March¹ (Apply to areas of known or likely winter-use)		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent ⁸	>80% of the wintering habitat meets winter habitat characteristics where appropriate (relative to ecological site, etc.).
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow ^{2,8,13}	>10%
	Sagebrush height above snow ⁸	>10 inches (>25cm)
NOTES AND REFERENCES		
<p>¹ Seasonal dates can be adjusted by local unit according to geographic region.</p> <p>² Absolute cover is the actual recorded cover and can exceed 100% when recorded across all species and all layers. It is not relative cover, which is the proportions of each species, and equals 100%. Note that cover is reported for only those species (e.g., sagebrush, preferred forbs) that are sampled to determine suitability of habitat for sage-grouse. Overall cover at the site will be greater than that sampled for sage-grouse habitat, due to</p>		

other species present. Manage areas not currently within a mapped seasonal habitat based on case-by case, site specific analysis arising from habitat assessments, telemetry, research or site specific NEPA.

³ Arid corresponds to the 10 – 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al. *In Press*).

⁴ Mesic corresponds to the ≥ 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata vaseyana* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al. *In Press*).

⁵Collectively the indicators for sagebrush (cover, height, and shape), perennial grass and perennial forb (cover, height and/or availability) represent the desired condition range for nesting/early brood rearing habitat characteristics, consistent with the breeding habitat suitability matrix identified in Stiver et al. *In Press*. Sagebrush plants that are more tree or columnar-shaped provide less protective cover near the ground than sagebrush plants with a spreading shape (Stiver et al. *In Press*). Some sagebrush plants are naturally columnar (e.g., Great Basin big sagebrush), and a natural part of the plant community. However, a predominance of columnar shape arising from animal impacts may warrant management investigation or adjustments at site specific scales.

⁶ Preferred forbs are listed in Stiver et al. *In press* . Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred.

⁷Baruch-Mordo, S., J. S. Evans, J. P. Severson, D. E. Naugle, J. D. Maestas, J. M. Kiesecker, M. J. Falkowski, C. A. Hagen, and K. P. Reese. 2013. Saving sage-grouse from trees.

⁸ Connelly, J. W., M. A. Schroeder, A. R. Sands, and C. E. Braun. 2000. Guidelines to manage sage-grouse populations and their habitats. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 28:967-985.

⁹Connelly, J. W., K. P. Reese, and M. A. Schroeder. 2003. Monitoring of Greater sage-grouse habitats and populations. University of Idaho College of Natural Resources Experiment Station Bulletin 80. University of Idaho, Moscow, ID.

¹⁰Doherty, K. 2008. Sage-grouse and Energy Development: Integrating Science with Conservation Planning to Reduce Impacts. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Montana, Missoula, MT.

¹¹ Hagen, C. A., J. W. Connelly, and M. A. Schroeder. 2007. A meta-analysis of greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* nesting and brood-rearing habitats. *Wildlife Biology* 13 (Supplement 1):42-50.

¹²Holloran, M. J., and S. H. Anderson. 2005. Spatial Distribution of Greater Sage-grouse nests in relatively contiguous sagebrush habitats. *Condor* 107:742-752.

¹³Stiver, S. J., E. T. Rinkes, D. E. Naugle, P. D. Makela, D. A. Nance, and J. W. Karl. *In Press*. Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: Multi-scale Habitat Assessment Tool. Bureau of Land Management and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Technical Reference XXXX-X. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Denver, Colorado.

¹⁴ Connelly, J.W., A. Moser, and D. Kemner. 2013. Greater Sage-Grouse breeding habitats: Landscape-based comparisons. *Grouse News* 45. Research Reports.

¹⁵ Some late brood habitat occurs at higher elevations outside of mapped nesting habitat and some is embedded within nesting landscapes especially areas such as wet meadows, riparian areas, springs and seeps.

3. Coordination

- 3.1.** CC-1: Collaborate, coordinate and utilize cooperative planning efforts to implement and monitor activities to achieve desired conditions and to maximize the utilization of available funding opportunities. Coordination efforts could include: adjacent landowners, federal and state agencies, local governments, tribes, communities, other agencies, resource advisory groups, public lands permit holders and non-governmental organizations.
- 3.2.** CC-2: Develop a cooperative MOU between the BLM, Forest Service and State of Idaho to establish the State of Idaho as a cooperating agency during implementation of the final decision. The MOU would identify responsibilities, role and interaction of the BLM, FS and State of Idaho. Montana BLM will participate as appropriate on Montana's Sage-grouse Oversight Team to facilitate coordination and implementation of BLM's final decision and Montana's Executive Order No. 10-2014.
- 3.3.** CC-3: The BLM and Forest Service would consider any recommendations from the Governor of Idaho as a result of evaluation completed by the Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force.
- 3.4.** CC-4: The BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with the State of Idaho and Montana and the Idaho Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force and Montana Sage-grouse Oversight Team regarding proposed management changes, the implementation of conservation measures, mitigation, and site-specific monitoring, related to adaptive management and livestock grazing (Appendix O).
- 3.5.** CC-5: Upon completion of the Record of Decision the BLM will develop an initial Implementation Guide for BLM District and Field Offices within a year of issuance of the Record of Decision. This Guide would define and describe consistent application of the allocations, management actions, required design features, and etc. that are contained within the final plan and would be updated and expanded as needed to respond to issues and concerns.
- 3.6.** CC-6: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with IDFG, MFWP, USFWS, and other conservation partners in collaborative efforts with adjacent states (Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Wyoming) in GRSG MZs IV and II to evaluate GRSG habitat and population status and trends and make appropriate regional recommendations for GRSG conservation at broader scales.
- 3.7.** CC-7: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with the appropriate WAFWA Sage-grouse Technical Committee to develop consistent population and habitat monitoring approaches that facilitate GRSG conservation at the MZ scale.
- 3.8.** CC-8: All prescribed burning would be coordinated with state and local air quality agencies to ensure that local air quality is not significantly impacted by BLM and Forest Service activities.

4. Greater Sage-Grouse Management Areas

- 4.1. Management Area (MA)-1: Designate five GRSG Conservation Areas within the sub-region to form the geographic basis for achieving population objectives; evaluating the disturbance density and adaptive regulatory triggers; and tailor adaptive management responses. These conservation areas are depicted in Map 1. These areas are referred to as Mountain Valleys, Desert, West Owyhee, Southern and Southwestern Montana Conservation Areas.

Conservation Area Description:

Mountain Valleys Conservation Area – generally located north of the Snake River Plain, and includes habitat in west-central population area. It extends west from Rexburg, north and west of Highway 33 to Howe, north and west of Highway 33/22 to Arco, north and west of Highway 26/20/93 to Carey, north and west of Highway 20 west to Hill City, north and west of Highway 20 to the Dylan Karaus Road, west to Canyon Creek. Canyon Creek to the confluence with the Snake River form the western boundary.

Desert Conservation Area – located north of the Snake River and south of the Mountain Valleys Conservation Area. It extends from the confluence of Canyon Creek and the Snake River, eastward to Idaho Falls. The Snake River and Henry’s Fork form the eastern boundary.

West Owyhee Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and west of the Bruneau River.

Southern Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and east of the Bruneau River, including East Idaho uplands and Bear Lake Plateau, and the Utah portion of the Sawtooth National Forest in Box Elder County.

Southwestern Montana – located in southwestern Montana - encompassing the Dillon Butte BLM Field Office boundaries (the Butte RMP is not being amended and since there are limited GRSG federal General Habitat Management Areas management actions do not apply in the Butte Field Office).

Additionally, sage-grouse habitats in the Desert and West Owyhee CAs are relatively contiguous, while those in the Mountain Valleys and Southern CAs tend to be more fragmented due to topography, elevational and land use differences.

- 4.2. MA-2: Within each Conservation Area (CA) designate GRSG Habitat Management Areas: Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas (Map 2). **Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMAs)** focus on conserving the two key meta-populations in the sub-region. These meta-populations consist of a large aggregation of interconnected breeding subpopulations of GRSG that have the highest likelihood of long-term persistence. The PHMA encompasses areas with the highest conservation value to GRSG, based on the presence of larger leks, habitat extent, important movement and connectivity corridors and winter habitat. Priority Habitat Management Areas include adequate area to accommodate continuation of existing

land uses and landowner activities. **Important Habitat Management Areas (IHMAs)** contain additional habitat and populations that provide a management buffer for the PHMA and to connect patches of PHMA. The IHMA encompasses areas of generally moderate to high conservation value habitat and/or populations and in some CAs includes areas beyond those identified by USFWS as necessary to maintain redundant, representative and resilient populations (Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs)). The IHMAs are typically adjacent to PHMAs but generally reflect somewhat lower GRSG population status and/or reduced habitat value due to disturbance, habitat fragmentation or other factors. There are no IHMAs designated within the Southwestern Montana CA. **General Habitat Management Areas (GHMAs)** encompass habitat that is outside of PHMAs or IHMAs. It is generally characterized by more marginal habitat and few, if any, occupied leks or other important seasonal use areas.

- 4.3. MA-3: Delineate PHMA and IHMA to encompass 90% of the breeding males in Idaho.
- 4.4. MA-4: Annually prioritize Conservation Areas at the state scale considering results of the annual adaptive regulatory trigger evaluations relative to implementation of restoration and mitigation activities.
- 4.5. MA-5: Prioritize activities and mitigation to protect, enhance and restore GRSG habitats (i.e. fire suppression activities, fuels management activities, vegetation treatments, invasive species treatments, etc.) first by Conservation Area, if appropriate (CA under adaptive management or at risk of engaging adaptive management), followed by Priority Habitat Management Areas, then Important Habitat Management Areas then General Habitat Management Areas within the Conservation Areas. Local priority areas within these areas will be further refined as a result of completing the GRSG Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments as described in Appendix D. This could include projects outside GRSG habitat when those projects would provide a benefit to GRSG habitat. Priority restoration and mitigation areas are restoration areas identified on the Key Habitat map (R1, R2, R3 and Recent Burn) within nesting and wintering areas in Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas.
- 4.6. MA-6: The management area map and biologically significant unit baseline map would be re-evaluated in conjunction with plan evaluation processes (i.e. approximately every 5 years). This re-evaluation could indicate the need to adjust Priority, Important or General Habitat Management Areas or the habitat baseline. These adjustments could occur upon completion of the appropriate analysis (plan amendment) to review the allocation decisions based on the map. Results from the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments, such as identified focal or emphasis areas would also be used to help inform mapping adjustments during this evaluation.
- 4.7. MA-7: The functionality and capability of GRSG habitat within the project area would be assessed during project-level NEPA analysis within the management area designations (Priority, Important, General) and appropriate annual updates to the Key Habitat map would occur. Areas without the potential and capability to provide GRSG habitat would be identified, areas with the potential to provide GRSG habitat would be appropriately classified on the Key Habitat map. Project proposals and their effects would be evaluated based on the habitat and values affected.

- 4.8. MA-8: Idaho BLM will annually update the Key Habitat map as described in Appendix F, in order to reflect habitat changes resulting from wildfire, succession, and vegetation treatments that occurred or were observed since the last update. Updates to the map will also occur if it is determined that mapping errors or omissions have occurred, or that radio-telemetry studies indicate that sage-grouse are consistently utilizing an area. Updates are also intended to capture recommendations by the field offices, sage-grouse Local Working Groups (LWG), or agency partners in sage-grouse conservation.
- 4.9. MA-9: Areas of habitat outside of delineated management areas identified during the Key habitat update process would be evaluated during site specific NEPA for project level activities and GRSG required design features (Appendix A), seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix B) and buffers (Appendix C) would be included as part of project design. These areas would be further evaluated during plan evaluation and the 5-year update to the management areas, to determine whether they should be included as Priority, Important or General Habitat Management Areas.

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5. Adaptive Management

- 5.1. Adaptive Management (AM)-1: Idaho: Use hard and soft population and habitat triggers, evaluated within a Conservation Area, to determine an appropriate management response.
- 5.2. AM-2: Utilize monitoring information collected through the Monitoring Framework Plan (Appendix E) to determine when adaptive regulatory triggers have been met.
- 5.3. AM-3: Idaho: BLM and Forest Service would maintain GRSG habitat information, through use of the Key Habitat map or latest sagebrush/vegetation map, which would be used to track and identify habitat changes to assess the habitat trigger in the adaptive management approach. Key habitat map updates are made each winter by BLM in coordination with the FS and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), using the process described in Appendix F.
- 5.4. AM-4: BLM and Forest Service would utilize population information collected and maintained by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to track and identify population changes to assess the population trigger in the adaptive management approach.
- 5.5. AM-5: Twice each year the applicable monitoring information would be reviewed to determine if any adaptive management triggers have been met.
- 5.6. AM-6: Adaptive regulatory triggers would be individually calculated across all ownerships within the biologically significant units (BSU). The BSU is defined as the Idaho Department of Fish and Game modeled nesting and wintering habitat within Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas within a Conservation Area. The sagebrush component of the BSU is represented by the key habitat within the BSU.
- 5.7. AM-7: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Habitat Triggers are defined as:
 - A 20 percent loss of Key Habitat within the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Appendix G) of the PHMA of a CA when compared to the 2011 baseline (the BSU is defined as the nesting and wintering habitat within a Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas (separately) within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships); or
 - A 20 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the IHMA of a CA when compared to the 2011 baseline.
- 5.8. AM-8: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Habitat Triggers are defined as:
 - A 10 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the PHMA of a CA when compared to the 2011 baseline; or
 - A 10 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the IHMA of a CA when compared to the 2011 baseline.
- 5.9. AM-9: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Population Triggers are defined as:
 - A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change significantly below 1.0 within PHMA within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years compared to the 2009-2011 baseline; or
 - A 20 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change significantly below 1.0 within IHMA within a CA over a period of 3 consecutive years compared to the 2009-2011 baseline. Significance for the finite rate of change is defined by the 90% confidence interval around the current 3-year average of finite rate of change to evaluate whether the finite rate of change is significantly less than 1.0. If the 90% confidence interval is

less than and does not include 1.0, than the finite rate of change is significantly less than 1.0. The finite rate of change and variance will be calculated following Garton et al. (2011).

- 5.10.** AM-10: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Population Triggers are defined as:
- A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change below 1.0 within PHMA within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011; or
 - A 10 percent decline in maximum number of males counted and a finite rate of change below 1.0 within IHMA within a CA over a period of 3 years when compared to the average finite rate of change from 2009-2011.
- 5.11.** AM-11: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend additional potential implementation level activities Appendix G.
- 5.12.** AM-12: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been met then PHMA management actions would be applied to the IHMA within that CA.
- 5.13.** AM-13: If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive Grazing Management Response described in Appendix G.
- 5.14.** AM-14: Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population information shows a return to or an exceedance of baseline values within the associated CA.
- 5.15.** **Montana Adaptive Management:**

6. Anthropogenic Disturbance

- 6.1.** Anthropogenic Disturbance (AD)-1: Limit anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent as calculated within the biologically significant unit (BSU) (Map 3). The BSU is defined as the currently mapped nesting and wintering habitat within Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas within a Conservation Area, inclusive of all ownerships for evaluation. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat disturbance from wildfire and fuels management activities and includes activities described in Table X. For Idaho this disturbance is measured by direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features (powerlines, pipelines and roads). For Montana this disturbance is measured utilizing the Disturbance Density Calculation Tool process described in Appendix H.
- 6.2.** AD-2: New anthropogenic disturbances within Priority or Important Habitat Management Areas within a CA where the disturbance cap is already exceeded from any source or where the proposed development would result in the cap being exceeded would not be allowed in within that CA until enough habitat has been restored within that CA to maintain the area under this cap (subject to valid existing rights).
- 6.3.** AD-3: Priority Habitat Management Area: Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria. In order to avoid surface-disturbing activities in Priority Habitat Management Areas, priority will be given to development (including ROWs, fluid minerals and other mineral resources subject to applicable stipulations) outside of Priority Habitat Management Areas. When authorizing development in Priority Habitat Management Areas, priority will be given to development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse. In addition to the Priority and Important Habitat Management Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4), the following criteria must all be met in the project screening and assessment process:
- a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing development);
 - b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat and mitigation would provide a net conservation benefit to the respective Priority Habitat Management Area;
 - c. The project and associated impacts would not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA (the project would be outside Key habitat in areas not meeting desired habitat conditions or the project would provide a benefit to habitat areas that are functioning in a limited way as habitat);
 - d. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the Priority Habitat Management Area; or can be either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade) ; or 3) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (i.e. powerlines) (proposed actions would not increase the 2011

- authorized footprint and associated impacts more than fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice.
- e. Development could be implemented adhering to the required design features (RDF) described in Appendix A;
 - f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).
 - g. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.
- 6.4.** AD-4: Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas: Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria – the following criteria must be met in the screening and assessment process:
- a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management area; and
 - b. The project siting and/or design should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; this may include co-location within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable; and
 - c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and
 - d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
 - e. Development could be implemented adhering to the required design features (RDF) described in Appendix A.
 - f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).
- 6.5.** AD-5: Co-locating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs or the construction of new facilities in all management area. Colocation for various activities is defined as:
- Communication Sites – The installation of new equipment/facilities on or within or adjacent to existing authorized equipment/facilities or within a communication site boundary as designated in the Communication Site Plan.
- Electrical Lines – Installation of new rights-of-way (ROWs) adjacent to current ROWs boundaries, not necessarily placed on the same power poles.
- Other Rights-of-Way – The installation of new rights-of-way (ROWs) within the existing footprint of an approved ROW boundary or adjacent to an approved ROW boundary.
- Designated Corridors – The installation of new rights-of-way within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor.
- 6.6.** AD-6: Incorporate required design features (RDFs) as described in Appendix A in the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new authorizations and suppression activities, as conditions of approval into any post-lease activities and as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to the extent allowable by law, unless at least one of the following conditions can be

demonstrated and documented in the NEPA analysis associated with the specific project:

- A specific RDF is not applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project or activity;
- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat; or
- Analysis concludes that following a specific RDF would provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for the project being proposed.

- 6.7. AD-7: Conduct implementation and project activities, including construction and short-term anthropogenic disturbances consistent with seasonal habitat restrictions described in Appendix B.
- 6.8. AD-8: Required Design Features and seasonal habitat restrictions would not be required for emergency or short-term activities necessary to protect and preserve human life or property.
- 6.9. AD-9: Incorporate appropriate buffers into implementation and project design to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG described in Appendix C.
- 6.10. AD-10: Incorporate appropriate conservation measures for slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*) as described in the 2014 Conservation Agreement (as updated, amended or reauthorized) into implementation and project design within slickspot peppergrass habitat in the Jarbidge and Four Rivers Field Offices to avoid and minimize impacts to slickspot peppergrass. The 2014 Conservation Agreement is included as Appendix ??.

Table X. Anthropogenic Disturbances and Areas of Impact

Datasets as Described in the Monitoring Framework³
Oil and Gas Wells and Development Facilities
Coal Mines
Wind Towers
Solar Fields
Geothermal Development Facilities
Mining (Active Locatable, Leasable and Saleable Developments)
Roads
Railroads
Powerlines
Communication Towers
Other Vertical Structures
Additional Local Datasets (need definitions)
Underground Pipelines
Coal Bed Methane Ponds
Meteorological Towers (e.g., wind energy testing)

³ Taken from Table 6 – GRSG Monitoring Framework.

Nuclear Energy Facilities
Airports
Military Ranges (Ground based facilities).
Hydropower plants
Recreation Areas (Facilities and infrastructure)

DRAFT

7. Mitigation

- 7.1.** Mitigation (MIT)-1: BLM and USFS would establish an inter-agency WAFWA Management Zone GRSG Conservation Team at the state level (both Idaho and Montana) to help guide conservation of GRSG, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. MIT-2: The BLM and USFS, in coordination with the GRSG Conservation Team would develop a Mitigation Strategy within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. In Idaho this strategy would be consistent with the Idaho Mitigation Framework (Appendix I).
- 7.2.** MIT-3: Mitigate impacts from anthropogenic developments (Appendix G Table G-1) to GRSG habitats to a net conservation benefit by first avoidance of impacts, minimizing impacts and then compensating for impacts. A net conservation benefit to GRSG would be achieved by implementing restoration conservation actions, applying a no net unmitigated loss standard for authorized uses in all GRSG habitat with PHMA, IHMA and GHMA; and strategically siting compensatory mitigation actions, consistent with the WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy as part of a mitigation program in order to achieve cumulative benefits (as outlined in Appendix I).
- 7.3.** MIT-4: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix G Table G-1) impacts to a no net loss of Key habitat standard (Appendix I) through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework (Appendix I), referred to as no unmitigated loss. No net unmitigated loss means that impacts from implementation level actions would fully offset to benefit the species. This would be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions.
- 7.4.** MIT-5: Mitigate anthropogenic development (Appendix G Table G-1) impacts to GRSG habitat through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework (Appendix I).
- 7.5.** MIT-6: Consistent with regulations for minerals activities, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site when surface disturbing activities are proposed. Ensure reclamation bonds are sufficient to cover costs to fully rehabilitate lost GRSG habitat. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work. Areas are considered fully rehabilitated when they meet the conditions described in Table 3.

8. Wildfire Preparedness/Prevention

- 8.1. Wildfire Preparedness (WFP)-1: Support development and implementation of Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) in coordination with the State of Idaho.
- 8.2. WFP-2: Develop a consistent approach to fire restrictions within GRSG habitat through the existing coordinated inter-agency approach to fire restrictions based upon National Fire Danger Rating System thresholds (fuel conditions, drought conditions, and predicted weather patterns).
- 8.3. WFP-3: Annually incorporate into existing fire management plans results and updates from the Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments (FIAT Assessments) described in Appendix D, to communicate/explain the resource value of GRSG habitat, including fire prevention messages and actions to reduce human-caused ignitions.
- 8.4. WFP-4: Continue to participate with the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, a cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.
- 8.5. WFP-5: Continue annual coordination meetings held between cooperating agencies that have fire suppression responsibilities. Incorporate Rangeland Fire Protection Associations and other stakeholders into this coordination. Discuss priority suppression areas and distribute maps showing priority suppression areas at both the Conservation Area and the local office levels as based on the adaptive management strategy and FIAT Assessments.
- 8.6. WFP-6: Ensure firefighter personnel receive annual orientation regarding GRSG habitat and sagebrush management issues as related to wildfire suppression.
- 8.7. WFP-7: As part of the FIAT Assessments, identify roads, trails, and recreational use areas with high frequency of human caused fires within or adjacent to the Priority or Important Habitat Management Areas. Consider these areas during annual fire restriction evaluations, and as appropriate, through site specific management.
- 8.8. WFP-8: Coordinate with Federal, State and local jurisdictions on fire and litter prevention programs to reduce human caused ignitions.
- 8.9. WFP-9: Implement activities identified within the FIAT Assessments.

9. Wildfire Suppression

- 9.1. WFS-1: Complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessments (FIAT Assessments) as described within Appendix D and incorporate results into appropriate Fire Management Plans as they are completed. FIAT Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of focal and emphasis habitats/treatment opportunities for fuels management, fire management, and restoration. These FIAT Assessments identify focal and emphasis habitats and describe strategies for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities. Focal and Emphasis Habitats identified through the FIAT Assessment to further refine priority areas for treatments to reduce the threats posed by wildfire, invasive annual grass and conifer expansion.
- 9.2. WFS-2: As part of the FIAT Assessments incorporate a wildfire response time analysis focusing on response time to identified priority areas within Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas or on those fires that have the potential to impact Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas. Incorporate findings into Unit Initial Attack program
- 9.3. WFS-3: As part of the FIAT Assessment incorporate a water capacity analysis for suppression purposes, including potential private water sources. Provide water availability to respond to fire in or threatening PHMA and IHMA during initial attack.
- 9.4. WFS-4: During high fire danger conditions, stage initial attack and secure additional resources closer to priority areas identified in the FIAT Assessments, based on anticipated fires and weather conditions, with particular consideration of the West Owyhee, Southern and Desert Conservation Areas to ensure quicker response times in or near GRSG habitat after considerations and placement of resources to protect human life and property.
- 9.5. WFS-5: Utilize a full range of fire management strategies and tactics through strategic wildfire suppression planning consistent with appropriate management response and within acceptable risk levels, to achieve resource objectives for GRSG habitat consistent with land use plan direction. Utilizing both direct and indirect attack as appropriate to limit the overall amount of GRSG habitat burned. This could include suppressing fires in intact sagebrush habitats; limiting fire growth in General Habitat Management Areas when suppression resources are available or managing wildfire for resource benefit in areas of conifer (juniper) encroachment.
- 9.6. WFS-6: Suppression priorities: Firefighter and public safety followed by property are the highest priority for protection during suppression activities. Maintaining GRSG habitat will be prioritized immediately after human life and property, commensurate with threatened and endangered species habitat or other critical habitats to be protected.
- 9.7. WFS-7: Ensure close coordination with federal and state firefighters including the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations during suppression activities.

10. Fuels Management

- 10.1.** FM-1: Design and implement fuels treatments that would reduce the potential start and spread of unwanted wildfires and provide anchor points or control lines for the containment of wildfires during suppression activities with an emphasis on maintaining, protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems and successfully rehabilitated areas and strategically and effectively reduce wildfire threats in the greatest area.
- 10.2.** FM-2: Enhance (or maintain/retain) sagebrush canopy cover and community structure to match expected potential for the ecological site and consistent with GRSG habitat objectives unless fuels management objectives requires additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel management treatments against the additional loss of sagebrush cover on the local landscape in the NEPA process.
- 10.3.** FM-3: Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing vegetation and fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present. Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality. Ensure chemical applications are utilized where they would assist in success of fuels treatments. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to prevent fire from spreading into Priority Habitat Management Areas or WUI.
- 10.4.** FM-4: Develop a fuels continuity and management strategy to expand, enhance, maintain and protect GRSG habitat informed by the FIAT Assessments completed as described in Appendix D.
- 10.5.** FM-5: When developing the fuels management strategy as part of the FIAT Assessment described in Appendix D consider up-to-date fuels profiles; land use plan direction; current and potential habitat fragmentation; sagebrush and GRSG ecological factors; active vegetation management steps to provide critical breaks in fuel continuity where appropriate; incorporate a comparative risk analysis with regard to the risk of increased habitat fragmentation from a proposed action versus the risk of large scale fragmentation posed by wildfires if the action is not taken.
- 10.6.** FM-6: Fuel treatments will be designed through an interdisciplinary process to expand, enhance, maintain, and protect GRSG habitat which considers a full range of cost effective fuel reduction techniques, including: chemical, biological (including grazing and targeted grazing), mechanical and prescribed fire treatments.
- 10.7.** FM-7: Existing and proposed linear ROWs could be considered for use and maintenance as vegetated fuel breaks in appropriate areas (this activity may or may not be part of the ROW permit or the responsibility of the permit holder, in cases where this activity is considered part of mitigation for project design then it would be appropriately included as part of the ROW permit and the responsibility of the permit holder for development and maintenance).
- 10.7.1.** FM-8: Fuel breaks would incorporate existing vegetation treatments (seedings), rocky areas or other appropriate topography or features or be located adjacent to existing linear disturbance areas where appropriate. Fuel breaks should be placed in areas with the greatest likelihood of compartmentalizing a fire and/or to foster suppression options to protect existing intact habitat.

- 10.8.** FM-9: Strategically pre-treat areas to reduce fine fuels consistent with areas and results identified within the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments..
- 10.9.** FM-10: Protect seeding efforts from subsequent fire events.
- 10.10.** FM-11: Targeted grazing as a fuels treatment to adjust the vegetation conditions to reduce the potential start and spread of wildfires may be implemented within existing grazing authorizations if feasible such as through temporary non-renewable authorizations, or through contracts, agreements or other appropriate means separate from existing grazing authorizations and permits.
- 10.11.** FM-12: Targeted grazing to achieve fuels management objectives should conform to the following criteria:
- Targeted grazing should be implemented strategically on the landscape, and directly involve the minimum footprint and grazing intensity required to meet fuels management objectives.
 - Allow conformance to the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Idaho or Montana) at the assessment scale.
 - Where feasible and applicable coordinate with the grazing permittee to strategically reduce fuels through livestock management within the Mandatory Terms and Conditions of the applicable grazing authorizations
- 10.12.** FM-13: Prioritize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low or non-economical, nonnative seeds may be used to meet GRSG habitat objectives to trend toward restoring the fire regime. When reseeding, use fire resistant native and nonnative species, as appropriate, to provide for fuel breaks.
- 10.13.** FM-14: Maintain effectiveness of fuels projects, including fuel breaks, to ensure long-term success, including persistence of seeded species and/or other treatment components while maintaining the integrity of adjacent vegetation.

11. Wildfire Restoration/Rehabilitation – Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

- 11.1.** ESR-1: Utilize the findings and Restoration/Rehabilitation Strategy developed as part of the FIAT Assessment process described in Appendix D to determine if GRSG rehabilitation actions are needed, based on ecological potential, and direct emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ESR) (BLM) or Burned Area Emergency Restoration (BAER) (FS) actions after fire.
- 11.2.** ESR-2: Incorporate GRSG Habitat Management Objectives into ESR/BAER plans based on site potential and in accordance with the Restoration/Rehabilitation Strategy developed as a result of the FIAT Assessments.
- 11.3.** ESR-3: Provide adequate rest from livestock grazing to allow natural recovery of existing vegetation and successful establishment of seeded species. New seedings should not be grazed until at least the end of the second growing season, and longer as needed to allow plants to mature and develop robust root systems which will stabilize the site, compete effectively against cheatgrass and other invasive annuals, and remain sustainable under long-term grazing management. Adjust other management activities, as appropriate, to meet ES&R objectives.
- 11.4.** ESR-4: Adjust, as appropriate, livestock management on adjacent unburned areas to mitigate the effect of the burn on local GRSG populations.

12. Habitat Restoration and Vegetation Management

- 12.1. VEG-1: Implement habitat rehabilitation or restoration projects in areas that have potential to improve GRSG habitat using a full array of treatment activities as appropriate, including chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments.
- 12.2. VEG-2: Implement vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects to enhance sagebrush cover or to promote diverse and healthy grass and forb understory to achieve the greatest improvement in GRSG habitat based on FIAT Assessments, HAF assessments, other vegetative assessment data and local, site specific factors that indicate sagebrush canopy cover or herbaceous conditions do not meet habitat management objectives (i.e. is minimal or exceeds optimal characteristics). This may necessitate the use of prescribed fire as a site preparation technique to remove annual grass residual growth prior to the use of herbicides in the restoration of certain lower elevation sites (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush) but such efforts will be carefully planned and coordinated to minimize impacts to sage-grouse seasonal habitats.
- 12.3. VEG-3: Require use of native seeds for restoration based on availability, adaptation (ecological site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Non-native seeds may be used as long as they support GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke 2011) to increase probability of success, when adapted seed availability is low or to compete with invasive species especially on harsher sites.
- 12.4. VEG-4: Implement management changes in restoration and rehabilitation areas, as necessary, to maintain suitable GRSG habitat, improve unsuitable GRSG habitat and to ensure long-term persistence of improved GRSG habitat (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006). Management changes could be considered during livestock grazing permit renewals, travel management planning, and renewal or reauthorization of rights-of-way.
- 12.5. VEG-5: Consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed production (Armstrong 2007) to provide a reliable source of locally adapted seed to use during rehabilitation and restoration activities.
- 12.6. VEG-6: Allocate use of native seed to GRSG or ESA listed species habitat in years when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation of native seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects outside of Priority or Important Habitat Management Areas to those inside it. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment of appropriate sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory plants, relative to site potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation efforts.
- 12.7. VEG-7: During land health assessments, evaluate the relative value of existing nonnative seeding within GRSG habitat as: 1) a component of a grazing system allowing improvement of adjacent native vegetation, 2) development of a forage reserve, 3) incorporation into a fuel break system (Davies et al. 2011) or 4) restoration/diversification for GRSG habitat improvement. Where appropriate and feasible, diversify seedings, or restore to native vegetation when potential benefits to GRSG habitat outweigh the other potential uses of the non-native seeding, with emphasis on PHMA and IHMA. Allow recolonization of seedings by sagebrush and other native vegetation.
- 12.8. VEG-8: Utilize conifer (juniper) removal treatments to reduce the extent of conifer encroachment areas in sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied

sage-grouse habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use site-specific analysis and tools like VDTT and FIAT assessments to help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated. Refrain from using prescribed fire and conducting removal projects in old-growth juniper stands. Old-growth juniper trees are characterized by rounded tops and spreading canopies, often containing dead limbs and/or spike tops, large branches near the base of the tree, as well as furrowed, fibrous bark, and are typically host to arboreal lichens. Leader growth in the upper quarter of the tree is usually less than one inch. These trees are generally distributed on rock outcrop or rubble land soils, or other soils with coarse fragments in the soil-surface and/or slopes over 12-25%, where juniper vegetation type is the climax plant community (IDFG 2000; Miller et al 2005; USDI and USGS 2007).

- 12.9.** VEG-9: Avoid using prescribed fire in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat unless evaluation of site-specific conditions demonstrate that there would be a net benefit for sage-grouse. If prescribed fire is used in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, include an analysis in the NEPA document that indicates how Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives will be addressed and met by its use, why alternative techniques were not selected, and a risk assessment to address how potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat would be minimized.
- If prescribed fire is to be used at the implementation level, at a minimum, the burn plan will indicate how land use plan objectives would be addressed and met and why alternative techniques were not selected.
 - Avoid prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment in Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species, or in areas with a potential for post-fire exotic annual dominance. However, after other treatment opportunities have been explored and as site-specific variables allow, prescribed fire could be used in these areas to meet specific fuels objectives that would maintain, improve, or restore Greater Sage-Grouse habitat or vegetation (e.g., creation of fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer reduction treatments, used as a component with other treatment methods (such as chemical) to combat annual grasses and restore native plant communities).
 - Allow no treatments in areas only providing winter seasonal habitat unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and/or would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality.

13. Invasive Species

- 13.1.** Invasive Species (INV)-1: Incorporate results of the FIAT Assessments into projects and activities addressing invasive species.
- 13.2.** INV-2: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated vegetation management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans for Cooperative Weed Management Areas in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.
- 13.3.** INV-3: Conduct integrated weed management actions for noxious and invasive weed populations that are impacting or threatening GRSG habitat quality using a variety of eradication and control techniques including chemical, mechanical and other appropriate means.
- 13.4.** INV-4: Require project proponent (projects described in Table X and which are included in the anthropogenic disturbance cap evaluation) to ensure that noxious weeds and invasive species caused as a result of the project are treated to eliminate establishment on the disturbed project construction areas for at least 3 years.

14. Lands and Realty / Infrastructure

- 14.1. Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Priority: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-3 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-4 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General: Designate and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open with proposals subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.
- 14.2. LR-2: Priority: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as exclusion areas for utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower energy development. Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as avoidance areas for Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower development. General: Designate and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open for Wind and Solar testing and development and nuclear and hydropower development subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.
- 14.3. LR-3: Priority: Development of commercial service airports and facilities (as defined by FAA 2014 – publically owned airports that have at least 2,500 passenger boardings each calendar year and receive scheduled passenger service) would not be allowed within Priority Habitat Management Areas. Important and General Habitat Management Areas are Avoidance and Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described in LR-1.
- 14.4. LR-4: Priority: Development of new or expansion of existing landfills would not be allowed within Priority Habitat Management Areas. Important and General Habitat Management Areas are Avoidance and Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as described in LR-1.
- 14.5. LR-5: Consistent with LR-2, LR-3 and LR-4, Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations in PHMA would only be considered when consistent with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria (AD-3); Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations in IHMA could be considered consistent with the Important Habitat Management Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria. (AD-4). General: New ROW and land use authorizations could be considered.
- 14.6. LR-6: If the project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade) - the existing transmission line must be removed and area rehabilitated within a specified amount of time after the new line is installed and energized.
- 14.7. LR-7: Existing designated corridors, including Section 368 Corridors, will remain Open (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement).
- 14.8. LR-8: Process unauthorized use. If the use is subsequently authorized, it would be authorized consistent with direction for the Management Areas within which it is located and the RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. If the use is not subsequently authorized the site would be reclaimed by removing these features and rehabilitating the habitat.
- 14.9. LR-9: Land use authorizations that are temporary (less than 3 years) in nature and are not otherwise excluded or restricted would be subject to seasonal or timing restrictions and mitigation requirements regarding habitat loss as needed.

- 14.10.** LR-10: New ROW applications for water facilities (ditches, canals, pipelines), or amendments to existing water facilities which include additional structures to improve fish passage or benefits to fisheries (new diversions, fish screens) would be allowed on a case-by-case bases subject to RDFs to reduce impacts to GRSG habitat and mitigation requirements regarding GRSG habitat loss as needed.
- 14.11.** LR-11: When a ROW grant expires and is not requested to be renewed, is relinquished, or terminated, the lease holder would be required to reclaim the site by removing overhead lines and other infrastructure and to eliminate avian predator nesting opportunities provided by anthropogenic development on public lands associated with the now void ROW grant (e.g., remove powerline and communication facilities no longer in service).
- 14.12.** LR-12: As opportunities and priorities indicate work with existing ROW holders to retrofit existing towers and structures consistent with RDFs described in Appendix A.
- 14.12.1.** LR-13: Lands within Priority, Important or General Habitat Management Areas for Greater Sage-Grouse will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation benefit to the Greater Sage-Grouse or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse. Land tenure adjustments would be subject to the following disposal, exchange, and acquisition criteria, which include retaining lands with GRSG habitat. Retention of areas with GRSG would reduce the likelihood of habitat conversion to agriculture, urbanization, or other uses that would remove sagebrush habitat and potentially impact sensitive plants. Criteria:
- a. Lands within Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas would not be available for disposal through sale (Appendix J).
 - b. Acquire habitat within Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas, when possible (i.e. willing landowner), and retain ownership of habitat within all Areas, except if a land exchange would allow for additional or more contiguous federal ownership patterns.
 - c. Lands within Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas would be retained unless exchange of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity of Priority or Important Habitat Management Areas.
 - d. Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality GRSG habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands of higher quality habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRSG habitats or lands providing for threatened and endangered species. These potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the extent or continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of Priority Habitat Management Areas. Higher priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of sagebrush areas within Priority Habitat Management Areas currently in public ownership. Lower priority would be given to other lands that would promote enhancement in the Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas (i.e., areas with fragmented or less in-tact sagebrush).
 - e. Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide for connectivity of Priority Habitat Management Areas.

15. Minerals

15.1. Fluid Minerals

- 15.1.1.** Fluid Minerals (FLM)-1: Idaho and Montana: Areas within Priority Habitat Management Areas and Important Habitat Management Areas would be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to no surface occupancy with a limited exception (FLM-3). General Habitat Management Areas would be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to CSU which includes buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.
- 15.1.2.** FLM-2: : Parcels nominated for lease in Priority or Important Habitat Management Areas would be evaluated prior to lease offering to determine if development is feasible when buffers and seasonal timing restrictions are applied. Parcels that could not be developed when these buffers and restrictions are applied would not be offered for lease.
- 15.1.3.** FLM-3: Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas: A lease waiver, exception or modification to the NSO stipulation may be considered where a portion of the proposed lease is determined to be in non-greater sage-grouse habitat, the area is not used by Greater sage-grouse, or it would not have direct, indirect or cumulative effects to Greater sage-grouse or its habitat. The determination would be made by a team of interagency Greater sage-grouse experts, including an expert from the state wildlife agency, USFWS and the BLM.. All exceptions must be approved by the State Director. In the event a waiver, exception or modification were allowed development would still be subject to CSU which includes buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.

Waivers, Exceptions and Modifications (WEMs) (Source IM-2008-032)

A waiver is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation, the stipulation would no longer apply anywhere within the lease. Waivers, by regulation, require a 30-day public review if the authorized officer has determined, prior to lease issuance, that a stipulation involves an issue of major concern to the public (43 CFR 3101.4) and are approved and signed by the State Director.

An exception is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the lease; exceptions are determined on a case-by-case basis; the stipulation continues to apply to all other sites within the lease. An exception is a limited type of waiver.

A modification is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or for the term of the lease. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to all sites within the lease to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

- 15.1.4.** FLM-4: Incorporate required design features and best management practices appropriate to the management area as conditions of approval when post leasing activity is proposed into any post-lease authorizations.
- 15.1.5.** FLM-5: Prior to leasing conduct a Master Leasing Plan process when all four of the following criteria are met:
- A substantial portion of the area to be analyzed in the MLP is not currently leased.
 - There is a majority Federal mineral interest.

- The oil and gas industry has expressed a specific interest in leasing, and there is a moderate or high potential for oil and gas confirmed by the discovery of oil and gas in the general area.
- Additional analysis or information is needed to address likely resource or cumulative impacts if oil and gas development were to occur where there are:
 - o multiple-use or natural/cultural resource conflicts;
 - o impacts to air quality;
 - o impacts on the resources or values of any unit of the National Park System, national wildlife refuge, or National Forest wilderness area, as determined after consultation or coordination with the NPS, the FWS, or the FS; or
 - o impacts on other specially designated areas. – analyzing likely development scenarios and varying mitigation levels.

15.1.6. FLM-5: Complete a Master Development Plan, consistent with plan development guide. on leases where a producing field is proposed to be developed.

15.1.7. FLM-6: Encourage unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring). The unitization must be designed in a manner to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG according to the Federal Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6.

15.1.8. FLM-7: Issue Written Orders of the Authorized Officer (43 CFR 3161.2) requiring reasonable protective measures consistent with the lease terms where necessary to avoid or minimize effects to GRSG populations or habitat.

15.2. Locatable Minerals

15.2.1. Locatable Minerals (LOC)-1: Lands would remain open to locatable mineral entry in all management areas.

15.2.2. LOC-2: Apply reasonable and appropriate required design features and best management practices as Conditions of Approval to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of GRSG habitat when a Plan of Operations is submitted for BLM or FS approval, in accordance with 43 CFR 3809.411(d)(2) (or 36 CFR 228.5(a)(3) on National Forest System lands).

15.3. Salable Minerals

15.3.1. Salable Minerals (SAL)-1: Priority: No new site authorizations would be approved. Important: New site authorizations could be considered provided the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) can be met, and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing community pits within PHMA and IHMA would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions. General: Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions.

15.3.2. SAL-2: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat management objectives.

15.3.3. SAL-3: Require reclamation bonding that would require restoration of GRSG habitat on new site authorizations for mineral material pits in IHMA (this would not apply to free use permits issued to a government entity such as a county road district, but would apply to non-profit entities).

15.4. Non-Energy Solid Mineral Leasable Minerals

15.4.1. Non Energy Leasables (NEL)-1: Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas: Areas within Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) will remain open to leasing subject to standard stipulations. PHMA areas outside KPLAs

are closed to leasing and prospecting. IHMA areas outside of KPLAs are open to prospecting and subsequent leasing provided the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) and the anthropogenic disturbance cap (AD-1) can be met. RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions shall be applied to prospecting permits. Exceptions to closures in PHMA and IHMA may be made for lease modifications and fringe leases where valid existing rights may be affected. General Habitat Management Areas: Lands outside KPLAs are available for prospecting and subsequent leasing and initial mine development subject to RDFs, buffers, timing restrictions (seasonal and daily) and standard stipulations.

15.4.2. NEL-2: Require seasonal and daily timing restrictions in undeveloped non-energy mineral leases when exploration activities or initial mine development is proposed (e.g. exploration drilling, timber removal, shrub clearing, etc.) as conditions of approval.

15.4.3. NEL-3: Include RDFs as conditions of approval to mine plans in undeveloped non-energy mineral leases for exploration activities or initial mine development.

15.5. Mineral Split Estate

15.5.1. Mineral Split Estate (MSE)-1: BLM Owns Mineral Estate – non-federal surface owner: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs, IHMAs, and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures, and RDFs applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands in the management area, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.

15.5.2. MSE-2: BLM owns surface – non-federal mineral estate owner: In coordination with the state regulatory entity and mineral estate owner apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management instruments, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities in PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA.

16. Range Management/Livestock Grazing

- 16.1. Range Management (RM)-1: Maintain existing areas designated as available or unavailable for livestock grazing. Existing active AUMs for livestock grazing within the planning area would not be changed at the broad scale, though the number of AUMs available on an allotment may be adjusted based on site-specific conditions to meet management objectives during term permit renewals, AMP development, or other appropriate implementation planning. Additionally, temporary adjustments can be made annually to livestock numbers, the number of AUMs, and season of use in accordance with applicable regulations.
- 16.2. RM-2: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing permits consistent with management area prioritization (MA-4), unless other higher priority considerations exist such as threatened, endangered and proposed species habitat that livestock grazing could affect. Where possible, conduct land health assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.
- 16.3. RM-3: Where opportunities exist, coordinate with other land managers to encourage livestock operations that utilize mixed federal, private and/or state land to be managed at the landscape scale to benefit GRSG and their habitat across land ownerships.
- 16.4. RM-4: PHMA & IHMA: During the land health assessment process, identify the type(s) of seasonal habitat the assessed areas are capable of supporting. Utilize the habitat assessment framework, (Stiver et al. 2014 as amended/replaced) or other BLM or Forest Service approved methodology, in accordance with current policy and guidance to determine whether vegetation structure, condition and composition are meeting GRSG habitat objectives including riparian and lentic areas (HM-OBJ-2; Table 2). Use appropriate Ecological Site Descriptions, reference sheets and state and transition models to inform desired habitat conditions and expected responses to management changes for the land unit being assessed.
- 16.5. RM-5: When modifying grazing management, analyze indirect effects to habitat, including changes in fuel loading and wildfire behavior.
- 16.6. RM-6: When livestock management practices are determined to not be compatible with meeting or making progress towards achievable habitat objectives following appropriate consultation, cooperating and coordination, implement changes in grazing management through grazing authorization modifications, or allotment management plan implementation. Potential modifications include, but are not limited to, changes in:
- 1) Season or timing of use;
 - 2) Numbers of livestock;
 - 3) Distribution of livestock use;
 - 4) Duration and/or level of use;
 - 5) Kind of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, or goats) (Briske et al. 2011);
 - 6) ; and
 - 7) Grazing schedules (including rest or deferment).
- 16.7. RM-7: Where opportunities exist, establish forage reserves to facilitate restoration and rehabilitation efforts in sage-grouse habitat areas.
- 16.8. RM-8: PHMA, IHMA & GHMA - When an allotment, or portion thereof, becomes vacant or grazing preference is relinquished, consider retirement of the allotment or grazing preference, or portion thereof, or converting the area to a forage reserve

- (a.k.a. reserve common allotment)/buffer when doing so would maintain or enhance sage-grouse habitat as described in subsequent site specific NEPA analysis.
- 16.9.** RM-9: PHMA & IHMA - Where practical, design pasture rotations to utilize non-native perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands, during GRSG nesting season annually or periodically.
- 16.10.** RM-10: Evaluate the locations where salt/supplements are placed. Coordinate salt/supplements placement to reduce impacts to GRSG habitat (e.g., existing disturbed areas).
- 16.11.** RM-11: Incorporate RDFs into Terms and Conditions for crossing permits to limit disturbance of occupied leks when trailing livestock across BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands in the spring. Work with permittees in locating over-nighting, watering and bedding locations to minimize impacts to seasonal habitats.
- 16.12.** RM-12: Design any new structural range improvements, following appropriate cooperation, consultation and coordination, to minimize and/or mitigate effects to GRSG habitat. Any new structural range improvements are subject to RDFs (Appendix A). Structural range improvement in this context, include, but are not limited to: fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures; pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments.
- 16.13.** RM-13: During the land health assessment and grazing permit renewal process, evaluate existing livestock management range improvements with respect to their effect on GRSG habitat. Consider removal of projects that are not needed for effective livestock management, are no longer in working condition, and/or negatively affect GRSG habitat, with the exception of functional projects needed for management of habitat for other threatened, endangered or proposed species or other sensitive resources.
- 16.14.** RM-14: Prioritize removal, modification or marking of fences or other structures in areas of high collision risk following appropriate cooperation, consultation and coordination to reduce the incidence of GRSG mortality due to fence strikes (Stevens et al. 2012).

17. Wild Horses and Burros

- 17.1.** Wild Horse and Burro (WHB)-1: Develop or amend herd management area plans (HMAPs) to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all herd management areas within GRSG habitat, with emphasis placed on PHMA. WHB-2: Prioritize gathers and population growth suppression techniques in HMAs in GRSG habitat, unless removals are necessary in other areas to address higher priority environmental issues, including herd health impacts. Additional prioritization would be given for HMAs that are near AML or where reduction would serve the most beneficial purpose. Herd Areas occupied by wild horses and burros managed for zero wild horses and burros.
- 17.2.** WHB-3: In PHMAs and IHMAs, monitor the effects of WHB use in relation to GRSG seasonal habitat objectives on an annual basis to help inform future management actions.
- 17.3.** WHB-4: Utilize interdisciplinary land health assessments in HMAs containing GRSG habitat to determine whether vegetation characteristics are meeting appropriate seasonal habitat objectives. The priorities for completing assessments are: 1) PHMA, 2) IHMA, 3)GHMA.
- 17.4.** WHB-5: When evaluating AML on HMAs within PHMA and IHMA, evaluate indicators that address structure/condition/composition of vegetation and measurements specific to achieving GRSG habitat objectives. In PHMAs and IHMAs, assess and adjust AMLs through the NEPA process within HMAs when wild horse use within established AML is identified as a significant causal factor in not meeting land health standards. WHB-6: Consider removals or exclusion of WHB during or immediately following emergency situations (such as fire, floods, and drought) to facilitate meeting GRSG habitat objectives where HMAs overlap with GRSG habitat.
- 17.5.** WHB-7: When conducting NEPA analysis for wild horse/burro management activities, water developments, or other rangeland improvements for wild horses, address the direct and indirect effects to GRSG populations and habitat. Implement any water developments or rangeland improvements using the criteria identified for domestic livestock.
- 17.6.** WHB-8: Coordinate with professionals from other federal and state agencies, researchers at universities, and others to utilize and evaluate new management tools (e.g., population growth suppression, inventory techniques, and telemetry) for implementing the WHB program.

18. Travel Management

- 18.1. Travel Management (TM) -1: Limit off-highway vehicle motorized travel within Idaho BLM Field Offices to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails in areas where travel management planning has not been completed or is in progress. This excludes areas previously designated as open through a land use plan decision or currently under review for designation as open, currently being analyzed in ongoing RMP revision efforts in the Four Rivers, Jarbidge and Upper Snake Field Offices. Upon completion of travel management plans the designation would change to limited to designated roads, primitive roads and trails.
- An off-highway vehicle is any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding: (1) Any nonamphibious registered motorboat; (2) any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes; (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved; (4) Vehicles in official use where official use is use by an employee, agent, or designated representative of the Federal Government or one of its contractors, in the course of his employment, agency, or representation.; and (5) any combat or combat support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies (43 CFR 8340.0 5).
- 18.2. TM-2: Temporary closures will be considered in accordance with 43 CFR subpart 8364 (Closures and Restrictions); 43 CFR subpart 8351 (Designated National Area); 43 CFR subpart 6302 (Use of Wilderness Areas, Prohibited Acts, and Penalties); 43 CFR subpart 8341 (Conditions of Use).
- Temporary closure or restriction orders under these authorities are enacted at the discretion of the authorized officer to resolve management conflicts and protect persons, property, and public lands and resources. Where an authorized officer determines that off-highway vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources, the affected areas shall be immediately closed to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence. (43 CFR 8341.2) A closure or restriction order should be considered only after other management strategies and alternatives have been explored. The duration of temporary closure or restriction orders should be limited to 24 months or less; however, certain situations may require longer closures and/or iterative temporary closures. This may include closure of routes or areas.
- 18.3. TM-3: Develop Travel Management Plans for each Field Office as described in the BLM Travel Management Handbook 8342.1 and according to the travel management planning guidelines (Appendix K).
- 18.4. TM-4: During subsequent travel management planning design and designate a travel system to minimize adverse effects on GRSG. Locate areas and trails to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Give special attention to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats. Allow for route upgrade, closure of existing routes, and creation of new routes to help protect habitat and meet user group needs, thereby reducing the potential for pioneering

unauthorized routes. The emphasis of the comprehensive travel and transportation planning within Priority Habitat Management Areas would be placed on having a neutral or positive effect on GRSG habitat. Individual route designations would occur during subsequent travel management planning efforts.

- 18.5.** TM-5: Conduct road maintenance activities to avoid disturbance during specific times at different seasons – see seasonal and timing restrictions section.

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19. Recreation

- 19.1. REC-1: Manage existing recreation uses and sites to minimize adverse effects on GRSG or their habitat through incorporation of RDFs, buffers and seasonal restrictions.
- 19.2. REC-2: Do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g., campgrounds, trails, trailheads, staging areas) within PHMAs and IHMAs unless the development would have a neutral effect or be beneficial to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating recreation, diverting use away from critical areas, etc.); or the new construction replaces existing facilities and reduces impacts from the existing facilities as in TM-4, or unless the development is required for visitor safety or resource protection.

DRAFT

20. Monitoring

- 20.1. Monitoring (MON)-1: Once FIAT Assessments are complete annually complete a review of FIAT Assessment implementation efforts within GRSG habitat with appropriate USFWS and state agency personnel.
- 20.2. MON-2: Annually monitor the effectiveness of fuels treatment projects.
- 20.3. MON-3: Monitor invasive vegetation post vegetation management treatment
- 20.4. MON-4: Monitor project construction areas for noxious weed and invasive species for at least 3 years, unless control is achieved earlier.
- 20.5. MON-5: Use lek, nesting and winter habitat maps and key habitat map (updates) to annually assess GRSG population and habitat status in the context of the adaptive management triggers.
- 20.6. MON-6: Continue to support updates to the Key Habitat map to track vegetation changes in relation to GRSG habitat on a yearly basis, until such a time this process is replaced. The process used to update the Key Habitat Map is described in Appendix F.
- 20.7. MON-7: Monitor GRSG habitat as described in the monitoring framework plan (Appendix E) in coordination with IDFG and MT FWP.

Appendices

Appendix A – Required Design Features

Appendix B – Seasonal Timing Restrictions

Appendix C – Application of Buffers

Appendix D – Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments/FIAT Team

Appendix E – Monitoring Framework Plan

Appendix F – Idaho Key Habitat Map Update Process

Appendix G – Idaho Anthropogenic Disturbance and Adaptive Management

Appendix H – Montana Anthropogenic Disturbance and Adaptive Management Process

Appendix I – Mitigation

Appendix J – Lands No Longer Available for Disposal

Appendix K – Travel Management Planning Guidelines

Appendix L – Functioning of Boards

DRAFT

Brent Ralston

From: Holly Prohaska
Sent: Tuesday, November 04, 2014 2:48 PM
To: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; 'qfbahr@blm.gov'; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; Kathryn Stangl (kstangl@blm.gov); 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; jmbeck@blm.gov; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Katie Patterson; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; Peter Gower
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 20141104.docx

Good Afternoon- The meeting notes from this morning's GB PM call are attached. Please let me know if you have any comments/ edits.

Respectfully,

Holly Prohaska

Holly Prohaska

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Sent: Monday, November 03, 2014 2:50 PM
To: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; 'Imermejo@blm.gov'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov'; 'qfbahr@blm.gov'; 'jsuther@blm.gov'; 'bralston@blm.gov'; 'sharphay@att.net'; 'Tague, Joe'; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov'; 'ssmall@blm.gov'; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; Kathryn Stangl (kstangl@blm.gov); 'jarubado@blm.gov'; 'Quamen, Frank R'; Drew Vankat; 'jmbeck@blm.gov'; 'ssmith@blm.gov'; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Katie Patterson; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
 participants: 9009662#

Agenda

1. WO review updates
 - Final ELT meeting packet
 - Schedule update
2. Tier II/CEA Update
3. VDDT- Did everyone get the final numbers?
4. Phase II FIAT meetings
5. Administrative record changes
6. Forest Service Proposed Plan update
7. Other topics?

Holly Prohaska

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

November 4, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Brent Ralston, ID; Jon Beck, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Matt Magaletti, WO; Frank Quamen, NOC

USFS: Randy Sharp

EMPSi: Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Action Items

BLM

- The GB PMs and solicitors will review the Buffalo CEA prior to the November 18th call.
- Quincy will send a follow up email to Don Majors about the VDDT numbers and CC Rob Mickelsen.
- Lauren will follow up with Rob Mickelsen on VDDT modeling for the other alternatives.
- Sarah will give NV BLM feedback on the state's new habitat delineations by the end of the week.
- Sarah, Brent, John and Lauren will have a call about the ID mapping issues on Thursday or Friday of this week.
- Sarah will get back to Quincy on the UT Red area issue.

EMPSi

- EMPSi will send the Buffalo CEA "prototype" out for review at the end of the week.

Meeting Minutes

WO Update

- Most of the leadership team is headed to Boise for the Fire meeting this week.
- On Thursday (November 6), the state directors and task force members will meet to go over the remaining issues that require direction (e.g. buffers).
- On Monday (November 10th) the leadership team will meet with USFWS to discuss any remaining issues.
- There has been no official decision regarding the USFWS memo and Super PAC map.

CEA

- EMPSi has received feedback from John Carlson and is finalizing revisions on the Buffalo CEA. The Buffalo CEA is like a "prototype" for the GB CEAs. The Buffalo CEA is approximately 60 pages (45-50 of actual text) and covers 1 management zone. The other sub region CEAs that may have multiple management zones may be larger but it is unlikely that the number of pages would be multiplied by the number of zones. The Buffalo CEA will be tech edited and sent out to the GB

PM's and the solicitors at the end of the week for their feedback. We will not have a call next Tuesday because of Veteran's day so the November 18th call will dedicate a half an hour to go over the Buffalo document.

Chapter 2 Outline

- Paper size- Not all of the sub regions had the same size paper in Chapter 2 of the DEIS (due to the number of alternatives). Utah used 8.5 x 14; NVCA used 8.5 x 11; Idaho used 11x17. Is it okay if the sub regions have different size paper for the FEIS? The majority of readers will see this electronically. WO does not mind if the different sub regions have different sized chapter 2 sections. But, WO does not want the chapters set up similar to what NW CO did in the DEIS where they showed two alternatives on each page in columns.

VDDT

- Quincy had some questions on the numbers because the USFWS mislabeled some PACs in Utah. Quincy would like to see what GIS layers were used so he can see if it is an easy fix without remodeling. He sent an email to Don Majors and has not heard back. Quincy will send another email to Don and CC Rob Mickelsen.
- Rob had mentioned to Quincy that they might consider running the model on all of the alternatives on the FEIS. Lauren will follow up with Rob.
- All of the other Sub regions have received their numbers.

Consultation Call

- Kim Trip with BLM WO (T&E Rep) wants to meet with the PMs to discuss section 7 consultation. She sent out a doodle poll to have a call. For now it seems like only UT and ID may need to address section 7 consultation:
 - Idaho- Peppergrass is an issue, but there is a new conservation agreement in ID pertaining to peppergrass and when BLM told USFWS that they planned on incorporating the conservation measures as RDFs into the IDMT GRSG FEIS, the USFWS did not think formal consultation would be necessary. But that could change.
 - UT- Prairie Dog issue as a result of conflicting needs. There is an issue with push effect (push impacts from sage grouse onto other species). The impacts on these species will be discussed further with Kim and the USFWS.

Other

- Sarah and the WO would like to see the national and sub-regional public comment responses prior to the full review of the FEIS. The comment responses cannot be finalized until we receive final direction from WO on outstanding items. Once we receive direction, those appendices can be finalized and shared with the WO.
- FIAT implementation meetings are ongoing in all sub regions.

- The State of NV came out with new habitat map and solicitors are evaluating whether to include it or move forward. Sarah will give feedback on map issue this week.
- Sarah, Brent, John and Lauren will also have a call on Thursday or Friday to go over the mapping issues in Idaho.
- Red Area issue in Utah- Utah BLM requests the solicitor's direction in writing. Sarah will look into it and get back to Quincy.
- Keep Brent on Emails for now, but John will be the main ID contact from here on out.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 1:49 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; rmickelson@fs.fed.us; vherren@blm.gov; jmbeck@blm.gov; gstein@fs.fed.us; jtague@blm.gov
Cc: dhavelina@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-11-18.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call. We will have a call next week at 10 am, so please plan to call in if you are around.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2014 4:29 PM
To: 'Holly Prohaska'; David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; 'qfbahr@blm.gov'; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe'; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki' (vherren@blm.gov) (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

- I. WO review updates
 - Issue resolution - status

- Schedule update
2. Tier II/CEA Update – review working draft Buffalo CEA
 3. Commenter Lists – EMPSi has pulled together the list
 - List consist of all the unique submission commenters and only lists their names and/or organization affiliation; it does not include the form letter submitters.
 4. APRMP/Final EIS
 - Chapter 2 -Section 2.4.3 Selection of and Rationale for Identifying the Preferred Alternative
 - All subregions must provide narrative discussion why specific alternatives were not selected as the preferred alternative.
 - Chapter 2- All subregion's must reference the "COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES ALLEVIATION OF USFWS-IDENTIFIED THREATS" (stop-light table) in Chapter 2.
 - Chapter 2- 2.6.1 Development of Proposed LUPA Development- Need text from Matt/ Stephanie on NPT and WO involvement in the development of the Proposed Plan. This should be consistent text for all subregions.
 - Has a core set of adaptive management triggers (especially hard triggers) been developed? And has consistency for this been established for populations that cross sub-regions/state lines?
 - VDDT-The use of VDDT data in the Proposed Plan.
 - Forest Service Proposed Plan update
 - Forest Service Crosswalk - FS to provide?
 5. Other topics?

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

November 18, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Joe Tague, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jon Beck, ID; John Carlson, MT; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Johanna Munson, WY; Matt Magaletti, WO

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- Buffalo CEA and CEA approach document

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Matt, Lauren, and Johanna: Review the Master Action Item list from the federal family meeting and send decisions for those items that have been completed/decided.
- Matt and Lauren: Discuss what level of detail is needed for the table showing the alleviation of COT threats in Chapter 2.
- ALL: Send questions on the CEA to Drew by December 2nd.
- Matt: Work with others in WO to provide text describing how the proposed plans were developed for Section 2.6.1.
- Quincy: Send VDDT impact tables.

Meeting Minutes

WO Review Updates

- BLM, the Department, and Solicitors will be meeting with USFWS (Noreen and Gary) Friday and Monday. Will review decisions that BLM is proposing. Meeting with Secretary on Tuesday and hope to get approval on the final decisions.
- Unsure how the decisions will be delivered (i.e., if they will be written up and distributed).
- State Directors will discuss decision points at the ELT meeting today [e.g., stronghold areas; withdrawal versus ACEC; buffers (USGS paper expected this week)].
- Assuming everything gets resolved by Tuesday, the WO will provide a new schedule.
- There was a Master action item list developed during the federal family meeting. Some of these were not part of the 12 issues. Will direction be provided on these? Matt, Lauren, and Johanna will review this list and send decisions for those items that have been completed/decided.

Buffalo CEA

- Goals for the discussion: 1) re-familiarize PMs with CEAs and approach; 2) answer questions about the Buffalo CEA; 3) review process and roles/responsibilities; 4) ensure questions are answered.
- Review of the CEA approach document that provides a blueprint to guide CEAs.
 - Using present and widespread threats from the COT report. Tables not accurate for UT – they should clearly explain these deviations.
 - Some past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions need to be called out specifically. EMPSi will work with subregions to determine these.
 - Cumulative effects for other resources will be focused within the subregion, not the WAFWA Management Zone or range of the species. The socioeconomic cumulative report will be prepared as a separate effort.
- Review of Buffalo outline – methods/assumptions; existing conditions for the Management Zone; regional efforts to manage GRSG; relevant cumulative actions; threat-based analysis, includes the NOC data. Will try to incorporate research that is applicable to the correct subregion; conclusions.
- EMPSi will add text to explain that acres presented for the subregion in the rest of the EIS may not match the NOC data.
- Inclusion of maps would be helpful (e.g., where the planning area and populations are in relation to the Management Zone).
- Concerns about including too much subregional information that may conflict with the rest of the document. Should focus on the WAFWA Management Zone. Consider converting the subregional acres to a percentage of those for the total Management Zone.
- Put questions in writing and send to Drew by December 2nd.
- Process – CEA schedule depends on WO schedule; will be in close coordination with Frank to get the data from the NOC. Last schedule had a 6 week window to complete the CEAs. EMPSi will work closely with reviewers to get them integrated. Each WAFWA Management Zone will have one reviewer.
 - MZ III: Joe/Lauren
 - MZ IV: Jon
 - MZ V: Joan
- Conclusions – Should compare back to COT and no action alternatives and remove value judgments. Also discussing the net conservation benefit.
- Pushing impacts to private land – can we really say that if BLM has no jurisdiction on private land. While this is true, we need to acknowledge the effects and potentially qualify any statements that imply otherwise.
- This is the chance to comment on CEA approach. All subregions will be consistent so there will be no changes to CEA approach for individual CEAs.

APRMP/Final EIS

- Chapter 2 maps – WO is requesting maps at the end of each chapter. After some discussion, decided to put the maps in Appendix A and print that appendix.
- Section 2.4.3 – identification of the preferred alternative and rationale for why other alternatives are selected. Some uncertainty as to if this would be legally required, but desire to justify the rationale since we will likely have to answer this question in the future. To maintain the same messaging as the DEIS, it was decided that we will delete this section.
- All subregions must reference comparison of alternatives and alleviation of COT threats in Chapter 2. There is a general table in Chapter 2 that addresses this. NV/CA had included a detailed table in their DEIS that showed which management actions addressed each COT threat. UT and ID/MT did not have such a detailed table. Matt and Lauren will talk offline to determine guidance.
- There is a new map of grazing allotments showing those that meet/don't meet standards and if livestock is a cause or not. Subregions do not need to include it or respond in the FEIS.
- REA and FIAT – what are expectations for including those? FIAT assessments are implementation level and won't be in the proposed plan, but the process will be included in FEIS. If REAs are available, include information.
- Would like consistent text on how the proposed plans were developed. Since WO gave much of the direction, Matt will work with others to provide this text. It will be included in Section 2.6.1.
- Core set of adaptive management triggers are still in progress. Everyone needs to follow NPT guidance. All subregions have hard trigger responses tied to BSU. If needed, have a discussion with Matt. May need to talk more about this moving forward.
- VDDT – It will be an objective in all plans. But UT and ID/MT also used the VDDT outputs for impact analysis (assumes they will get the funding needed). Quincy will send tables from the UT EIS. Presented as trends instead of specific acres. All should use for impact analysis.
- Forest Service – once final direction received from WO for proposed plan, they will prepare a crosswalk to the BLM proposed plan to show how decisions line up.

Other

- We will have a call next week.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 4:20 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; vherren@blm.gov; jmbeck@blm.gov; gstein@fs.fed.us; jtague@blm.gov; rmickelsen@fs.fed.us
Cc: dhavelina@blm.gov
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: Screening Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances.docx

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

1. WO review updates
 - Issue resolution - status
 - Schedule update
2. APRMP/Final EIS
 - Anthropogenic disturbance screening criteria
 - Executive Summary and Chapter 1 templates
3. Other topics?

Meredith Zaccherio
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Screening Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances (Mineral Development, Rights-of-Ways, Recreational Uses, Grazing Facilities or Other Authorizations That Cause Surface-Disturbance)

A. Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)*

1. Precedence is given to development outside of PHMA.
2. If development/activity cannot be placed outside of PHMA, surface-disturbing activities would be authorized in non-habitat areas first, and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater sage-grouse.
3. If development/activity is placed in non-habitat, ensure that the non-habitat does not provide important connectivity between habitats.
4. Development/activity does not exceed the 3% disturbance cap.
5. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated biologically significant unit is stable or increasing and the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations; renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same as the existing development).
6. Mitigation is implemented to completely offset impacts to GRSG and their habitats (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework).
7. The development/activity with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat and mitigation would provide an overall net conservation benefit to the PHMA.
8. The development/activity cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of PHMA; or can be either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade); or 3) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (i.e. powerlines).
9. Authorized/permitted activities are implemented adhering to the required design features (RDFs) described in Appendix ____ for specific resources, and the BMPs for locatable minerals. At the site-specific scale, if a RDF/BMP is not implemented, at least one of the following must be demonstrated in the NEPA analysis associated with the project/activity:
 - A specific RDF/BMP is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
 - An alternative RDF/BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
 - Analyses conclude that following a RDF/BMP will provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat.
10. Discrete anthropogenic disturbances or activities disruptive to GRSG (including scheduled maintenance activities) do not occur in seasonal GRSG habitats unless the project plan and NEPA document demonstrate the project would not impair the function of seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of the GRSG population. Seasonal avoidance periods vary by GRSG seasonal habitat as follows:
 - In breeding and nesting habitat from _____ to _____

- In brood rearing habitat from _____ to _____
- In winter habitat from _____ to _____

The specific seasonal restrictions may be modified if documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climactic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long and/or heavy winter) reflect a need to change the given dates in order to better protect GRSG, in coordination with the local State-agency biologist.

11. Authorizations/permits would limit noise from discretionary activities (during construction, operation, or maintenance) to not exceed 10 decibels above ambient sound levels at occupied leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after official sunrise and sunset during breeding season (e.g., while males are strutting).
12. Authorizations/permits would restrict the placement of permanent tall structures within GRSG breeding and nesting habitats. A tall structure is any man-made structure that provides for perching/nesting opportunities for predators that may naturally be absent, or that decreases the use of an area by GRSG; this determination would be made based on local conditions such as existing vegetation or topography.

B. General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)*

1. Precedence is given to development outside of GHMA.
2. If development/activity cannot be placed outside of GHMA, surface-disturbing activities would be authorized in non-habitat areas first, and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater sage-grouse.
3. If development/activity is placed in non-habitat, ensure that the non-habitat does not provide important connectivity between habitats.
4. Mitigation is implemented to completely offset impacts to GRSG and their habitats (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework).
5. The development/activity with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat.
6. Authorized/permitted activities are implemented adhering to the required design features (RDFs) described in Appendix ___ for specific resources, and the BMPs for locatable minerals. At the site-specific scale, if a RDF/BMP is not implemented, at least one of the following must be demonstrated in the NEPA analysis associated with the project/activity:
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7. Discrete anthropogenic disturbances or activities disruptive to GRSG (including scheduled maintenance activities) do not occur in seasonal GRSG habitats unless the project plan and NEPA document demonstrate the project would not impair the function of seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of the GRSG population. Seasonal avoidance periods vary by GRSG seasonal habitat as follows:

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*This screening criteria would not be applicable to vegetation treatments being conducted to enhance GRSG habitat.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 1:33 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; vherren@blm.gov; jmbeck@blm.gov; gstein@fs.fed.us; jtague@blm.gov; rmickelsen@fs.fed.us
Cc: dhavelina@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-11-25.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call. Happy Thanksgiving!
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 3:19 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; 'Imermejo@blm.gov'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov'; 'qfbahr@blm.gov'; 'jsuther@blm.gov'; 'bralston@blm.gov'; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; 'sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; 'scarman@blm.gov'; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); 'ssmith@blm.gov'; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'vherren@blm.gov'; 'jmbeck@blm.gov'; 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'jtague@blm.gov'; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us'
Cc: 'dhavelina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

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 - Executive Summary and Chapter I templates
3. Other topics?

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

November 25, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Joe Tague, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Paul Makela, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Frank Quamen, NOC; Pam Murdock, WY; John Carlson, MT

USFS: Randy Sharp

EMPSi: Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

Handouts

- Screening Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Lauren: revise and send screening criteria.

Meeting Minutes

WO Update

- State Director call today at 1 pm Pacific to discuss some of the decisions, though limited information will be available. Briefing with Secretary on Monday and should have more information after that time. Lauren will talk with Matt about combining the GBR and RMR calls if the same information is to be released.

Screening Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances

- Lauren has looked at the avoidance criteria for ROWs and wondered why not apply these criteria for all anthropogenic disturbances (like ID/MT has done)? Would like to have all text be the same.
- Review and edits to screening criteria. Lauren will revise and re-send the screening criteria.

Other

- NOC would like a conference call with Lauren, Project Leads, and GIS leads to discuss what needs to be changed in order to start on CEA calculations and respond to USFWS data request by the end of the year.

Brent Ralston

From: Adamski, Joseph
Sent: Friday, November 07, 2014 8:24 AM
To: Brad Jessop; Aaron Roth; Alan Crouch; Anne Halford; Bradley Washa; Brandon Knapton; Brent Ralston; Brian Watts; caine daugherty; Chad Lewis; Coreen Francis; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Deb Koziol; Dominika Lepak; Don Kemner; Donald Major; Douglas Havlina; Elena Shaw; Ethan Ellsworth; Glen Burkhardt; Greg Emerson; James (Chris) Bryan; Jamie Jasmine; Jason Pyron; Jason Wright; Jeremy Bisson; Jesse German; John Copeland; Joseph Adamski; Justin Boeck; Katie Powell; kyra reid; lara niell; Leisa Wesch; Mace Crane; Michael Boomer; Morgan Trieger; Paul Makela; Peter Gower; Ralph Falsetto; Rob Mickelsen; Robert Burton; ryan elliot; Sarah Kulpa; Scott Hoefler; Steve Foree; Steven Jirik; susan joyce; Tate Walters; Thad Heater; Theresa Burcsu; Thomas (Tom) Warren; Thomas Reid; Tim Metzger; travis Mote; William Brown; Williams Mark
Subject: Fwd: Twin Falls
Attachments: Idaho_TwinFalls_FIAT Notes_20141106_sc.docx; TwinFalls_Bennett Hills.docx; TwinFalls_Little Wood River.docx; TwinFalls_Magic.docx

Good morning - Notes from yesterday's meeting with Twin Falls - joe

*Joseph Adamski
BLM Idaho State Forester and Natural Resource Supervisor
1387 S. Vinnell Wy., Boise, ID 83709
208.373.4022 work
208.994.1534 cell
208.373.3805 fax*

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sean Cottle <sean.cottle@empci.com>
Date: Thu, Nov 6, 2014 at 5:54 PM
Subject: Twin Falls
To: "jadamski@blm.gov" <jadamski@blm.gov>

This is what we have so far for Twin Falls. Let me know if you like how I combined all forms and documentation into one document per assessment area. I have not added any information in your forms, but I will complete what I can before I finalize these.

Have a good night, talk to you tomorrow

Sean Cottle
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4741 Caughlin Parkway, Suite 4
Reno, NV 89519
tel: 775-323-1433

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**Northern Great Basin and Salmon/Snake/Beaverhead
FIAT Assessment Workshop
Twin Falls, ID
November 6, 2014
Meeting Notes**

Attendees

BLM- Glen Burkhart, Don Major, Travis Cooper, Joe Adamski, Brandon Brown, Jerry Rice, Tara Anderson, Tony Owens, Jim Tharp, Jesse Goodwin, Scott Sayer, Jesse German, Jim Klott, Julie Klott, Julie Hilty, Joe Russell and Dustin Smith

EMPSi- Sean Cottle

FWS- Jason Pyron FWS

IFG- Mike McDonald and Don Kemner

NRCS- Deb Koziol

Upcoming Meetings

A request for a block of time will be sent to Joe Adamski to finalize schedule of when we can meet again for a final review of Assessment areas in Twin Falls.

Expectations of Documentation

Powerpoint from Doug H. will be distributed to team ASAP, this should help clarify what the expectations are for documentation of this process.

Opening Notes

- Joe sent out forms to all team members that need to be filled out and documented as we delineate polygons for the four management strategies. These forms will be used to help write the FIAT Assessment Report.
- We will be looking at leks with > 20 males that occur between the focal habitats to determine if these areas need to be included.
- We will be working through the Northern Great Basin and the Snake/ Salmon/ Beaverhead areas.
- Begin by breaking areas up into separate project planning areas based on movement of GRSG and natural barriers on the landscape.

Powerpoint presentation- Joe Adamski

We are now in Step 2 of the FIAT process. Started in September 2014 and will be completed in mid-January 2015. This is an assessment of three threats across five landscapes. This will aid the USFWS in their decision of listing the GRSG. The Step 1 process included a geodatabase that has been shared with all the assessment team members. We now need to include local information to aid in the utilization of the four management strategies:

- Fuels Management
- Fire Operations
- Habitat Restoration and Recovery

- Post-Fire Rehabilitation Management (ESR)

The FIAT work was based on the COT report which identified the Priority Areas of Conservation (PACs). These describe the key areas for GRSG conservation, key threats within those areas, and the extent to which threats need to be reduced. The COT report Also looked at where the birds actually are to determine the most important places to protect and conserve.

- There were four criteria used for identifying priority PACs for the FIAT process
 1. High density of GRSG. Selected 75% breeding bird density based on Doherty et al 2010. Wanted to use habitat criteria and a static dataset that could be compared across PACs. Downfalls are that it does not capture habitat outside of nesting and strutting periods (e.g. winter habitat) and uses 2009 data, so does not include recent fires.
 2. Sufficient sagebrush cover. Landscape cover has a strong correlation to GRSG persistence (Knick 2013). Includes three classes of sagebrush cover (0-25%; 25-65%; 65%-100%). Existing data is derived from LANDFIRE using 2000 imagery. Using local data as part of Step 2 will greatly benefit understanding of existing cover. There is a good correlation between where Sagebrush is and where the Sage-grouse are found.
 3. Soil temp and moisture regimes. Areas at the greatest risk are the warm dry sites. The degree of resistance and resilience is strongly correlated to amount of invasive species (Chambers et al 2014). Perennial grasses take longer to reestablish in hotter and dryer soils after being disturbed.
 4. Conifer expansion. Derived from the Baseline Environmental Report (BER) (Manier, et. al. 2013). Step 2 will hopefully inform more specific classifications of pinyon and juniper distribution across the landscape and where the best work could be completed.
- For annual grasses, **focal habitats** are a subset of the six priority PACs where application of management strategies will be focused to conserve GRSG. **Emphasis areas** are areas with warm/dry soil regimes within focal areas where management emphasis should be given.
- For conifer invasion, **focal habitats** are within or near conifer expansion in landscapes with greater than 25% sagebrush. **Emphasis areas** are where there is an intersection with 75% breeding bird density.
- There are Four strategies (program areas) in proactive and reactive categories:
 - **Proactive:**
 1. Fuels Management - modify fire behavior and change vegetation structure
 2. Habitat recovery/restoration - reduce undesirable plants, conduct reseeding efforts, and prevent a landscape from passing an undesired threshold. When there is a disturbance, these efforts promote faster recovery. Restoration implies that a threshold has been crossed and needs to be restored

- **Reactive:**
 1. Fire operations - preparedness, prevention, suppression
 2. Post-fire rehabilitation - stabilize species, reduce invasives, establish or allow recovery of desirable vegetation

Available Data from the NOC database

Purple areas include 75% BBD for Northern Great Basin Priority Area. This information will help us identify the Focal Habitat and Assessment Areas.

Lek and telemetry data will help us determine which areas within and near the focal habitat areas we need to focus our efforts on when considering potential treatments.

R&R- Resistance and Resilience

The soil moisture and temperature matrix help us determine which areas may be a higher priority for protection or rehabilitation efforts. This scale ranges from low cover of sagebrush with a high resistance to disturbance to low cover of sagebrush with low R&R.

Boundaries of potential treatment polygons

There is some disagreement of conifer encroachment and where the priority should be placed for potential treatments. Priority important boundaries for GRSG are delineated in other planning assessments and a GIS layer is available and being incorporated into this database for comparison with identified focal habitats. After review they do closely match and the project planning area can be set to follow the priority important boundaries if this will work the best.

Habitat restoration has been occurring in these areas outside of the focal habitats. This is ok, the boundaries can be expanded and contracted to meet what local knowledge tells us are the most sensible areas to plan potential treatments, but the main direction is to identify potential treatments within the focal habitats.

Project Planning Areas in the Salmon/Snake/Beaverhead areas

See Attached Forms

Bennett Hills

Little Wood River

Magic

Bennett Hills Project Planning Area

Bennett Hills Project Planning Area

(XXX Total acres of Project Planning Area)

Located northwest of Hill City and includes Mountain Home in the NW corner. The project planning boundary has been delineated in the GIS layers. The southern boundary has been extended South of Gooding to include important wintering habitat.

- Priorities would be high for all 4 Management Strategies.
- Medusahead and cheatgrass understories occur in the southern areas of the focal habitats.
- ESR treatments and fuel treatments have occurred to control medusahead and cheatgrass.

Potential project areas:

- Conifer encroachment- not a major issue in this FIAT project planning area. Therefore, no applicable treatment strategy for conifer encroachment is needed at this time.
- Bennett Hill Annuals outside- 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 3C areas in and near the southern borders of the focal habitats near Gooding are primary priority areas for potential treatments to control invasive annual grasses. (polygons identifying annuals priority areas have been drafted and will be clipped by Travis to actual boundaries)
- Bennett Hills Annuals inside- 3C and 3B habitats within the focal habitats are secondary priority areas for potential treatments to control invasive annual grasses. (polygons identifying annuals priority areas have been drafted and will be clipped by Travis to actual boundaries)

Completed Veg Treatments (Poly) layer has been added to help determine where treatments have previously occurred.

Fuels Management

Potential for roadside treatments exist, especially from chemical methods. Possible fuel breaks would potentially exist along XXX miles of roads within the Project Planning Area.

Twin Falls team will send the rest of the group the Road Features so this polygon can be finalized.

Fire Operations

The entire focal habitat within Bennett Hills planning area is a high priority for Fire Suppression (Same delineation as the Bennett Hills Project Planning Area).

There is a high potential for invasive annual expansion within focal habitats. High past fire activity has occurred on many acres along the border of the project planning area. Also, there is a very high burn probability due to areas being converted to cheatgrass and invasive annuals existing in the understory.

Habitat Restoration and Recovery

Active restoration need would be limited with higher priority areas being on the edge of the focal habitat. The Bennett Hills restoration polygon is the same as the high priority ESR polygon.

Post-Fire Rehabilitation Management (ESR)

Hill City Blues among other fires have occurred within the focal habitat in this area. There has only been natural recovery in these areas.

1st priority areas for potential treatments would be in the southern areas in the IC habitat and south of this going into the 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 3C habitats (South Bennett Hills ESR High priority). Annual grass presence potential and burn severity make this a high priority area.

2nd priority areas for potential treatments would be in the northern areas in the IA and IB habitat (North Bennett Hills ESR low priority).

FIAT Project Planning Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO:

FIAT Planning Area Name:

FIAT project planning area NFPORS Project ID: _____

Reasons this geographic extent was chosen:

Project Planning Area Completion Checklist

- ___ Project planning area has been delineated
- ___ Potential treatments have been identified
 - ___ Fuels treatments
 - ___ Habitat restoration and recovery treatments
- ___ ESR priority areas have been identified
- ___ Fire Operations priority areas have been identified

Comments:

Potential Treatment Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Conifer encroachment (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

Treatment type (select one) Restoration / Fuels / Both

Is the treatment within an ongoing project? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance be required? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Fire Operations Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Protection purpose/need (select one)

Focal Habitat / Emphasis Area

High priority for implementation (select one)

Initial Attack / Pre-positioning Resources / Both

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

ESR Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Are there past or ongoing ESR treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance treatments be required? (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Little Wood River Project Planning Area

Little Wood River Project Planning Area

Different management opportunities will exist in these areas than the other focal habitats to the SE, high suppression high ESR but low for proactive restoration.

(XXX Total acres of Project Planning Area)

Potential project areas:

- Conifer encroachment- Local knowledge dictates conifer encroachment is not a main threat.
- Invasive grass- Most annual invasives occur on southern facing slopes in dryer soils. Potential treatment area is the Project Planning Area boundaries, which the limiting factor is aspect (XXX acres of southern aspects).
- Little wood annuals inside- all areas within the focal habitat (192,339 acres).
- Little wood annuals outside- area in the IB and IC habitats outside the focal habitat, but within the project planning area (102,977 acres).

Fuels Management

Possible fuel breaks would potentially exist along XXX miles of roads within the Project Planning Area.

Twin Falls team will send the rest of the group the Road Features so this polygon can be finalized.

Fire Operations

There is a high potential for fire due to invasives and if it does burn, high suppression would help.

High resource values exist for brood rearing habitat, nesting, winter use, watersheds and recreation.

The entire Little Wood River planning area is a high priority for Fire Suppression (Same delineation as the Little Wood River Project Planning Area).

Habitat Restoration and Recovery

The Little Wood River Restoration area polygon would be the same as the ESR polygon.

Post-Fire Rehabilitation Management (ESR)

ESR treatment may be limited due to topography. The entire area is a moderate priority need due to the cool soils, however southern facing slopes would be treated first.

Important riparian and brood rearing habitat exists and is managed by Federal and Private, Current Coop Projects.

Little wood River ESR moderate polygon follows the boundary of the project planning area.

FIAT Project Planning Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO:

FIAT Planning Area Name:

FIAT project planning area NFPORS Project ID: _____

Reasons this geographic extent was chosen:

Project Planning Area Completion Checklist

- ___ Project planning area has been delineated
- ___ Potential treatments have been identified
 - ___ Fuels treatments
 - ___ Habitat restoration and recovery treatments
- ___ ESR priority areas have been identified
- ___ Fire Operations priority areas have been identified

Comments:

Potential Treatment Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Conifer encroachment (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

Treatment type (select one) Restoration / Fuels / Both

Is the treatment within an ongoing project? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance be required? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Fire Operations Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Protection purpose/need (select one)

Focal Habitat / Emphasis Area

High priority for implementation (select one)

Initial Attack / Pre-positioning Resources / Both

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

ESR Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Are there past or ongoing ESR treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance treatments be required? (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Magic Project Planning Area

Magic Project Planning Area

(XXX Total acres of Project Planning Area)

Former SG habitats near and to the south and east of Gooding and Shoshone are now dominated by annual grasses due to recent fires. The PPA has been drawn further south to include more area that has been converted to invasive annual and noxious weeds. By managing these areas more proactively this will decrease the risk of invasion further into the focal habitat areas. The Southeastern boundary now follows Minidoka Road to include these areas and the Eastern boundary follows the District boundary. Priorities would be high for all 4 Management Strategies.

Potential project areas:

- Conifer encroachment- Local knowledge dictates conifer encroachment is not a main threat.
- Magic Annuals outside- 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 3C near and south of the focal habitats are primary priority areas for potential treatments to control invasive annual grasses. (polygons identifying annuals priority areas have been drafted and will be clipped by Travis to actual boundaries, this should be similar to Bennett Hills)
- Magic Annuals inside- 3C and 3B habitats within the focal habitats are secondary priority areas for potential treatments to control invasive annual grasses (polygons identifying annuals priority areas have been drafted and will be clipped by Travis to actual boundaries, this should be similar to Bennett Hills).

Fuels Management

Possible fuel breaks would potentially exist along XXX miles of roads within the Project Planning Area. Twin Falls team will send the rest of the group the Road Features so this polygon can be finalized.

Fire Operations

The entire Magic planning area is a high priority for Fire Suppression (Same delineation as the Magic Project Planning Area).

Habitat Restoration and Recovery

The high priority Magic restoration polygon would include all areas within the Magic Project Planning Area (excluding any lava rock areas). Some areas in the IA, IB, and IC habitat would want to be restored and recovered based on importance and ability to recover. The relatively flat terrain allows cheatgrass in these areas to be more expansive.

Post-Fire Rehabilitation Management (ESR)

1st priority areas for potential treatments would be in the southern areas in the IC habitat and south of this going into the 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 3C habitats (Magic ESR High priority). Annual grass presence potential and burn severity make this a moderate priority area.

2nd priority areas for potential treatments would be in the northern areas in the IA, IB and IC habitat (Magic ESR low priority).

FIAT Project Planning Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO:

FIAT Planning Area Name:

FIAT project planning area NFPORS Project ID: _____

Reasons this geographic extent was chosen:

Project Planning Area Completion Checklist

- ___ Project planning area has been delineated
- ___ Potential treatments have been identified
 - ___ Fuels treatments
 - ___ Habitat restoration and recovery treatments
- ___ ESR priority areas have been identified
- ___ Fire Operations priority areas have been identified

Comments:

Potential Treatment Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Conifer encroachment (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

Treatment type (select one) Restoration / Fuels / Both

Is the treatment within an ongoing project? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance be required? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Fire Operations Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Protection purpose/need (select one)

Focal Habitat / Emphasis Area

High priority for implementation (select one)

Initial Attack / Pre-positioning Resources / Both

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

ESR Priority Area Worksheet

BLM District/FO: _____

FIAT Planning Area Name: _____

Potential Treatment Area Name: _____

Treatment Purpose/Needs

Invasive species (select one) Yes / No

Sagebrush protection/enhancement (select one) Yes / No

Are there past or ongoing ESR treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Ongoing project NFPORS ID for past treatment: _____

Potential chemical treatments? (select one) Yes / No

Seeing priority area? (select one) Yes / No

Timeframe for achieving treatment objective (select one) <1yr / 1 – 5 yrs / 6 – 10 yrs / > 10 yrs

Will maintenance treatments be required? (select one) Yes / No

Potential for coordination across jurisdictional boundaries? (select one) Yes / No

NFPORS project ID: _____

GIS layers used for selection:

Comments:

Brent Ralston

From: Havlina, Douglas
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 2:33 PM
To: dlpence@fs.fed.us; gemerson@fs.fed.us; irickert@fs.fed.us; Vanessa Stepanek; Adamski, Joseph; Andrew Johnson; Bobo, Matthew; Bradley Washa; Bridget Clayton; Clinton McCarthy; Craig Goodell; Crane, Mace; David Repass; Dawn M Davis; Doug Havlina; Earl (Tom) Rinkes; Erin Jones; Frank Quamen; Gina Ramos; Glen Burkhardt; Gordon Toevs; Herren, Vicki; Ielmini, Michael -FS; Jason Pyron; Jay Kerby; Jeanne Chambers; Jeremy Maestas; Johanna Munson; John Carlson; John Wilson; Jolie Pollet; Karen Prentice; Katie Powell; Kenneth Collum; Kit Muller; Krista Gollnick; Lauren Mermejo; Laurie -FS Kurth; Leao, Duncan S -FS; Louis Brueggeman; Major, Donald; Melvin Tague; Metzger, Timothy J -FS; Michael Pellant; Nyman, Mesia -FS; Pamela Murdock; Peter Gower; Quincy Bahr; Ralston, Brent E; Randall Sharp; Rex McKnight; Sandra Gregory; Stephen Small; Susan Goodman; Suther, Joan M; tburcsu; Tom Rinkes; Tucker, James P -FS; William Brown; Wuenschel, Amarina E -FS
Subject: Today's FIAT information call notes

Folks;

Below are the discussion points from today's FIAT information call, as summarized by Mike Pellant (thanks Mike!!). Note that all team leads are engaged in meetings, hence none were on the call. By the end of the week I'll have a draft template sent out to team leads, and also by end-of-week I'm intending to have a decision from the WO/partners about the possibility of extending the FIAT assessments one month. Stay tuned on these topics.

No Assessment Team leads on the call. Program Leads present: 1) Krista asked that final input on the definitions that she distributed earlier would be appreciated. Vicki and I said we would provide input by later this week.

We discussed the proposed one month deadline extension. Dawn said that F&WS would like to get the assessment results into their CED (Conservation Elements Database?) by the end of January. I expressed concerns that our FIAT output is not an on-the-ground project (Step 3) and probably would not be appropriate to be included in this database unless the NEPA on the a project was completed. Vicki is coordinating with a F&WS counterpart and will visit with her on this issue and report back to the group.

If the extension is approved before next Tuesday's call, we could add it to the agenda and discuss the revised benchmarks/due dates to fit the proposed March 1 deadline.

Krista brought up a question for her fuels management state leads on if and how the FIAT process will be applied outside the Great Basin. Joe's recommendation was the we would do a lessons learned on the current assessments before doing the next round of assessments.

Brent Ralston

From: Davis, Dawn
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 1:53 PM
To: Havlina, Douglas
Cc: dpence@fs.fed.us; gemerson@fs.fed.us; irickert@fs.fed.us; Vanessa Stepanek; Adamski, Joseph; Andrew Johnson; Bobo, Matthew; Bradley Washa; Bridget Clayton; Clinton McCarthy; Craig Goodell; Crane, Mace; David Repass; Earl (Tom) Rinkes; Erin Jones; Frank Quamen; Gina Ramos; Glen Burkhardt; Gordon Toevs; Herren, Vicki; Ielmini, Michael -FS; Jason Pyron; Jay Kerby; Jeanne Chambers; Jeremy Maestas; Johanna Munson; John Carlson; John Wilson; Jolie Pollet; Karen Prentice; Katie Powell; Kenneth Collum; Kit Muller; Krista Gollnick; Lauren Mermejo; Laurie -FS Kurth; Leao, Duncan S -FS; Louis Brueggeman; Major, Donald; Melvin Tague; Metzger, Timothy J -FS; Michael Pellant; Nyman, Mesia -FS; Pamela Murdock; Peter Gower; Quincy Bahr; Ralston, Brent E; Randall Sharp; Rex McKnight; Sandra Gregory; Stephen Small; Susan Goodman; Suther, Joan M; tburcsu; Tom Rinkes; Tucker, James P -FS; William Brown; Wuenschel, Amarina E -FS
Subject: Re: Today's FIAT information call notes

All,

Bear in mind that the combination of voluntary, incentive-based efforts, habitat restoration projects, and management through regulatory mechanisms could have a significant influence on the Service's upcoming status review. Whether it is through the CED (or other method of delivery) it will be critical to capture the broader level of prioritization efforts currently being outlined in the FIAT step-down assessments. The information provided by the BLM FIAT assessments will allow the Service to evaluate the extent to which these strategic approaches will ameliorate the threats of wildfire and invasives within the Great Basin. Please consider that an important element of the Service's status review will not only be a compilation of conservation efforts currently being implemented but will also include efforts planned for implementation in the near future, to conserve sage-grouse.

The CED organizes information about planning efforts into 3 broad categories: regulatory plans, incentive-based plans, and fire suppression plans. We understand the BLM's concerns that the FIAT step-down assessments lack an on-the-ground component. However, the fire suppression planning category is specifically designed to capture the important fire suppression actions (e.g., geospatial plans to prioritize fuels management; habitat recovery/restoration designed to improve sage-grouse habitat with greater resistance to annual grasses and/or resilience after disturbances such as wildfire). As described in the CED user guide, fire suppression planning efforts can range from conservation strategies that strategically identify priority areas for fuels management, fuel treatments, fuel breaks, anchors for suppression, and/or coordinated fuels management approaches cross-jurisdictional boundaries to share resources, pre-position resources, or increase water availability, etc. Individual on-the-ground efforts, such as site-specific fuel treatment projects or installation of fuel breaks, could also be entered in the CED as projects when those projects are highly likely to be implemented, or have been implemented.

Under the ESA, the Service must base its decision on whether to list the greater sage-grouse on the best available data. In addition, we must evaluate the threats to sage-grouse in the context of actions and plans that are in place, or in the case of the FIAT assessments, reasonably certain to be in place, to ameliorate those threats. Inclusion of the FIAT step-down assessments will be a critical component of the status review.

The Service supports the completion of the FIAT step-down assessments currently underway and applauds the land management agencies for moving swiftly in this regard. We recommend FIAT assessments be completed by the January 30, 2015 deadline as stated in the Instructional Memorandum. Assessments should be well coordinated with interagency, cross-jurisdictional involvement. We recommend these assessments be quickly developed into implementation plans and that the step-down assessments include specific actions to provide further certainty of implementation for efforts to address this major threat to sage-grouse and its habitat.

On Tue, Nov 18, 2014 at 1:32 PM, Havlina, Douglas <dhavlina@blm.gov> wrote:
Folks;

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--

Dawn Davis, Ph.D.

Certified Wildlife Biologist ®

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911 NE 11th Avenue, 4th Floor, Portland, OR 97232

Phone: 503.231.6194; FAX: 503.231.6243

dawn_davis@fws.gov

Brent Ralston

From: Wilson, John
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 4:02 PM
To: Havlina, Douglas
Cc: dlpence@fs.fed.us; gemerson@fs.fed.us; irickert@fs.fed.us; Vanessa Stepanek; Adamski, Joseph; Andrew Johnson; Bobo, Matthew; Bradley Washa; Bridget Clayton; Clinton McCarthy; Craig Goodell; Crane, Mace; David Repass; Dawn M Davis; Earl (Tom) Rinkes; Erin Jones; Frank Quamen; Gina Ramos; Glen Burkhardt; Gordon Toevs; Herren, Vicki; Ielmini, Michael -FS; Jason Pyron; Jay Kerby; Jeanne Chambers; Jeremy Maestas; Johanna Munson; John Carlson; Jolie Pollet; Karen Prentice; Katie Powell; Kenneth Collum; Kit Muller; Krista Gollnick; Lauren Mermejo; Laurie -FS Kurth; Leao, Duncan S -FS; Louis Brueggeman; Major, Donald; Melvin Tague; Metzger, Timothy J -FS; Michael Pellant; Nyman, Mesia -FS; Pamela Murdock; Peter Gower; Quincy Bahr; Ralston, Brent E; Randall Sharp; Rex McKnight; Sandra Gregory; Stephen Small; Susan Goodman; Suther, Joan M; tburcsu; Tom Rinkes; Tucker, James P -FS; William Brown; Wuenschel, Amarina E -FS
Subject: Re: Today's FIAT information call notes

One thing to keep in mind as well:

the FIAT assessments *are also* documenting the projects with NEPA completed within the focal habitats and those same projects will be entered into the CED database through the current national sage-grouse data call. The FIAT is identifying some expansion of current projects however. I just wanted to make sure we are not duplicating information that goes into the CED, so a question to answer may be should we separate out ongoing NEPA completed projects when the final FIAT is submitted?

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Folks;

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--

John M Wilson
NV Healthy Landscapes, Fisheries, &
Sensitive Plants Program Lead
BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd
Reno, NV 89502
(W) 775-861-6613
(C) 775-276-1769
(F) 775-861-6601

Brent Ralston

From: Beck, Jonathan
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 11:57 AM
To: eugene.schock@id.usda.gov; Jason Pyron; Kathleen Hendricks; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov; Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Arnold, Jenifer L; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brent Esmoil; Brooks, Sandra S; Brown, William B; Burkhardt, Glen H; Cally Younger; Carlson, John C; Catherine Wightman; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Danly, Lynn A; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; Elizabeth Maclean; Ethan Ellsworth; Fehlau, Robin S; Fletcher, Tammy; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; German, Jesse S; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Halford, Fredrick K; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Jeff Bergland; Jeff Burwell; Jirik, Steven J; Jon Beals; Jonathan Norred; Katie Powell; Kershaw, Kathi G; Knapton, Brandon L; Kuyper, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Mike McDonald; Porter, Karen F; Prestwich, Kasey C; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tanya Thrift; Tolness, Denise R; Wiedenmann, Kurt R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S
Subject: Thursday GRSG Call - 12/17/2014 (9:00-11:00 Mountain Time)
Attachments: combined buffer table 12_12_14.pdf; ID swMT ADPP Appendix A 110514 RDFs_with additons from Buff.pdf

Hi folks, I want to have a quick call tomorrow. I will be at the ISO in the Mustang Room.
Call in Number = 877-604-9864
code = 95504#

AGENDA:

1. WO Update
2. Schedule Update
3. Buffer Table and RDF update (see attached documents for discussion)

Jon

--

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
208-384-3305 Boise District
208-373-4070 Idaho State Office

Disturbance Category	Priority habitat Buffer	Important habitat Buffer	General Habitat Buffer
<i>Surface Disturbance</i>			
Saleable Minerals	(SAL)-1: Priority: No new site authorizations would be approved	Do not construct new saleable development within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks.	
<i>Linear Features</i>			
Pipelines and Other Buried linear Features	Minimize removal of sagebrush within 0.6 miles of leks.		
Roads	Do not construct new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks.		
<i>Energy Development</i>			
Unleased Fluid Minerals	Open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to no surface occupancy with a limited exception. Do not allow wells, pads, facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek. Limit average well pad density to no more than 1 per 640 acres within nesting and winter habitat.	Do not allow wells, pads, facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek. Limit average well pad density to no more than 1 per 640 acres within nesting ³ and winter ³ habitat.	
<i>Tall Structures</i>			
Transmission Lines	Site transmission lines at least 600 m from a lek.		
Distribution Lines	Avoid distribution line construction within 600 m of a lek or bury where possible		
Tall structures, Communication and Met Towers	Do not allow communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek unless needed to address public safety needs.	Avoid communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek unless needed to address public safety needs.	

Comment [jmbeck1]: Tie to maintenance levels from the propose plan

Disturbance Category	Priority habitat Buffer	Important habitat Buffer	General Habitat Buffer
Solar	LR-2: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as exclusion areas for utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower energy development.	Do not allow new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek	Avoid new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek
Wind	LR-2: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as exclusion areas for utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower energy development.	<p>Do not site commercial wind development facilities within 3.1 miles (5km) of a lek (Labeau et al. 2014).</p> <p>Old language: BMP: Important and General: Avoid wind development in nesting and/or winter habitat.</p>	
Low Structures			
Miscellaneous anthropogenic structures/ activities (e.g., corrals, water windmills, apiaries, signs, informational kiosks, etc.)	RDF 105: Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.	RDF 105: Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.	

Comment [BJM2]: Discuss with Partners

Appendix A – Required Design Features

The following required design features (RDFs) are included for consideration and use based upon review of current science and effects analysis (circa 2014) (Table A-1). These may be reviewed during project evaluation and updated through plan maintenance as new information and updated scientific findings become available.

The table is organized by program area grouping the RDFs most relevant to that program. All relevant RDFs, regardless of which program they are grouped under, should be considered during project evaluation and applicable RDFs should be applied during implementation, with the exception that they would be implemented as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to the extent allowable by law. The table identifies the specific measure (numbered) and its appropriate application – as an RDF – required all the time everywhere; or as an RDF required when the applicable resources are present. In some cases the RDFs may not all be appropriate based on local conditions and would be assessed in the appropriate site specific NEPA analysis, these all should be considered and where determined to be beneficial to achieving GRSG habitat objectives included as part of the site specific project. In other cases additional project design criteria or best management practices could be incorporated into project implementation to address site specific concerns not fully addressed by the RDFs described here.

Table A-1. Required Design Features

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
General		
1. Solicit and consider expertise and ideas from local landowners, working groups, and other federal, state, county, and private organizations during development of projects.		X
2. No repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise over 10 dbA at lek, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season.	X	
3. Avoid mechanized anthropogenic disturbance, in nesting habitat during the nesting season when implementing: 1) fuels/vegetation/habitat restoration management projects, 2) infrastructure construction or maintenance, 3) geophysical exploration activities; 4) organized motorized recreational events.		X
4. Avoid mechanized anthropogenic disturbance during the winter, in wintering areas when implementing: 1) fuels/vegetation/habitat restoration management projects, 2) infrastructure construction or maintenance, 3) geophysical exploration activities; 4) organized motorized recreational events.		X
Wildfire Suppression		
5. Compile district-level information into state-wide sage-grouse tool boxes. Tool boxes will contain maps, listing of resource advisors, contact information, local guidance, and other relevant information for each district, which will be aggregated into a state-wide document.	X	
6. Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
<p>incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics. The Fire Planning and Fuels Management Division (FA-600) hosts a webpage containing up-to-date maps, instruction memoranda, conservation measures, BMPs, and spatial data specific to fire operations and fuels management/sage-grouse interactions. These resources can be accessed at: http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fpfm/sg/index.html . Additional BLM sage-grouse information can be found at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/fish_wildlife_and/sage-grouse-conservation.html .</p>		
<p>7. Assign a resource advisor with sage-grouse expertise, or who has access to sage-grouse expertise, to all extended attack fires in or near sage-grouse habitat areas. Prior to the fire season, provide training to sage-grouse resource advisors on wildfire suppression organization, objectives, tactics, and procedures to develop a cadre of qualified individuals. Involve state wildlife agency expertise in fire operations through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructing resource advisors during preseason trainings; • qualification as resource advisors; • coordination with resource advisors during fire incidents; • contributing to incident planning with information such as habitat features or other key data useful in fire decision making 	X	
<p>8. At the onset of an emerging wildland fire the Agency Administrators and Fire Management Officers will engage a local Resource Advisor to assess sage-grouse habitat that may be affected by the fire or suppression activities.</p>	X	
<p>9. If complexity of the wildland fire warrants the activation of an Incident Management Team, locally refined information regarding important sage-grouse habitat will be relayed during in brief and continually throughout the incident.</p>		X
<p>10. On critical fire weather days, pre-position additional fire suppression resources to optimize a quick and efficient response in sage-grouse habitat areas.</p>		X
<p>11. As appropriate, utilize existing fuel breaks, such as roads or discrete changes in fuel type, as control lines in order to minimize fire spread.</p>		X
<p>12. During periods of multiple fires, ensure line officers are involved in setting priorities.</p>	X	
<p>13. To the extent possible, locate wildfire suppression facilities (i.e., base camps, spike camps, drop points, staging areas, heli-bases, etc.) in areas where physical disturbance to sage-grouse habitat can be minimized. These include disturbed areas, grasslands, near roads/trails or in other areas where there is existing disturbance or minimal sagebrush cover.</p>	X	
<p>14. Power-wash all firefighting vehicles, to the extent possible, including engines, water tenders, personnel vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) prior to deploying in or near sage-grouse habitat areas to minimize noxious weed spread.</p>	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
15. Minimize cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations in sage-grouse habitat.	X	
16. Minimize burnout operations in key sage-grouse habitat areas by constructing direct fireline whenever safe and practical to do so.	X	
17. Utilize retardant, mechanized equipment, and other available resources to minimize burned acreage during initial attack.	X	
18. As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.		X
19. Adequately document fire operation activities in sage-grouse habitat for potential follow-up coordination activities.	X	
Fuels Management Unless otherwise specified as part of the land use plan consider the full array of fuels management treatment types (prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and biological) when implementing the following RDFs.		
20. Where applicable, design fuels treatment objectives to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems, modify fire behavior, restore native plants, and create landscape patterns which most benefit sage-grouse habitat.	X	
21. Provide training to fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas utilized locally.	X	
22. Use burning prescriptions which minimize undesirable effects on vegetation or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of annual grass invasion).	X	
23. Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.	X	
24. Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.	X	
25. Where applicable, incorporate roads and natural fuel breaks into fuel break design.		X
26. Power-wash all vehicles and equipment involved in fuels management activities, prior to entering the area, to minimize the introduction of undesirable and/or invasive plant species.	X	
27. Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency which facilitate firefighter safety, reduce the potential acres burned, and reduce the fire risk to sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, develop maps for sage-grouse habitat which spatially display existing fuels treatments that can be used to assist suppression activities.	X	
28. Give priority for implementing specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands, first to sites which are adjacent to or surrounded by Priority Habitat Management Areas or that reestablish continuity between Priority Habitat Management Areas. Annual grasslands are a second priority for restoration when the sites are not adjacent to Priority Habitat Management Areas, but within Important Habitat Management	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
Areas. The third priority for annual grassland habitat restoration projects are sites within General Habitat Management Areas. The intent is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.		
29. As funding and logistics permit, restore annual grasslands to a species composition characterized by perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs or one of that referenced in land use planning documentation.	X	
30. Emphasize the use of native plant species, especially those from a warmer area of the species' current range, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions.	X	
31. Remove standing and encroaching trees within at least 110 yards of occupied sage-grouse leks and other habitats (e.g., nesting, wintering and brood rearing) to reduce the availability of perch sites for avian predators, as resources permit.		X
32. Protect wildland areas from wildfire originating on private lands, infrastructure corridors, and recreational areas.		X
33. Reduce the risk of vehicle- or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive species by installing fuel breaks and/or planting perennial vegetation (e.g., green-strips) paralleling road rights-of-way.		X
34. Strategically place and maintain pre-treated strips/areas (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, etc.) to aid in controlling wildfire, should wildfire occur near PHMA or priority restoration areas (such as where investments in restoration have already been made).	X	
35. Design treatments to provide a break in fuel continuity in large, at-risk, expanses of continuous sagebrush. Use local knowledge of fire occurrence, spread patterns, and habitat values at risk to determine the proper placement and size of the fuel break.	X	
36. Use existing agreements with local, county, and state road departments to improve and maintain existing fuel breaks during routine road maintenance. Examples include: blading, mowing, disking, grading, and spraying roadside vegetation.		X
37. Form partnerships with linear right-of-way holders to maintain fuel breaks, which reduce fuel continuity and serve to protect at-risk landscapes.		X
38. Use existing NEPA documentation and authorities, where possible, when conducting road right-of-way maintenance. In many instances, existing authorizations for roads or linear rights-of-way contain provisions for maintenance activities that could be implemented and incorporated into a vegetation and habitat protection strategy without requiring additional NEPA analysis. Document this with a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA).		X
39. Enter into agreements with road departments which may help fund the construction and maintenance of fuel breaks adjacent to roads, as funding permits.		X
40. Spatially depict the locations of existing and planned fuel breaks in a landscape fuel break map and label each vegetation polygon for	X	

Comment [BER1]: Jason Wright - I thought this was going to be updated

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
reference. Offices will make these maps available to suppression resources for use in fire operations.		
Vegetation Treatment		
41. Utilize available plant species based on their adaptation to the site when developing seed mixes. (Lambert 2005; VegSpec).	X	
42. Utilizing the warmer component of a species' current range when selecting native species for restoration when available (Kramer and Havens 2009).		X
43. Reduce annual grass densities and competition through herbicide, targeted grazing, tillage, prescribed fire, etc. (Pyke 2011).		X
44. Reduce density and competition of introduced perennial grasses using appropriate techniques to accomplish this reduction (Pellant and Lysne 2005).		X
45. Utilize techniques to introduce desired species to the site such as drill seeding, broadcast seeding followed by a seed coverage technique, such as harrowing, churning or livestock trampling, and transplanting container or bare-root seedlings.		X
46. Assess existing on-site vegetation to ascertain if enough desirable perennial vegetation exists to consider techniques to increase on-site seed production to facilitate an increase in density of desired species.		X
47. Use site preparation techniques that retain existing desirable vegetation.	X	
48. Use "mother plant" techniques or planting of satellite populations of desirable plants to serve as seed sources.		X
49. Utilize post-treatment control of annual grass and other invasive species.	X	
50. Utilize new tools and use of new science and research as it becomes available.	X	
<p>51. Give higher priority to vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites where environmental variables contribute to improved chances for project success (Meinke et al. 2009). • Areas where seasonal habitat is limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance (wintering areas, wet meadows and riparian areas, nesting areas, leks, etc.). • Re-establish sagebrush cover in otherwise suitable GRSG with consideration to local needs and conditions using the general priorities in the following order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently burned native areas • Native grassland with suitable forb component • Nonnative grassland with suitable forb component • Recently converted annual grass areas • Native grassland • Nonnative grassland • Where desirable perennial bunchgrasses and/or forbs are deficient in existing sagebrush stands, use appropriate 	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
mechanical, aerial or other techniques to re-establish them. Examples include but are not limited to, use of a Lawson aerator with seeding, harrow or chain with seeding, drill seeding, hand planting plugs, aerial seeding or other appropriate technique. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative efforts that may improve GRSG habitat quality over multiple ownerships. • Projects that may provide connectivity between suitable habitats or expand existing good quality habitats. • Projects that address conifer encroachment into important GRSG habitats. In general the priority for treatment is 1) Phase 1 (≤10% conifer cover), 2) Phase 2 (10-30%), and 3) Phase 3 (>30%). • Replacing stands of annual grasses within otherwise good quality habitats with desirable perennial species. Other factors that contribute to the importance of the restoration project in maintaining or improving GRSG habitat. 		
52. When conduction vegetation treatments in areas inhabited or potentially inhabited by slickspot peppergrass (<i>Lepidium papilliferum</i>) follow the conservation measures in the applicable conservation agreement (revised August 2014).		X
Lands and Realty		
53. Where technically and financially feasible, bury distribution powerlines and communication lines within existing disturbance.		X
54. Above-ground disturbance areas would be seeded with perennial vegetation as per vegetation management.	X	
55. Place infrastructure in already disturbed locations where the habitat has not been fully restored.		X
56. Cluster disturbances, operations (fracturing stimulation, liquids gathering, etc.) and facilities as close as possible.		X
57. Co-locate linear facilities within one mile of existing linear facilities.		X
58. Micro-site linear facilities to reduce impacts to sage-grouse habitats.	X	
59. Locate staging areas outside the Priority Habitat Management Areas to the extent possible.	X	
60. Consider collocating powerlines, flowlines and pipelines under or immediately adjacent to a road or adjacent to other pipelines first, before considering co-locating with other ROW.		X
61. Restrict the construction of tall facilities and fences to the minimum number and amount needed.	X	
62. Use free standing structures where possible, to limit the use of guy wires. Where guy wires are necessary and appropriate bird collision diverters would be used, if doing so would not cause a human safety risk.	X	
63. Place new utility developments (power lines, pipelines, etc.) and transportation routes in existing utility or transportation corridors.		X
64. Construction and development activities should conform to seasonal restrictions.	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
Fluid Mineral Leasing		
65. Use directional drilling and/or multi well-pads to reduce surface disturbance.	X	
66. Apply a phased development approach with concurrent reclamation.	X	
67. Place liquid gathering facilities outside of PHMAs. Have no tanks at well locations within PHMAs to minimize truck traffic and perching and nesting sites for ravens and raptors.	X	
68. Use remote monitoring techniques for production facilities and develop a plan to reduce the frequency of vehicle use (Lyon and Anderson 2003).		X
69. Site and/or minimize linear ROWs or SUAs to reduce disturbance to sagebrush habitats.	X	
70. Design or site permanent structures which create movement (e.g. pump jack) to minimize impacts to GRSG.	X	
71. Equip tanks and other above-ground facilities with structures or devices that discourage nesting of raptors and corvids.		X
72. Control the spread and effects of non-native plant species (Gelbard and Belnap 2003, Bergquist et al. 2007, Evangelista et al. 2011). (E.g. by washing vehicles and equipment.)		X
73. Restrict pit and impoundment construction to reduce or eliminate threats from West Nile virus (Doherty 2007).		X
<p>74. Remove or re-inject produced water to reduce habitat for mosquitoes that vector West Nile virus. If surface disposal of produced water continues, use the following steps for reservoir design to limit favorable mosquito habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overbuild size of ponds for muddy and non-vegetated shorelines. • Build steep shorelines to decrease vegetation and increase wave actions. • Avoid flooding terrestrial vegetation in flat terrain or low lying areas. • Construct dams or impoundments that restrict down slope seepage or overflow. • Line the channel where discharge water flows into the pond with crushed rock. • Construct spillway with steep sides and line it with crushed rock. • Treat waters with larvicides to reduce mosquito production where water occurs on the surface 		X
<p>75. In PHMA, limit noise from discretionary activities to not less than 40 decibels above ambient sound levels (typically 20-24 dBA) at occupied leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during breeding season.</p>	X	
76. Require noise shields when drilling during the lek, nesting, brood-rearing, or wintering season.		X
77. The BLM/Forest Service would work with proponents to limit project related noise where it would be expected to reduce	X	

Comment [jmbeck2]: Delete because this is above in the general section and is said more clearly.

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
functionality of habitats in Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas.		
78. The BLM/Forest Service would evaluate the potential for limitation of new noise sources on a case-by-case basis as appropriate.	X	
79. Limit noise sources that would be expected to negatively impact populations in Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas and continue to support the establishment of ambient baseline noise levels for occupied leks in Priority Habitat Management Areas.	X	
80. As additional research and information emerges, specific new limitations appropriate to the type of projects being considered would be evaluated and appropriate limitations would be implemented where necessary to minimize potential for noise impacts on sage-grouse core population behavioral cycles.	X	
81. As new research is completed, new specific limitations would be coordinated with the IDFG and MT FWP and partners.	X	
82. Fit transmission towers with anti-perch devices (Lammers and Collopy 2007).		X
83. Require sage-grouse-safe fences.		X
84. Locate new compressor stations outside Priority Habitat Management Areas and design them to reduce noise that may be directed towards Priority Habitat Management Areas.	X	
85. Clean up refuse (Bui et al. 2011).	X	
86. Locate man camps outside of priority sage-grouse habitats.	X	
87. Consider using oak (or other material) mats for drilling activities to reduce vegetation disturbance and for roads between closely spaced wells to reduce soil compaction and maintain soil structure to increase likelihood of vegetation reestablishment following drilling.		X
88. Use only closed-loop systems for drilling operations and no reserve pits.	X	
89. Cover (e.g., fine mesh netting or use other effective techniques) all drilling and production pits and tanks regardless of size to reduce sage-grouse mortality.	X	
Roads		
90. Utilize existing roads, or realignments of existing routes to the extent possible.	X	
91. Design roads to an appropriate standard no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended purpose.	X	
92. Do not issue ROWs or SUAs to counties on newly constructed energy or mineral development roads, unless for a temporary use consistent with all other terms and conditions included in this document.	X	
93. Establish speed limits on BLM and FS system roads to reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions or design roads to be driven at slower speeds.		X
94. Coordinate road construction and use among ROW or SUA holders.	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
95. Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings.		X
96. Use dust abatement on roads and pads.	X	
97. Close and reclaim duplicate roads by restoring original landform and establishing desired vegetation.		X
Roads Specific to Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas		
98. Locate roads to avoid priority areas and habitats as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X	
99. Establish trip restrictions (Lyon and Anderson 2003) or minimization through use of telemetry and remote well control (e.g., Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).	X	
100. Restrict vehicle traffic to only authorized users on newly constructed routes (using signage, gates, etc.)	X	
Reclamation Activities		
101. Include objectives for ensuring habitat restoration to meet sage-grouse habitat needs in reclamation practices/sites (Pyke 2011).	X	
102. Address post reclamation management in reclamation plan such that goals and objectives are to protect and improve sage-grouse habitat needs.		X
103. Maximize the area of interim reclamation on long-term access roads and well pads, including reshaping, topsoiling and revegetating cut-and-fill slopes.	X	
104. Restore disturbed areas at final reclamation to the pre-disturbance landforms and desired plant community.	X	
105. Irrigate interim reclamation if necessary for establishing seedlings more quickly.		X
106. Utilize mulching techniques to expedite reclamation and to protect soils.		X
Grazing Required Design Features		
107. Avoid building new wire fences within 2 km of occupied leks (Stevens 2011). If this is not feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates.	X	
108. Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.	X	
109. Utilize temporary fencing (e.g., ESR, drop down fencing) where feasible and appropriate to meet management objectives.		X
110. Fence wetlands (e.g., springs, seeps, wet meadows and/or riparian areas) where appropriate, to maintain or foster progress toward Proper Functioning Condition and to facilitate management of sage-grouse habitat objectives. Where constructing fences or enclosures to improve riparian and/or upland management, incorporate fence marking or other BMPs/RDFs as appropriate.		X
111. During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately March 15-May 1 in lower elevations and March 25-May 15 in higher elevations), livestock trailing will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of occupied leks between 6:00	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse. Over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations on public lands must be at least 1 km from occupied leks during the lekking season to reduce disturbance from sheep, human activity and guard animals.		
112. Work with permittees in locating sheep over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations to minimize impacts to sage-grouse seasonal habitats.	X	
113. When trailing livestock during the lekking or nesting season, use roads or existing trails, to the extent possible to reduce disturbance to roosting, lekking or nesting sage-grouse.		X
114. Design new spring developments in GRSG habitat to maintain or enhance the free flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Modify developed springs, seeps and associated pipelines to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority GRSG habitat where necessary.		X
115. Install ramps in new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by GRSG and other wildlife.		X
West Nile Virus Required Design Features		
116. Construct water return features and maintain functioning float valves to prohibit water from being spilled on the ground surrounding the trough and/or tank and return water to the original water source, to the extent practicable.	X	
117. Minimize the construction of new ponds or reservoirs except as needed to meet important resource management and/or restoration objectives.	X	
118. Develop and maintain non-pond/reservoir watering facilities, such as troughs and bottomless tanks, to provide livestock water.	X	
119. For most spring developments or wells, mosquito breeding habitat usually is not an issue. Flowing cold (less than 50° Fahrenheit) water and steep sides of the stock tanks are not conducive for egg laying or larvae production. If flows are low, the water is warm, or moss production is an issue in the tank, mosquito breeding habitat could exist in the tank.	X	
120. Maintenance of healthy wetlands at spring sources helps control mosquitoes and their larvae by providing habitat for natural predators such as birds, dragonflies and amphibians. Protecting the wetland at the spring source with a fence is an option to consider.		X
121. Clean and drain stock tanks before the season starts. If never cleaned or drained, many tanks will fill with silt or debris causing warmer water and heavy vegetation growth conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X
122. Draining tanks after the period of use is completed, particularly in warmer weather, also reduces potential habitat by eliminating stagnant standing water.		X
123. Maintain a properly functioning overflow to prevent water from flowing onto the pad and surrounding area, to eliminate or	X	

Measure	Required Design Feature (RDF)	RDF if appropriate and when the resources/values are present
minimize pooling of water that is attractive to breeding mosquitoes.		
124. Clean or deepen overflow ponds to maintain colder temperatures to reduce mosquito habitat.		X
125. Install and maintain float valves on stock tank fill pipes to minimize overflow	X	
126. Harden stock tank pads to reduce tracks that can potentially hold water where mosquitoes may breed.	X	
127. Build ponds with steep shorelines to reduce shallow water (>60 cm) and aquatic vegetation around the perimeter of impoundments to deter colonizing by mosquitos (Knight et al. 2003, cited in NTT report page 61).	X	
128. Consider removing and controlling trees and shrubs to reduce shade and wind barriers on pit and reservoir shorelines if not needed for wildlife, fish, or recreational values.		X
129. Impoundments that remain accessible to livestock and wildlife can cause tracking and nutrient enrichment from manure which can create favorable mosquito breeding habitat. Where this is a concern, it may be desirable to fence the reservoir and pipe the water to a tank.		X
130. Construct dams or impoundments that minimize down-slope seepage or overflow. Seepage and overflow results in down-grade accumulation of vegetated shallow water areas that support breeding mosquitoes.		X
131. On ponds and reservoirs with enough depth and volume, introduce native fish species, which feed on mosquito larvae.		X
132. Line the overflow of a dam's spillway with crushed rock and constructing the spillway with steep sides to preclude the accumulation of shallow water and vegetation to reduce mosquito habitat.		X
133. Where an existing reservoir has filled with silt, consider cleaning to reduce shallow water habitat conducive to mosquito reproduction.		X
134. During confirmed West Nile virus outbreaks in sage-grouse habitat, consider larvicide applications.		X
Travel Management Required Design Features		
135. Designate or design routes to direct use away from priority areas identified in Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments and still provide for high-quality and sustainable travel routes and administrative access, legislatively mandated requirements, and commercial needs	X	
Recreation Required Design Features		
136. Direct use away from GRSg priority areas as described in the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.	X	
137. Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids.		X
138. Avoid development of new campgrounds or recreation facilities in nesting habitat.	X	

Brent Ralston

From: Holly Prohaska
Sent: Tuesday, December 02, 2014 1:12 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); Ethan Ellsworth (eellsworth@blm.gov)
Subject: GRSG Great Basin PM Call December 2nd Meeting Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 20141202.docx; Buffer Questionnaire_12_2_14.docx; Avoidance Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances.New.11.25.14.docx

Good Afternoon- Please find attached to this email, meeting notes, the Lek buffer questionnaire and avoidance criteria handout from today's call.
If you have any edits or comments please let me know.

Respectfully,

Holly Prohaska

Holly Prohaska

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

December 2, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM:

NV: Lauren Mermejo; Joe Tague

UT: Quincy Bahr;

ID: Brent Ralston; John Beck; Paul Makela, Ethan Ellsworth

OR: Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado

MT: John Carlson

SOL: Sarah Shattuck, SOL

WO: Matt Magaletti; Stephanie Carman

Rocky Mtn. Region: Johanna Munson

USFS:

Glen Stein; Randy Sharp; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi:

David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Chad Ricklefs; Drew Vankat; Carol Anne Garrison

Handouts

- Avoidance Criteria
- Buffer Questionnaire

Action Items

WO

- Stephanie to coordinate with Pam and Norine at USFWS about highly important landscape boundaries (Super Pacs).
- Stephanie to send out Franks Super Pac Acre comparison table.
- Sarah and Joe to discuss CCS vs. 3% cap issue.
- Sarah and Quincy to discuss
- Matt and Vicki to coordinate with Quincy on question he had about the vegetation objective direction.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Answer the Buffer Questionnaire and do mapping exercise by Friday December 5th.
- Review and comment on avoidance screening criteria for anthropogenic disturbance and provide comments by next Tuesday.

EMPSi

- Send Sarah Shattuck current sub regional comment response reports.

Meeting Minutes

National, State Director, and SOL updates

- GRSG summit wrapped up last week, meeting with secretary yesterday...decisions, coal mining, transmission, vegetation objectives.
 - Vegetation objective-Following FS table 2.6. UT- If added table but formatted it differently would it be okay (based on elevation or type)? Matt/ Vicki to get back to Quincy.
 - Livestock Grazing Modifications- Took out that there would be annual monitoring...just monitoring and added statement focusing on riparian areas and wet meadows.
 - Mineral materials- PHMA- Closed to new, except for expansion of active pits.
 - Transmission and Major ROWs- Portions of Gateway Energy South was removed.
 - Mapping- Issues worked out in NV-Solicitor gave greenlight. Both NV and ID made adjustments to PPMA boundaries based on new information. WO is still working on issues with the Tavaputs and Anthro areas in Utah.
 - Development in highly important landscapes aka Super Pacs...proposed to be called "sagebrush step focal areas". ADPPs will recommend administrative withdrawal from 1872 mining law in these areas and then NSO without exceptions or modifications, and livestock grazing permit renewals would be prioritized here.
 - Maps- Need to understand how USFWS developed map. Frank put together table showing the distribution of acres in PHMA, GHMA, and non-habitat by land-manager for each state. . Stephanie will follow up with USFWS (Pat and Norine) and ask them to refine map to fit within BLM sideboards.
 - Need to also make sure that cross border issues are addressed in this map.
- Still waiting on decisions on mitigation (language) and coal suitability language.
 - Mitigation language- No net unmitigated loss and mitigation gain language has been changed. Discuss that disturbance would fully offset impacts within valid existing rights and provide a conservation benefit for the sage grouse.
- Secretary is trying to negotiate NSO language between BLM and USFWS (Exception waiver criteria).
- Buffers and NSO language...BLM would like state directors to have final say on exceptions, mods, etc. USFWS wants a biologist to have final say...addresses mixed land ownership issue public had concerns about.
- Buffers and Adaptive Management are still being worked on:
 - USFWS is reviewing AM plans from some states... (NV and UT)...specifically, Norine and Bob (Deputy) and Dan Ash and Terri...are reviewing the plans...seemed pleased with what they saw (even hard triggers)...Idaho's approach has also been cleared...but want to see CO and OR. There is a concern about sub regions without hard trigger responses in plans (e.g. Wyoming) and consistency. Triggers are currently at BSU level, but USFWS wants to see it at PAC level. Issue is with examples like the following: If UT triggers in 26A then Idaho and NV would be affected. If pop tripped in BSU located on state line, hard wire response for original planning are where BSU is and adjacent planning area

would go into effect. UT BLM and state of UT discussed this situation. WO needs to take into account these issues before providing direction.

Q: If we trip a trigger at BSU level, would that trip it for whole population? BLM policy right now is if tripped at BSU, it will be responded to at BSU...but USFWS wants it addressed at population level.

-Secretary will be at WGA and will talk to governors about this issue (This weekend).

- Buffers-Still working on it. Have two weeks to decide. BLM and USFWS are both looking at this issue. Since we have made a lot of planning decisions, may not need buffers...e.g. NSO. Steve and Ed want four questions to be answered by COB Friday December 5th. See questionnaire attached to notes:
 - How was PPH initially mapped initially based on IM-2012-44 (did you include buffers as part of this exercise)? Many states just used habitat maps, but want to make sure.
 - Need to provide WO with rationale for existing buffer distances.
 - Application of Buffer distances in the ADPP-Are you applying allocation decisions into the buffers?
 - Mapping exercise-take minimum range 3.1 mile buffer and show where PHMA and GHMA lie within those lek buffers.

Q: Which leks to use when doing map exercise? 2010 active leks? E.g. UT added about 40 leks between 2012 and 2013. You should use whatever you are using for Chapter 3. And use surface layer within decision area.

Q: Is there directional language that will be provided to the PMs for the ADPP on buffers? Yes, the answer to the questionnaire will help form that direction. Email Matt with questions.

-Science will need to support buffer direction.

- Disturbance- Direction is still being decided. 3% cap (except WYO which has 5%). NV is proposing to use the state of Nevada conservation credit system approach instead, but if doesn't work then will revert back to 3%. WY and NV will have to work with solicitors to develop language on how to monitor and address success. USFWS is concerned that if go with CCS, and we relax allocation direction in one of the strongest plans it will not be good for the bird. But also want to work with the state of Nevada...so solicitors and WO are trying to figure out language. Joe and Sarah to discuss. OR-The state would like to relax allocations for solar and wind in priority habitat....UT will have some concerns with coal allocations in the end...but meeting with state to discuss this week.

Tier II/CEA Update – Comments on the working draft Buffalo CEA

- No comments received to date. Please provide comments by December 5th.

Update from the NOC

-The hold up on getting data to NOC is from changes to Super Pacs and buffers.

Comment response reports – SOL request to review

- The summaries will be sent to Sarah knowing that many have holes, will change based on new WO direction, and she will still need to review the final reports with the FEIS.

Avoidance Criteria

- Review and comment on Avoidance screening criteria for anthropogenic disturbance and provide comments by next Tuesday. Joe is fine with criteria.

Schedule update

- WO is still working on the schedule.

Pre-decisional Deliberative Document – Not for Distribution

The objectives of the below questionnaire are to gather information from the individual sub-regions/states as to how the recent USGS Report *Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse: A Review* could potentially impact the BLM and Forest Service’s existing ADPPs and to identify the proper use of the Report in our final documents. Please respond to the following questions as they relate to your sub-region’s ADPP by COB Friday December 5, 2014.

1. Mapping PPH and PGH: When initially mapping preliminary priority and preliminary general habitat for your sub-region with your respective state wildlife agency (per IM-2012-044), were distances from leks part of this mapping exercise? If so, what distance from the lek was used? Please provide the citation if available. If not, what was the criteria/basis for mapping priority and general habitat?

2. Rationale for existing buffer distances: We recognize that sub-regions provided this information to the WO prior to the Federal Family Meetings, but in order to reflect any changes that have been made since then, what buffer distances and their supportive scientific references are identified in your ADPP for both PHMA (Core and IHMA) **and** GHMA (please note if they are seasonal or year-round buffers)? Do these distances fall within the Report’s interpreted range for surface disturbance, linear features, and energy development (3.1 miles to 5 miles), tall structures (2 miles to 5 miles), and low structures (1.2 miles to 5 miles)?

If the sub-regional buffers do not fall within the Report’s interpreted ranges, do you feel you need to make changes to your existing ADPP buffers? If not, why?

3. Application of buffer distances in your ADPP: Do you attach any BLM land use plan allocations (NSO, ROW exclusions/avoidances, or closures for example) within the buffer distances from leks in your ADPP for both PHMA (Core and IHMA) **and** GHMA? If so, are these buffer allocations depicted in the data that you will be using for cumulative effects analysis and mapping purposes?

If no land use plan allocations are associated within a buffer distance from a lek, how does the sub-region plan to implement the conservation actions associated with the buffer distance?

4. If a 3.1 mile buffer was to be applied to every occupied lek present in the sub-region’s planning area, would BLM managed PHMA and GHMA within this 3.1 mile buffer area be covered by restrictive land use plan allocations? In order to effectively respond to this question, please work with your GIS specialist to develop the following:
 - a. A map of your planning area with the following layers: 1) all known leks with a 3.1 mile buffer (shown as a circle), ADPP PHMA (Core and IHMA), and ADPP GHMA.
 - b. Acreage figures populated for the below categories.

	Acres
Acres of BLM/FS managed PHMA (Core and IHMA) within a 3.1 mile buffer from a lek.	
Acres of BLM/FS managed GHMA within a 3.1 mile buffer from a lek.	
Acres of BLM/FS lands within 3.1 mile from a lek that is not managed as PHMA or GHMA.	

Avoidance Criteria for New Anthropogenic Disturbances (Mineral Development, Rights-of-Ways, Recreational Uses, Grazing Facilities or Other Authorizations That Cause Surface-Disturbance)

A. Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)*

1. Priority is given to development outside of PHMA.
2. If development/activity cannot be placed outside of PHMA, surface-disturbing activities would be authorized in non-habitat areas first, and then in the least suitable habitat for GRSG.
3. If development/activity is placed in non-habitat, it would not create a barrier to movement and/or connectivity between seasonal habitats and populations.
4. Development/activity does not exceed the 3% disturbance cap.
5. Adaptive management triggers have not been reached.
6. The development/activity with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat, and mitigation would provide an overall net conservation benefit to the PHMA (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework). **(TIME FRAME)**
7. If the development/activity cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of PHMA, it could be considered under the following conditions: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; 2) is co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure.
8. Authorized/permitted activities are implemented adhering to the required design features (RDFs) described in Appendix ___ for specific resources, and the BMPs for locatable minerals. At the site-specific scale, if a RDF/BMP is not implemented, at least one of the following must be demonstrated in the NEPA analysis associated with the project/activity:
 - A specific RDF/BMP is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
 - An alternative RDF/BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
 - Analyses conclude that following a RDF/BMP will provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat.
9. Discrete anthropogenic disturbances or activities disruptive to GRSG (including scheduled maintenance activities) do not occur in seasonal GRSG habitats unless the project plan and NEPA document demonstrate the project would not impair the life-history or behavioral needs of the GRSG population. Seasonal avoidance periods vary by GRSG seasonal habitat as follows:
 - In breeding and nesting habitat from _____ to _____
 - In brood rearing habitat from _____ to _____
 - In winter habitat from _____ to _____The specific seasonal restrictions may be modified if documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climactic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long and/or heavy winter) reflect a need to change the given dates in order to better protect GRSG, in coordination with the local State-agency biologist.
10. Authorizations/permits would limit noise from discretionary activities (during construction, operation, or maintenance) to not exceed 10 decibels above ambient sound levels at the

perimeter of occupied leks during the primary lekking periods.

11. Authorizations/permits would restrict the placement of permanent tall structures within GRSG breeding and nesting habitats. A tall structure is any man-made structure that provides for perching/nesting opportunities for predators that may naturally be absent, or that decreases the use of an area by GRSG; this determination would be made based on local conditions such as existing vegetation or topography.

B. General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)*

1. Priority is given to development outside of GHMA.
2. If development/activity cannot be placed outside of GHMA, surface-disturbing activities would be authorized in non-habitat areas first, and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater sage-grouse.
3. If development/activity is placed in non-habitat, it would not create a barrier to movement and/or connectivity between seasonal habitats and populations.
4. The development/activity with associated mitigation would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework).
5. Authorized/permitted activities are implemented adhering to the required design features (RDFs) described in Appendix ___ for specific resources, and the BMPs for locatable minerals. At the site-specific scale, if a RDF/BMP is not implemented, at least one of the following must be demonstrated in the NEPA analysis associated with the project/activity:
 - A specific RDF/BMP is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
 - An alternative RDF/BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
 - Analyses conclude that following a RDF/BMP will provide no more protection to GRSG or its habitat.
6. Discrete anthropogenic disturbances or activities disruptive to GRSG (including scheduled maintenance activities) do not occur in seasonal GRSG habitats unless the project plan and NEPA document demonstrate the project would not impair the life-history or behavioral needs of the GRSG population. Seasonal avoidance periods vary by GRSG seasonal habitat as follows:
 - In breeding and nesting habitat from _____ to _____
 - In brood rearing habitat from _____ to _____
 - In winter habitat from _____ to _____

The specific seasonal restrictions may be modified if documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climactic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long and/or heavy winter) reflect a need to change the given dates in order to better protect GRSG, in coordination with the local State-agency biologist.

*This screening criteria would not be applicable to vegetation treatments being conducted to enhance GRSG habitat.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 3:46 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-12-09.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's meeting.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, December 8, 2014 2:40 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

- I. WO review updates
 - WGA Outcomes

- Issue resolution - status
 - Schedule update
 - GRSG Decision tracking sheet
2. Tier II/CEA Update
 3. APRMP/Final EIS
 - Executive Summary and chapter I templates (need for consistency)
 - Revised anthropogenic disturbance screening criteria sent out last week
 - Other?
 4. Other topics?
 5. Action Items from past calls
 - None

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

December 9, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Stephanie Carman, WO; Matt Magaletti, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Gordon Toevs, WO

USFS: Glen Stein; Randy Sharp

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- ALL: Send comments on CEA template to Drew Vankat.
- Matt: Draft Executive Summary template.

EMPSi

- Review and respond to CEA template comments from Oregon.
- Send Matt Executive Summary from NV/CA plan.

Meeting Minutes

WO Review Updates

- Decisions/guidance are not ready to send out yet, but anticipate direction will be provided for most issues on Thursday. Adaptive Management and buffers will not likely be resolved this week.
- Staff changes – Michael Hildner will replace Matt who will be going to WY to replace Johanna, who is currently filling in for Kurt Wiedenmann in Idaho, who is on detail in the WO. Expect the staff changes will last 60-90 days with options for up to 120 days.
- Adaptive Management – BLM and SOL working with USFWS to resolve the issue of triggers for populations that cross state boundaries. BLM would like BSU/PAC-level triggers within the state and then discussions for changes needed across state boundaries. USFWS would like to see response at population level.
- Buffers – Matt, Stephanie, and Vicki working to process buffer information that sub-regions provided. Three discussions:
 - High level talking points – BLM's GRSG conservation plans are based primarily on PHMA allocation decisions. Within the 3.1 mile buffer around leks, how much is protected by PHMA/GHMA/not protected? Across BLM lands, 74% contained within PHMA. 24% in GHMA. Only 2% not included and can usually explain why these are not included. If only

used a lek buffer to protect GRSG, this would only cover 57% of PHMA in NV. We are proposing greater and more holistic protection.

- How we did use buffers in our plans? Generally used as a secondary level of protection. Allocations in PHMA are primary level of protection. Buffers mostly occur at project implementation level.
- Suggestions for changes or what we should use based on USGS feedback. Will probably develop a suite of options that would apply at implementation stage, specific to a particular use.
- USFWS is reviewing buffers and hoping to get their suggestions by Friday. Have to discuss with USFWS before giving direction to sub-regions.
- Sagebrush Conservation Areas (e.g. Super PACs) – negotiating with USFWS to amend boundaries to include only federal lands and PHMA and address other mapping errors. Would like official buyoff on this.

Adaptive Management

- Some discussion about using management from other alternatives as a trigger response, but unsure if we need to use management verbatim from the alternative or whether it can fall within the range of alternatives. Grazing was mentioned as an example since grazing actions are limited but the range is large. If you take an action verbatim, NEPA coverage stronger because it was directly analyzed. If taking management within the range, weaker NEPA analysis.
- Hearing from SOL – once you hit hard trigger, immediately implement response. Then can investigate the cause. Regardless, still need LUP amendment to release hard trigger response. Response may not respond to what caused the trigger to be tripped, but USFWS would have certainty that change will be implemented.

Tier II/CEA Update

- Received comments from Oregon and expecting comments from the Forest Service. Send comments to Drew Vankat. Will be responding to comments and may have additional questions or need clarifications from Joan.

Monitoring Language

- Gordon provided guidance that the drop-in language for monitoring is sufficient for planning purposes and no supplementation of monitoring language is needed.
- DSDs have been discussing implementation and Gordon is a member of that team. Trying to coordinate activities and monitoring.
- Forest Service monitoring protocol – will it be across all lands or different by forest? Glen is not sure but thinks they will follow the same protocol as BLM.

APRMP/Final EIS

- Should have consistency across sub-regions for Chapter 1 and Executive Summaries. Chapter 1 started as a template and was tailored by sub-region. Want to make sure that Executive Summaries look the same.
- WO will draft an Executive Summary template. Holly to send current version of NV/CA.
- Revised anthropogenic screening criteria sent out last week. Few minor comments from Joe. Send comments to Lauren. ID/MT and OR to send comments.
- They should be a separate action (e.g. SSS-1) under special status species. In every resource section, the first decision will be to comply with SSS-1.
- Can develop criteria for GHMA, but less important to be consistent across this management area.

Other

- UT received a FOIA from cooperating agency and will be working with Sarah to respond and address concerns.
- No word on the Omnibus. Language to be released to the public today.
- Website: Hoping to update national website. Need to have common responses to schedule concerns.

Brent Ralston

From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 12:04 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio
Cc: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; dhavlina@blm.gov; Jessica Rubado
Subject: Re: Great Basin GRSB - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: FWS-FS-BLM Cooperating Agency MOU - GSG.pdf

And attached is the FWS, FS, and BLM MOU that Jessica was referring to on today's call.

Thanks,

Matt

On Tue, Dec 16, 2014 at 11:53 AM, Meredith Zaccherio <meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com> wrote:

Hello all,

Attached are notes from this morning's meeting. Have a great holiday season!

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2014 4:17 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharpay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki' (vherren@blm.gov) (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; David Batts
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Agenda

1. WO review updates

- Issue resolution - status
- Schedule update
- GRSG Decision tracking sheet

2. Tier II/CEA Update

3. APRMP/Final EIS

- Figure template
- Consultation and Coordination Chapter (Usually Chapter 5 or 6) – Jessica Rubado
- Other?

4. Other topics?

5. Action Items from past calls

- None

David Batts

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--

Matthew Magaletti

Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

AND

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

AND

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

REGARDING

DEVELOPMENT OF THE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT OR
REVISION OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS AND LAND AND RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT PLANS TO INCORPORATE CONSERVATION MEASURES

FOR

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE

**Memorandum of Understanding
Between the Bureau of Land Management,
the Fish and Wildlife Service,
and the Forest Service**

Parties to and Purpose for this Document: This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into between the United States Department of Interior (DOI), Bureau of the Land Management (BLM), the DOI, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (FS) (hereinafter, collectively referred to as “the parties”) for the purpose of coordinating and cooperating in conducting an environmental analysis and preparing the draft and final Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for amendment of land use plans to incorporate conservation measures for the greater sage-grouse. These EISs will be prepared in two regions: a Rocky Mountain Region and a Great Basin Region. The Rocky Mountain Region includes land use plans in the states of Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, and portions of Utah and Montana. The Great Basin Region includes land use plans in California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and portions of Utah and Montana.

Within these Regions, sub-regional interdisciplinary teams (IDTs) will be developing individual EISs. Based on the identified threats to the greater sage-grouse and the FWS timeline for making a listing decision on this species, the BLM and the FS aim to incorporate objectives and conservation measures into land use plans by September 2014 in order to provide adequate regulatory mechanisms to conserve greater sage-grouse and its habitat. These measures would be considered by FWS as it makes its final determination on whether to list the greater sage-grouse under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Therefore, these EISs will be prepared under expedited timeframes.

1. This MOU establishes the FS and the FWS as "cooperating agencies" in the environmental impact analysis and documentation process and establishes procedures through which the FS, the FWS and the BLM will coordinate participation in sub-regional IDTs, the Regional Management Teams, and the National Policy Team, to conduct the analyses and develop the EISs. The FS and the FWS have been identified as cooperating agencies because the agencies have both jurisdiction by law and special expertise with respect to environmental impacts relating to the greater sage-grouse habitat conservation strategy (40 CFR 1508.5).
2. **Authorities:** This MOU has been prepared under the authority of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq., and federal regulations codified at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500-1508, and 43 CFR Part 46; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq. and BLM’s planning regulations (in particular 43 CFR 1601.0-5, 1610.3-1, and 1610.4); the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) 16 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.; 36 CFR 219, et seq. and 220, et seq.; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661-668d; Service First Authority, Section 422 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012, P.L. 112-74; and the Fish and Wildlife Act, 16 U.S.C. 742a-742j.

3. **Background:** In April 2010, the FWS published its listing decision for the greater sage-grouse indicating that listing was “Warranted but Precluded” due to higher listing priorities under the ESA. The inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms to conserve the greater sage-grouse and its habitat was identified as a significant threat in the FWS finding on the petition to list the greater sage-grouse as a threatened or endangered species. In view of the identified threats to the greater sage-grouse, and the FWS timeline for making a listing decision on this species, the BLM and the FS propose to incorporate consistent conservation measures for the protection of greater sage-grouse and its habitat into relevant BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and FS Land and Resource Management Plans (LMPs) by September 2014 in order to provide adequate regulatory mechanisms to conserve greater sage-grouse and its habitat. The BLM and the FS will consider and analyze these conservation measures through the plan amendment processes of the respective agencies. The BLM and the FS expect to prepare EISs to analyze proposed amendments to land use plans that are not currently undergoing amendment or revision. For plans already undergoing amendment or revision, the BLM and the FS will consider incorporating conservation measures through the ongoing amendment or revision processes.

The BLM and the FS intend to evaluate the adequacy of sage-grouse conservation measures in existing RMPs and selected LMPs, and consider conservation measures, as appropriate, in proposed RMP and selected LMP amendments throughout the range of the greater sage-grouse, with the exception of the bi-state population in California and Nevada and the Washington State distinct population segment, which will be addressed through other planning efforts.

The BLM and the FS will seek public and agency input to identify issues to address in the EISs, and the BLM and the FS will coordinate, as appropriate, with other federal, state, and local government agencies in preparing the EISs. The BLM and the FS will conduct detailed environmental studies of proposed conservation measures to be incorporated into RMPs and LMPs and alternative conservation measures, and analyze how incorporation of these conservation measures into RMPs and LMPs may affect the quality of the environment.

The BLM will serve as the lead agency and the FWS and the FS are cooperating agencies for these EISs. Cooperating agency status may be offered to other federal agencies, tribes and local government agencies as the BLM deems appropriate.

All EISs will consider both federal and non-federal lands in its analyses. However, implementation of any decisions that amend RMPs and LMPs would apply ONLY to federal land and minerals.

4. **Organization:**

This coordinated interagency effort to conserve greater sage-grouse populations and habitats shall be supported by the following organizational structure:

National Policy Team - Leadership Support

Regional Management Teams - Implementation and Consistency Support

Sub-Regional IDTs – EIS Development

National Technical Team - Technical Support

5. **Term of MOU:** This MOU will commence upon the date of the last signature made by the duly authorized representatives of the parties to this MOU, and will remain in full force and effect unless terminated in accordance with Section 11i, or through March 2, 2016, at which time it will expire, unless extended by an executed modification, signed and dated by all properly authorized signatory officials.
6. **Responsibilities of the FWS:** Based upon the expedited time frames for this initiative, the FWS will participate in the environmental analysis and documentation process by providing information regarding environmental issues for which or where the FWS has jurisdiction by law or special expertise. A schedule and preliminary timeframe for the respective stages of EIS development where the FWS may participate in the planning process is included in Attachment A.

The FWS will have at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with each sub-regional IDT, at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with each regional management team, and at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with the National Policy Team. These members are identified as FWS points of contact (see Section 11n.). The FWS member(s) may be present, as available, at IDT meetings and may provide supporting documentation and information as necessary. Information provided by the FWS may be at its discretion or upon request by BLM and FS IDT members or the third party NEPA contractor through the sub-regional IDT leader and within the IDT leader's specified time frames.

Through its representative(s), the FWS will have the opportunity for input to preliminary draft documents prepared during the EIS process. The IDT leader may, at any time during the effective term of this MOU, request records or information by contacting the FWS point of contact identified in Section 11n below, and the FWS point of contact will work to respond to such requests within reasonable time frames. Prior to release, all records or information requested of or provided by the FWS pursuant to this MOU will be subject to review by the FWS.

Under this MOU, the FWS is expected to assist the BLM and the FS in identifying key issues, developing reasonable alternatives, providing timely information, and reviewing preliminary environmental documents, so that the EIS process remains on track to adhere to agreed-upon schedules and to meet our mutual goals of sage-grouse conservation. The FWS also agrees to advise the BLM and the FS throughout the EIS development process as issues arise in regard to the conservation measures being incorporated into the respective agencies' land use plans. The FWS agrees to maintain the confidentiality of documents and deliberations during the period prior to the public release of any NEPA documents to the extent allowed by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), including drafts; consistent with agreements made with the FS and the BLM to determine appropriate timing for sharing documents with the public or other partners.

7. **Responsibilities of the FS:** Based upon the expedited time frames for this initiative, and the

FS LMP units involved, the FS will participate in the environmental analysis and documentation process by providing information regarding environmental issues which are pertinent to its LMP amendments. A schedule and preliminary timeframe for the respective stages of EIS development where the FS may participate in the planning process is included in Attachment A. It is critical that the FS provide information in a timely fashion to allow completion of EISs by the appointed deadlines.

The FS will have at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with each sub-regional IDT where FS LMP units are at issue, at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with each regional management team, and at least one member appointed to represent its interests and work with the National Policy Team. These members are identified as FS points of contact (see Section 11n.). The FS member(s) will be present, as available, at IDT meetings and provide supporting documentation and information as necessary.

Through its representative(s), the FS will have the opportunity for input to preliminary draft documents prepared during the EIS process. The IDT leader will, at any time during the effective term of this MOU, request records by contacting the FS point of contact identified in Section 11n below, and the FWS point of contact will work to respond to such requests within reasonable time frames. Prior to release, all records or information requested of or provided by the FS pursuant to this MOU will be subject to review by the FS.

Under this MOU, the FS is expected to work with the FWS and the BLM in identifying key issues, developing reasonable alternatives, providing timely information, and reviewing preliminary environmental documents, so that the EIS process remains on track to adhere to agreed-upon schedules. The FS agrees to maintain the confidentiality of documents and deliberations during the period prior to the public release of any NEPA documents to the extent allowed by the FOIA, including drafts; consistent with agreements made with the FWS and the BLM to determine appropriate timing for sharing documents with the public or other partners.

The FS will have the responsibility for developing and approving specific Records of Decision for the FS LMPs included in the respective sub-regional EISs. Any FS decisions made associated with the EISs apply only to NFS land. This planning process is subject to resource and funding availability.

8. **Responsibilities of the BLM:** The points of contact for the preparation of these EISs are designated in Section 11n of this MOU. The BLM will keep the FWS and FS representatives apprised of current events and timeframes in relation to the EISs. The BLM will provide information requests and drafts for review with as much lead time as possible to facilitate FWS and FS timely and thoughtful responses. The BLM will incorporate information and proposals provided by the FWS and the FS into the draft and final EIS as appropriate. Any BLM decisions made associated with the EISs apply only to public land administered by BLM.
9. **Mutual Responsibilities of the Parties:** The FWS, the FS and the BLM agree to cooperate

by informing each other as far in advance as possible, of any related actions, issues or procedural problems that may affect the environmental analysis and documentation process or that may affect either party. The parties agree to cooperate in the development and review of any operating guidelines or agreements between the FWS, the FS, or the BLM and other entities involved in the EISs that may affect the environmental analyses and writing of the EISs.

The key contacts identified in Section 11n serve as the MOU core team. The purpose of the MOU core team is to ensure that timely and coordinated communication and exchange of information between the parties to the MOU occurs throughout the planning process.

10. Payment: No payment will be made to any other party by the other as a result of this MOU. Each party will pay its own costs. During the course of the planning process, should it become necessary for one party to purchase from or make payment or reimbursement to any other party, such arrangements will be covered in a separate cooperative agreement in accordance with applicable law.

11. General Provisions:

a. Amendments. Any party may request changes to this MOU. Any changes, modifications, revisions, or amendments to this MOU, that are mutually agreed upon by and between the parties to this MOU, will be incorporated by written instrument, executed and signed by both parties to this MOU, and are effective in accordance with the terms of paragraph 3 above.

b. Applicable Law. The construction, interpretation and enforcement of this MOU will be governed by the applicable laws of the United States.

c. Entirety of Agreement. This MOU, consisting of 10 pages, represents the entire and integrated agreement between the parties and supersedes all prior negotiations, representations and agreements concerning the parties' greater sage-grouse related environmental documents, whether written or oral.

d. Severability. Should any portion of this MOU be determined to be illegal or unenforceable, the remainder of the MOU will continue in full force and effect, and either party may renegotiate the terms affected by the severance.

e. Sovereign Immunity. The FWS, the FS, and the BLM do not waive their sovereign immunity by entering into this MOU, and each fully retains all immunities and defenses provided by law with respect to any action based on or occurring as a result of this MOU.

f. Third Party Beneficiary Rights. The parties do not intend to create in any other individual or entity the status of third party beneficiary, and this MOU must not be construed so as to create such status. The rights, duties and obligations contained in this MOU will operate only among the parties to this MOU, and will inure solely to the benefit of the parties to this MOU. The provisions of this MOU are intended only to assist the parties in

determining and performing their obligations under this MOU. The parties to this MOU intend and expressly agree that only parties signatory to this MOU will have any legal or equitable right to seek to enforce this MOU, to seek any remedy arising out of a party's performance or failure to perform any term or condition of this MOU, or to bring an action for the breach of this MOU.

g. Exchange of Information. All records or information requested of any party by any other party will be reviewed by the releasing party prior to release. To the extent permissible under law, any recipient of proprietary and/or pre-decisional information agrees not to disclose, transmit, or otherwise divulge this information without prior approval from the releasing party. Any breach of this provision may result in termination of this MOU.

h. Administrative Considerations. Nothing in this MOU will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or legal responsibility of the FWS, the FS, or the BLM, or as binding either the FWS, the FS, or the BLM to perform beyond the respective authority of each, or to require either to assume or expend any sum in excess of appropriations available. It is understood that all the provisions herein must be within financial, legal, and personnel limitations, as determined practical by the FWS, the FS and the BLM for their respective responsibilities. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document.

Nothing in this MOU will be construed to extend jurisdiction or decision-making authority to the FWS, the FS, or the BLM for planning and management of land and resource uses for any non-Federal lands or resources in the planning area. Nothing in this MOU will be construed to extend jurisdiction or decision-making authority to the FS or the FWS for planning and management of land or resource uses on the Federal lands or mineral estates administered by the BLM. Nothing in this MOU will be construed to extend jurisdiction or decision-making authority to the BLM or the FWS for planning and management of land or resource uses on National Forest System lands except for the mineral estates administered by the BLM. The FWS, the FS, and the BLM will work cooperatively and will communicate about issues of mutual concern.

i. Termination: Any party may terminate this MOU after 30 days written notice to the other parties of their intention to do so. During this period, the parties will enter negotiations to resolve any disagreement(s). If the disagreement(s), if any, have not been resolved by the end of the 30-day period, the MOU will terminate. In the event negotiations are progressing but are not concluded by the end of the 30-day period, the party initiating the termination notice may request that termination be postponed for an additional 30-day period or longer while the negotiations continue.

j. Dispute Resolution: In the event of any disagreement among the parties regarding their obligations under this MOU that cannot be resolved among the parties in a reasonable time, any party may refer the disagreement to the BLM Director to timely resolve said issue. The decision of the BLM Director will be the final decision for purposes of resolving the issue.

k. Participation in Similar Activities: This agreement in no way restricts the FWS, the FS, or the BLM from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies,

organizations, and individuals.

l. Members of U.S. Congress: Pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 22, no United States member of, or United States delegate to, Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this agreement, or benefits that may arise therefrom, either directly or indirectly.

m. Text Messaging while Driving: In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," Federal employees shall not engage in text messaging (a) when driving a Government owned vehicle (GOV), or when driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) while on official Government business, or (b) when using electronic equipment supplied by the Government while driving. All recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging when driving company owned, leased or rented vehicles, POVs or GOVs when driving while on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government.

n. Contacts: The primary points of contact for carrying out the provisions of this MOU are:

FWS

Pat Deibert
National Greater Sage-grouse Coord.
Cheyenne, WY
307-772-2374
pat_deibert@fws.gov

Noreen Walsh
Deputy Regional Director (Region 6)
Lakewood, CO
303-236-7920
noreen_walsh@fws.gov

ES

Jim Pena
Associate Deputy Chief
National Forest System
Washington, DC
202-205-1523
jpena@fs.fed.us

Marlene Finley
Deputy Regional Forester
Intermountain Region
Ogden, UT
802-625-5605
mfinley@fs.fed.us

BLM

Ed Roberson
Assistant Director
Renewable Resources and Planning
Washington, DC
202-208-4896
eroberso@blm.gov

Jessica Rubado
National Sage-grouse Coordinator
Washington, DC
202-912-7235
jarubado@blm.gov

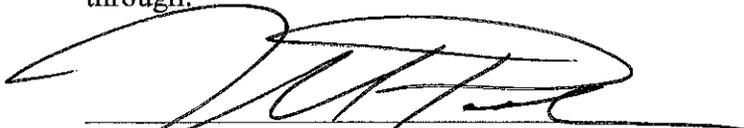
Lauren Mermejo
Great Basin Sage-grouse Project Manager
Reno, NV
775-861-6580
lmermejo@blm.gov

Johanna Munson
Rocky Mtn. Sage-grouse Project Manager
Cheyenne, WY
307-775-6329
jmunson@blm.gov

12. Signature: The parties hereto have executed this Memorandum of Understanding as of the dates shown below.

The effective date of this MOU is the latest signature date affixed to this page.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, by and through:

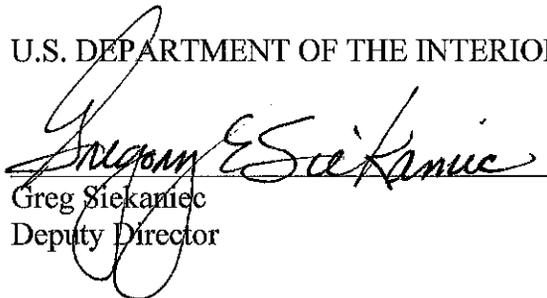


Mike Pool
Deputy Director



Date

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, by and through:

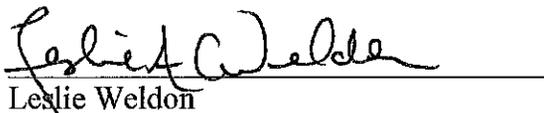


Greg Siekaniec
Deputy Director

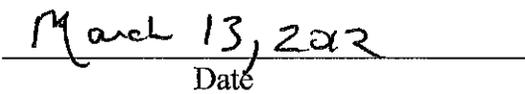


Date

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE, by and through:



Leslie Weldon
Deputy Chief, National Forest System



Date

Attachment A

Cooperating Agency Participation in the National Sage Grouse Planning Strategy

RMP/EIS Stage	Proposed Completion Date
Conduct scoping and identify issues	March 23, 2012
Formulate alternatives	June 30, 2012
Estimate effects of alternatives	September 30, 2012
Select the preferred alternative; issue Draft RMP/EIS	December 31, 2012
Respond to comments	May 31, 2013
Issue Proposed RMP/FEIS	November 30, 2013
Governor's Consistency Review	January 31, 2014
Resolve protests; modify Proposed RMP/FEIS if needed; sign ROD	May 30, 2014

Brent Ralston

From: Havlina, Douglas
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2014 5:25 PM
To: gemerson@fs.fed.us; irickert@fs.fed.us; Vanessa Stepanek; Adamski, Joseph; Andrew Johnson; Bobo, Matthew; Bradley Washa; Bridget Clayton; Clinton McCarthy; Craig Goodell; Crane, Mace; David Repass; Dawn M Davis; Doug Havlina; Earl (Tom) Rinkes; Erin Jones; Frank Quamen; Gina Ramos; Glen Burkhardt; Gordon Toevs; Herren, Vicki; Ielmini, Michael -FS; Jason Pyron; Jay Kerby; Jeanne Chambers; Jeremy Maestas; Johanna Munson; John Carlson; John Wilson; Jolie Pollet; Karen Prentice; Katie Powell; Kenneth Collum; Kit Muller; Krista Gollnick; Lauren Mermejo; Laurie -FS Kurth; Leao, Duncan S -FS; Louis Brueggeman; Major, Donald; Melvin Tague; Metzger, Timothy J -FS; Michael Pellant; Nyman, Mesia -FS; Pamela Murdock; Pence, Dusty L -FS; Peter Gower; Quincy Bahr; Ralston, Brent E; Randall Sharp; Rex McKnight; Sandra Gregory; Smith-Campbell, Victoria; Stephen Small; Susan Goodman; Suther, Joan M; tburcsu; Tom Rinkes; Tucker, James P -FS; William Brown; Wuenschel, Amarina E -FS
Subject: Tuesday's FIAT information call - Agenda attached
Attachments: FIAT_Agenda_Call13.docx

Folks:

Attached is an agenda for tomorrow's FIAT information call. Most teams were on the road last week, so this will be a good opportunity to regroup. The time is from 1300-1430, mountain. Call information is embedded in the attached, and there will be no live meeting.

thanks!

Doug



Bureau of Land Management
 FIAT Information Sharing Call #13
 1300-1500 mountain
 12/9/2014

Conf. Call # 866-658-3311 (participant passcode: 1393359#) (leader: 8371224#)

To join the meeting as an **Attendee** (those who will only be viewing Presentations), use this link:
<http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=SA303102&p=GM9017832&t=c>

To join the meeting as a **Presenter** (those who will share applications and / or the Windows Desktop), use this link:
<http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=SA303102&p=GM9017892&t=c>

Time Slot (Mountain)	Topic	Presenter
1300-1305	Roll Call	All
1305-1340	FIAT Assessment Team Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central Oregon ○ Snake/Salmon/Beaverhead ○ Southern Great Basin ○ Northern Great Basin ○ Western Great Basin/Warm Springs Valley 	Craig Joe Sandy Joe Ken
1340-1355	Program Area Lead Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fuels Mgmt. ○ Fire Operations ○ Habitat Restoration/Recovery ○ Post-Fire Rehabilitation 	Krista Rex Vicki/Gina Dave



1355-1425	<p>Current Issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Template for Assessments 2. Timelines: due date for drafts, review periods, final due date 3. Spatial data, data viewer 4. End of workshops 	All
1425-1435	Open discussion	All
1435	Action Items and Wrap Up	All

Brent Ralston

From: Beck, Jonathan
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 9:16 AM
To: Carlson, John
Cc: Jamie Connell; Wiedenmann, Kurt; Foss, Jeffery; Peter Ditton; Brent Ralston; Cornelia Hudson
Subject: Re: Coop Agency SG call

John, I will call in from Twin Falls tomorrow for the daytime call. I have a prior commitment scheduled during the evening call. Jon

On Wed, Apr 29, 2015 at 9:08 AM, Carlson, John <jccarlso@blm.gov> wrote:
I just added you to the invite Jon. There are two calls - one during the day and one in the evening. J

John C. Carlson
Conservation Biologist
Bureau of Land Management
Montana/Dakotas State Office
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101-4669
(406) 896-5024

On Wed, Apr 29, 2015 at 9:03 AM, Beck, Jonathan <jmbeck@blm.gov> wrote:
I would be happy to sit it on your call and and answer any questions. I will be in Twin Falls tomorrow. Send me the times and I will see how I can make it work. Jon

On Wed, Apr 29, 2015 at 8:56 AM, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov> wrote:
Thanks John. I am hosting the MT call but admit to being unfamiliar with the Idaho process.

Will someone from your team be joining us in case we get questions from SW MT participants or do you think Cornie is in the loop enough to handle the questions?

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 29, 2015, at 8:20 AM, Wiedenmann, Kurt <kwiedenmann@blm.gov> wrote:

Jamie - Jon Beck (SG Project Lead) spoke with Cornelia Hudson this morning, apologizing for the oversight of not inviting the Dillon Field Office on Tuesdays cooperating agency call. They had a good discussion with Jon sending her the electronic Chapter 2 today to be followed by the CD when they arrive from the contractor today. Jon informed me that none of the invited Montana counties participated in the Idaho's call and that Cornelia will be inviting them to participate in Montana's upcoming call.

Kurt Wiedenmann

Branch Chief - Resources & Science
BLM Idaho State Office

Office - 208-373-3813
Cell - 208-2709659

On Wed, Apr 29, 2015 at 7:29 AM, Foss, Jeffery <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:

Jamie

I just spoke with Jon Beck and learned the counties in MT that are cooperating agencies were invited to yesterday's call.

Kurt will follow-up with you this AM about the coordination and communication we are doing with MT (internal and external).

Thanks
Jeff

Jeff Foss
Acting State Director-Idaho BLM
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709
208-373-3800 or 373-4001
jfoss@blm.gov

On Tue, Apr 28, 2015 at 10:20 PM, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov> wrote:
Jeff -

Rumors are circling that Idaho held a coop agency call and forget to invite the MT (Dillon FO) folks participating on the EIS? What about the Forest Service?

Yikes! Please let me know one way or the other so we can try to get them in the loop another way.

Thanks,

Jamie

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

--

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

Brent Ralston

From: Jeffery Foss
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 5:28 AM
To: Jamie Connell
Cc: Peter Ditton; Kurt R Wiedenmann; Jonathan Beck; Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Coop Agency SG call

Jamie

We did have a cooperating agency call yesterday with counties but I am not aware of the mailing list the invites were sent to..... I am checking this AM

If there was an oversight we will correct it ASAP and keep you in the loop.

Kurt, Brent, Jon, if we forgot to include the MT cooperators please make calls today to all those cooperators and ensure they get the letter and documents ASAP

Jamie, I am traveling to Fort Hall for a Govt-Govt mtg today so I will ask Kurt Wiedenmann to followup with you this AM

Jeff

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 28, 2015, at 10:20 PM, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov> wrote:

>

> Jeff -

>

> Rumors are circling that Idaho held a coop agency call and forget to
> invite the MT (Dillon FO) folks participating on the EIS? What about
> the Forest Service?

>

> Yikes! Please let me know one way or the other so we can try to get
> them in the loop another way.

>

> Thanks,

>

> Jamie

>

>

>

>

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Brent Ralston

From: Jeffery Foss
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 5:19 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Kurt R Wiedenmann; Jonathan Beck
Cc: jeff foss; Donald Smurthwaite
Subject: Fwd: Coop Agency SG call

If we did not invite MT counties, please do so and have a call ASAP

Let me know the status today so I can respond to Jamie

Jeff

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov>
Date: April 28, 2015 at 10:20:24 PM MDT
To: Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>
Cc: Peter Ditton <pditton@blm.gov>
Subject: Coop Agency SG call

Jeff -

Rumors are circling that Idaho held a coop agency call and forget to invite the MT (Dillon FO) folks participating on the EIS? What about the Forest Service?

Yikes! Please let me know one way or the other so we can try to get them in the loop another way.

Thanks,

Jamie

Sent from my iPhone

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 9:40 PM
To: Jonathan Beck
Subject: RE: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Jon,

Mary has been retained/hired by the county to review documents and provide their feedback to BLM in this process.

Brent Ralston
Special Projects Lead
Jarbidge & Owyhee Grazing Permit Process
208-373-3812

From: Beck, Jonathan [mailto:jmbeck@blm.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 8:53 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Is Mary Darling designated by the county to participate as a cooperator on their behalf? Jon
----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mary Darling** <marydarling@darlingltd.com>
Date: Mon, Apr 27, 2015 at 8:27 AM
Subject: RE: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call
To: Jon Beck <jmbeck@blm.gov>
Cc: Wayne Butts <bbreedlove@co.custer.id.us>, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>

Jon – Please keep me on all hard copy and email lists for the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse issues, especially NEPA documents. I am the sage-grouse biologist working for Custer County and would like to continue to receive all administrative drafts of NEPA documents under the Custer County cooperating agency status, as well as documents that go to the public. I am also requesting information about meetings – as Custer County has been very active in coordination with BLM and other federal agencies on the sage-grouse. We wish to continue to stay very involved.

Thank you. /s/ Mary



Mary E. Darling, MS, JD

CEO/Principal Owner/Biologist

Darling Geomatics

Award Winning 3D Scanning, Land Surveying, & Environmental Permitting

Immediate Past President So AZ Post Society of American Military Engineers

Certified DBE, WBE, WOSB, SBE

University of Arizona Tech Park

9040 South Rita Road, Ste #2350, Tucson, AZ 85747

Ph (520) 298-2725 / Fax (520) 298-2767/Cell (520) 954-4050

www.darlingltd.com

From: Brent Ralston [mailto:bralston@blm.gov]

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:40 AM

To: marydarling@darlingltd.com

Cc: Wayne Butts; Jon Beck

Subject: FW: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Mary,

Here is some information regarding a call with Cooperating Agencies for next week and an upcoming review opportunity for the administrative draft of the proposed plan amendment/FEIS.

Brent Ralston

Special Projects Lead

Jarbidge & Owyhee Grazing Permit Process

208-373-3812

From: Beck, Jonathan [mailto:jmbeck@blm.gov]

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:30 AM

To: bcc@co.blaine.id.us; lschoen@co.blaine.id.us; dcrane@cassiacounty.org; timbri.hurst@Cassiacounty.org;

depperjd@id.doe.gov; dbal@qwestoffice.net; dbal0680@gmail.com; madco@madison.mt.gov;
jraymond@co.jefferson.id.us; shrj@juno.com; lcarter@co.bingham.id.us; lmiller@co.fremont.id.us;
cowdoc75@hotmail.com; dblocksom@idcounties.org; trice@beaverheadcounty.org; bbreedlove@co.custer.id.us;
ripper@mudlake.net; commiss@co.twin-falls.id.us; Jonathan Beck

Cc: Kurt Wiedenmann; Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston

Subject: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

County Cooperators: My name is Jonathan Beck and I am the new GRSG project lead for the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS filling in behind Brent Ralston. As you are aware, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is in the midst of an unprecedented land use planning effort. The BLM is preparing 15 Environmental Impact Statements and amending or revising 68 land use plans for the conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse. We anticipate completing the planning process this summer. As a cooperating agency, the Bureau of Land Management will be providing you an administrative draft of the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS during the week of April 29 for a two week review.

I am writing to invite you to an informational call on **Tuesday April 28th** to kickoff the cooperator review at **10:00 AM**.

I look forward to visiting on the 28th. The call in information is below.

Thanks for you continued interested. Jon

The Call In number is:

866-916-4861

The Passcode is: 4369869#

Jonathan Beck

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho State Office

208-373-4070

--

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

Brent Ralston

From: Mary Darling
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 8:23 AM
To: 'Brent Ralston'
Cc: 'Wayne Butts'; 'Jon Beck'
Subject: RE: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Brent – I am not sure if I got back to you on this. Thank you. Also – it appears you have a new assignment. Congratulations. Wishing you the best. Mary



Mary E. Darling, MS, JD
CEO/Principal Owner/Biologist
Darling Geomatics
Award Winning 3D Scanning, Land Surveying, & Environmental Permitting
Immediate Past President So AZ Post Society of American Military Engineers
Certified DBE, WBE, WOSB, SBE
University of Arizona Tech Park
9040 South Rita Road, Ste #2350, Tucson, AZ 85747
Ph (520) 298-2725 / Fax (520) 298-2767/Cell (520) 954-4050
www.darlingltd.com

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:40 AM
To: marydarling@darlingltd.com
Cc: Wayne Butts; Jon Beck
Subject: FW: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Mary,

Here is some information regarding a call with Cooperating Agencies for next week and an upcoming review opportunity for the administrative draft of the proposed plan amendment/FEIS.

Brent Ralston
Special Projects Lead
Jarbidge & Owyhee Grazing Permit Process
208-373-3812

From: Beck, Jonathan [<mailto:jmbeck@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:30 AM
To: bcc@co.blaine.id.us; lschoen@co.blaine.id.us; dcrane@cassiacounty.org; timbri.hurst@Cassiacounty.org; depperjd@id.doe.gov; dbal@qwestoffice.net; dbal0680@gmail.com; madco@madison.mt.gov; jraymond@co.jefferson.id.us; shrj@juno.com; lcarter@co.bingham.id.us; lmiller@co.fremont.id.us; cowdoc75@hotmail.com; dblocksom@idcounties.org; trice@beaverheadcounty.org; bbreedlove@co.custer.id.us; ripper@mudlake.net; commiss@co.twin-falls.id.us; Jonathan Beck

Cc: Kurt Wiedenmann; Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston

Subject: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

County Cooperators: My name is Jonathan Beck and I am the new GRSG project lead for the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS filling in behind Brent Ralston. As you are aware, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is in the midst of an unprecedented land use planning effort. The BLM is preparing 15 Environmental Impact Statements and amending or revising 68 land use plans for the conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse. We anticipate completing the planning process this summer. As a cooperating agency, the Bureau of Land Management will be providing you an administrative draft of the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS during the week of April 29 for a two week review.

I am writing to invite you to an informational call on **Tuesday April 28th** to kickoff the cooperator review at **10:00 AM**.

I look forward to visiting on the 28th. The call in information is below.

Thanks for you continued interested. Jon

The Call In number is:

866-916-4861

The Passcode is: 4369869#

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

Brent Ralston

From: Cally Younger
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 10:41 AM
To: Foss, Jeffery; Virgil Moore; Dustin T. Miller; Tom Perry
Cc: Brent Ralston; Jonathan Beck; Kurt R Wiedenmann; Michael Carrier
Subject: RE: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

I'll be on the call. Thanks.

Cally Younger | Associate Counsel to the Governor

Office of Governor C. L. "Butch" Otter
Phone (208) 334-2100 | Fax (208) 334-3454
cally.younger@gov.idaho.gov



Sign up to receive [regular updates](#) from Governor Otter

From: Foss, Jeffery [mailto:jfoss@blm.gov]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 7:33 AM
To: Virgil Moore; Dustin T. Miller; Tom Perry; Cally Younger
Cc: Brent Ralston; Jonathan Beck; Kurt R Wiedenmann; jeff foss; Michael Carrier
Subject: Fwd: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

Next week we will have the administrative draft of the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS ready for a two week review. We plan to have county cooperators informational call on **Tuesday April 28th** to kickoff the cooperator review at **10:00 AM**:

The Call In number is:

866-916-4861
The Passcode is: 4369869#

You are welcome to join the call with the counties. I have also asked Jon Beck to set up a call/meeting with the State of Idaho for Tuesday the 28th from 10-11 AM so we can provide more information on the admin draft proposed plan/FEIS and answer questions.

Thanks
Jeff

Jeff Foss

Acting State Director-Idaho BLM
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709
208-373-3800 or 373-4001

jfoss@blm.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Beck, Jonathan <jmbeck@blm.gov>
Date: Thu, Apr 23, 2015 at 11:30 AM
Subject: IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS Information Call

To: bcc@co.blaine.id.us, lschoen@co.blaine.id.us, dcrane@cassiacounty.org, timbri.hurst@cassiacounty.org, depperjd@id.doe.gov, dbal@qwestoffice.net, dbal0680@gmail.com, madco@madison.mt.gov, jraymond@co.jefferson.id.us, shrij@juno.com, lcarter@co.bingham.id.us, lmiller@co.fremont.id.us, cowdoc75@hotmail.com, dblocksom@idcounties.org, trice@beaverheadcounty.org, bbreedlove@co.custer.id.us, ripper@mudlake.net, commiss@co.twin-falls.id.us, Jonathan Beck <jmbeck@blm.gov>
Cc: Kurt Wiedenmann <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov>, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>

County Cooperators: My name is Jonathan Beck and I am the new GRSG project lead for the IDswMT Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS filling in behind Brent Ralston

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The Passcode is: 4369869#

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, April 02, 2015 11:43 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR and RMR PM Meeting Notes-2015-04-01.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from yesterday's GBR/RMR call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 3:33 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

NOTE: The second part of the meeting will focus on BLM and Forest Service coordination. Project leads without Forest Service involvement need not participate (but are welcome).

Agenda:

1. WO updates
 - Upload latest version of proposed plan (Dept wants to see these ASAP)
 - Communication update
 - SGTF update from meeting this week
 - Drop-in language for Chapter 2 Veg Objectives Table
 - Presidential Priority Transmission Lines
 - Disturbance Appendix
 - Net conservation gain (mitigation drop-in language for actions that are required to reach it.
 - Glossary definition for “site potential”
2. Executive Summary and Dear Reader Letter
 - Templates complete
 - Timeline for Ex Sum
3. CEAs Update and Reviews – Drew and Project Leads
4. Socioeconomic analysis update
5. IMT Consistency Review –
 - Submit in MS Word files to extent possible
 - EMPSi developing rule set to efficiently incorporate IMT review
 - Need any qualifiers from PMs to help with the review; also anything you think reviewers should focus on.
6. Schedule – Critical Paths:
 - Review of Direct and Indirect impact analysis – due COB 4/3 (single Word file)
 - Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
 - IMT Review PLUPA/FIES – 4/17
 - Final CEAs – 4/24 (other reviews before)
 - WO Internal Review Draft EIS – 4/25
7. Round robin on status – all
8. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

1. Forest Service update on their review of Chapter 4s and 5s (the NeST is in Ogden this week)
2. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls

WO

- Send additional drop-in language when available
- Provide written guidance for Administrative Record regarding use of PPH/PGH and PHMA/GHMA in FEIS.
- WO will provide briefing schedule on the 6 revisions (Buffalo, etc.).
- WO will draft dear reader letter (s).
- Vicki will provide guidance on Vegetation objectives/standards/ etc.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- All references and acronyms from main document and appendices should be put in their respective chapters in the main document.
- Idaho BSU definition will be provided to the other subregions.
- PMs: Let Glen and Madelyn know when you need impact analysis feedback returned next week.
- PMs: Discuss county cooperator review with your State Director.

EMPSi

David Batts

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
3775 Iris Avenue, Suite 1A
Boulder, CO 80301
tel: 303-447-7160 cell: 303-652-7047 fax: 866-625-0707
www.EMPSi.com Twitter: EMPSInc Facebook: EMPSi

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Regions Project Management Team Weekly Call

April 1, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Erin Jones, CO; Jon Beck, ID; Johanna Munson, ID; John Thompson, MT; Frank Quamen, NOC; Julie Suhr Pierce, UT; Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Joan Suther, OR; Quincy Bahr, UT; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY

Forest Service: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon; Rob Mickelsen; Ron Rodriguez; Dale Harber; Tim Metzger; other Forest Service reviewers

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Meredith Zaccherio

Action Items

WO

- Send drop-in language when available.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- PMs: Start a list of any qualifiers for the FEIS that the IMT should know about.
- PMs: Respond to ICF regarding when the revised analyses will be available for them to review.

EMPSi

- Drew: Coordinate with Madelyn regarding Forest Service CEA review.

Meeting Minutes

Washington Office Updates

- WGA task force meeting this week. Steve Ellis scheduled a State Director call tomorrow to provide updates. Anticipate updating some language, but unsure of the details. Nearly all states are upset with the plans. Department has asked to see the proposed plans again.
- Still on schedule to do review on April 11.
- Working on providing drop-in language. Will send text for Presidential Priority projects and the disturbance appendix. Still working on vegetation objectives table intro text and mitigation direction.
- Definitions of site potential, grazing language – SOL and the Department looking at this again.
- Communications – department still taking the lead. April 7, Department will have a webinar/call with State Directors and District Managers to talk about the communications factsheet. April 21- a high level webinar regarding GRSG biology and importance.
- Stephanie will be reaching out to some of the sub-regions individually.
- Showing SFAs under BLM management as well as other areas – might be dropping this.

- Concerns from the WGA meeting about habitat objectives table relate to whether they would have to meet objectives in order to graze?
- Dear Reader letters were distributed last week. Executive Summary also sent – based on NV/CA. IMT review will focus on Chapters 2 and 4, so the Executive Summary will not be needed. IMT will want to review appendices as well.
- Still working on approach for NOAs.

CEA Update

- Team is working on CEAs. Some are under review, others, including HiLine, NW CO, and Oregon will be submitted later this week.
- CEAs are split out by sub-region and Management Zone. Both the Management Zone lead and the sub-regional lead will review the applicable CEAs.

Socioeconomic Update

- Julie is the Great Basin socioeconomic specialist and has been working with ICF. ICF turned in revised sections for ID/MT, NV/CA, UT, and OR. NW CO due this Friday. ICF is hoping they will have any opportunity to see any BLM comments and revisions to other sections to see if socio sections need to be changed. They have reached out to each sub-region to determine when the revised analyses will be available.

IMT Consistency Review

- Everyone submit MS word files to the extent possible. The IMT will call PMs if they have questions.
- EMPSi is developing a rule set for the review – e.g., do not change headings/footers; how to insert comments. This will prevent problems when trying to merge multiple files together.
- Please start a list of any qualifiers the review team should know about – send to EMPSi PM or to David. They will give a briefing to IMT team.
- Each person on the IMT will specialize in an area of the plans and they will be in charge of consistency for that section.
- USFWS is doing their own consistency review.
- WO is creating sideboards for review. Jim Lyons committed to ensuring that drop-in language is included but also that the FEISs adhere to the broader goals we're looking to achieve.

Round Robin

- NV/CA – moving forward. Will turn in everything to EMPSi on Friday for formatting.
- OR – working through Chapter 4 reviews. Deputy State Director had a good meeting with the state. Oregon wasn't at the WGA meeting. Need to rework some data. In reviewing mitigation Chapter 4 language – unsure where this text should go.
- ID/MT – discussion with state this morning. Jon will discuss with Stephanie. Jon reviewing CEA Tier II. Working through issues, and finding recalculations and QA issues. On schedule.
- UT – reviewing Chapter 4. EMPSi is in-house with team. Pulling together rest of document. Incorporating Forest Service comments on Thursday. Had a meeting with state and gave them

the Proposed Plans (BLM-UT; FS-UT; and FS-WY). Meeting with the state again on Monday to answer questions on the Proposed Plan.

- CO – same as everyone else. Working with ICF on socioeconomic impact analysis. Meeting with state partners and will meet again today to talk about issues. Check in call with EMPSi to review any outstanding items.
- MT – planning leads asking questions about drop-in language. USFWS also had some questions.
- WY – on schedule. Planning team receiving Forest Service comments this week, incorporating next week. The 9Plan Chapter 4 may not incorporate Forest Service comments on time. Met with USFWS yesterday and they had their own internal checklist. They are providing some comments. They are asking for some rationale as to why WY is deviating from other state direction.
- UT – needs to incorporate any changes to Forest Service plan in WY.

NOC

- Sent data to USFWS with metadata.
- Sent data and tables to EMPSi for CEA and information for the socioeconomic report.

Forest Service Coordination

- NV/CA is done. Reviewing UT and CO today. ID/MT to be completed tomorrow
- Effort focused on fairly specific areas where there may be some differences (e.g., grazing, allocations; language added to GRSG section for grazing effects).
- Struggling with WY and not sure what to do yet.
- Higher level comment is that they are not seeing conclusions that management will lead to improvement in conditions for GRSG. Will be adding some language in GRSG and vegetation sections, including VDDT analysis.
- For VDDT, we will include numbers from draft for the other alternatives, as these alternatives were not re-run for the FEIS. Rob will be writing some proposed plan analysis done by COT population area. Can crosswalk population areas if needed.
- Utah also had some questions about VDDT. Important to talk about the trend and past disturbances.
- WGA concerns about how Forest Service addresses buffers, since some buffers are included as guidelines. Madelyn created a crosswalk and she will provide this to Stephanie. Glen does not think there is a difference in effects.
- Disturbance of 1 per 640 - BLM does discuss this, Forest Service does not. How is this incorporated in plans? This is a management action. Stephanie will check into it.
- How and when will Forest Service review CEA –Drew will coordinate directly with Madelyn.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Friday, April 10, 2015 2:49 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR-RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-04-08.docx

Hello everyone,
Attached are notes from this week's GBR/RMR NEPA leads call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2015 6:31 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

NO MEETING NEXT WEEK!

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

NOTE: The second part of the meeting will focus on BLM and Forest Service coordination. Project leads without Forest Service involvement need not participate (but are welcome).

Agenda:

1. No call next week; next call on April 22nd
2. WO updates
 - Remaining drop in language (Net conservation gain, glossary definition for “site potential”, others)
3. Executive Summary
 - FS input attached (NACA_GRSG_Ch0ES_20150323_md3.docx)
4. NOA package
 - Materials for RMR attached; GBR should modify
5. Printing update
6. CEAs Update and Reviews – Drew and Project Leads
 - Supplement regional analysis or replace
7. IMT Consistency Review –
 - Review expectations
 - Project leads please be available next week for questions, etc.
 - Provide you cell phone number to Matt or Lauren
 - Submit MS Word files for each chapters/section/appendix to SharePoint site EMPSi developing rule set to efficiently incorporate IMT review
 - Need any qualifiers from PMs to help with the review; also anything you think reviewers should focus on.
8. Schedule – Critical Paths:
 - Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
 - IMT Review PLUPA/FIES – 4/17
 - Final CEAs – 4/24 (other reviews before)
 - WO Internal Review Draft EIS – 4/25
9. Round robin on status – all
10. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

1. Incorporation of Forest Service comments
2. BA/BEs beginning tech editing process
3. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls

WO

- Send additional drop-in language when available
- Provide written guidance for Administrative Record regarding use of PPH/PGH and PHMA/GHMA in FEIS.
- WO will provide briefing schedule on the 6 revisions (Buffalo, etc.).
- Vicki will provide guidance on Vegetation objectives/standards/ etc.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- PMs: Start a list of any qualifiers for the FEIS that the IMT should know about.

- PMs: Respond to ICF regarding when the revised analyses will be available for them to review.
- All references and acronyms from main document and appendices should be put in their respective chapters in the main document.
- Idaho BSU definition will be provided to the other subregions. **EMPSi**

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Regions Project Management Team Weekly Call

April 8, 2015 9:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Erin Jones, CO; Bridget Clayton, CO; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Matt Magaletti, WY;; Pam Murdoch, WY; Aaron Moody, SOL; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow, WO;

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Sean Cottle; Drew Vankat

Handouts *(attached below)*

- Transmittal Letter (RM Region Amendments_Transmittal Letter_4_6_15)
- Notice of Availability language for the RMR (RM Region Amendments_FRN_4_6_15)
- Briefing Paper for the RMR (RM Region Amendments_BP_4_6_15)
- NVCA Executive Summary with Forest Service comments (NVCA_GRSG_Ch0ES_20150323_clean md3)

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Lauren will facilitate getting the Great Basin Regions NOA completed. All NOA examples are specific to the Rocky Mountain Region, text has been highlighted where the Great Basin Regions will need to update with their applicable information.
- All teams need to fill out a funding form (for printing) and turn into Sherry Barbee-Richey. Matt will resend these forms to all team leads.
- Matt, Lauren, Madelyn and Stephanie will further discuss the printing schedule for Sherry. They will have a call at 2:30 pm later today.
- All teams must check that NOA is posted on their website.

WO

- WO would like to see some examples of what the Executive Summaries will look like. Stephanie will provide additional direction on this.

EMPSi

- No meeting next week, Chad will remove next week's meeting from everyone's calendar invite.

Meeting Minutes

Project Management weekly call

- There will not be a call next week on April 15, 2015. The next project management call will be on April 22, 2015. Chad Ricklefs will remove next week's meeting from everyone's calendar invite.

WO Updates

- The remaining drop in language has not been finalized. Remaining resources and resource uses being finalized include grazing and habitat objectives.
- All drop-in language provided by WO will be sent to team leads and will be in tracked changes for easy inclusion into each FEIS. A general background on topics covered will also be provided.
- Please flag topics that are specific to certain plans such as the Utah Prairie Dog in Utah's plan, this will help explain why plans may deviate from other plans.
- Few policy changes are expected during WO review due to this being a higher level review.
- More direction from WO regarding maps is coming, stay posted.
- EMPSi will help facilitate the WO review, below is how each team plans on delivering each FEIS to WO for their review:
 - NVCA: EMPSi will send to Stephanie at WO via email or FilesAnywhere if needed
 - UT: EMPSi will share document with BLM on Google Drive
 - ID: EMPSi will share document with BLM on Google Drive
 - OR: EMPSi will upload to State Office Sharepoint, then BLM team lead will upload to WO Sharepoint
 - MT: EMPSi will upload to State Office Sharepoint, then BLM team lead will upload to WO Sharepoint
 - WY: EMPSi will upload to State Office Sharepoint, then BLM team lead will upload to WO Sharepoint
 - CO: EMPSi will upload to State Office Sharepoint, then BLM team lead will upload to WO Sharepoint

Executive Summary

- Additional Forest Service components need to be added to Executive Summary (attached below)
- Although not all plans will have an Executive Summary available for the WO review, the WO would like to see some examples of what the Executive Summaries will look like. Additional direction on this will be provided by Stephanie.
- NOA package
- See attached examples (below).
- All NOA examples are specific to the Rocky Mountain Region, text has been highlighted where the Great Basin Regions will need to update with their applicable information. Lauren will facilitate getting the Great Basin Regions NOA completed.
- Further discussion is needed regarding:
 1. Will there be one press release for the Great Basin Region and the Rocky Mountain Region?
 2. Who will be the signatory?

Printing update

- Matt has created a tracking list for printing
- All teams need to fill out a funding form and turn into Sherry. Matt will resend these forms to all team leads.

CEAs Update and Reviews

- Majority of the CEAs have been delivered to BLM and Forest Service for review.
- Final 2 CEAs (South Dakota and Utah) will be delivered on Tuesday and Wednesday next week.
- EMPSi is currently creating a comment tracking sheet. CEAs will be finalized by April 21, 2015 and submitted for incorporation into the FEIS.
- Review process for CEAs was implemented by designating leads for each management zone (MZ) to review, their role as lead was to ensure consistency among plans within the same MZ.

IMT Consistency Review

- Cumulative effects will include all topic areas except Sage-Grouse, Drew will work with Stephanie to ensure at least one GRSG CEA will be available for review next week.
- Drew will email specific thoughts and instructions to help with review of CEAs.
- Skye Sieber needs to be included on email regarding review next week.

Schedule – Critical Paths:

- Stephanie is drafting letter to send to all cooperating agencies counties to let them know when documents will be ready to be reviewed.
- This letter will include a note for cooperating agencies to check for any inconsistencies with their local/state plans. Regulations state that a list of any inconsistencies between the FEIS and local/state plans must be included in the ROD.
- WO will review two plans per day and comments will be sent to teams following each review. Stephanie will send a schedule to teams when comments are expected to be sent back.
- Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
- IMT Review PLUPA/FIES – 4/17
- Final CEAs – 4/24 (other reviews before)
- WO Internal Review Draft EIS – 4/25

Round robin on status – all

CO: On schedule, getting document compiled for IMT review.

MT: Ask John for update later, no MT team on call.

WY: On schedule, meetings with USFWS and State teams went well.

UT: On schedule, proposed plan was provided to USFWS. Met with state to identify more inconsistency items. Working with EMPSi to finalize documents for review.

ID: On schedule, chapter 2 template was slightly changed because state was not fully pleased. Met with USFWS and no changes were made. Working with EMPSi for delivery on Friday.

OR: On schedule, CEA comments will be sent to Drew today. New numbers will be on hold for this immediate review. State and fish helped with CEA review and it went well.

NVCA: On, schedule, document and appendices shared with USFWS and comments were provided.

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

Incorporation of Forest Service comments

- Madelyn is cross checking Forest Service and BLM definitions for terms used in the glossary. No significant differences have been found, but meeting between USFS and BLM will be needed at some point if adjustments are necessary.
- Madelyn will send notes on glossary terms to Glen, Matt and Lauren.
- Forest Service provided comments to BLM regarding changes to grazing and socioeconomics sections. EMPSi is assisting BLM to ensure these incorporated into the plans.
- Next week CEA for SG can be reviewed with Ron at USFS to provide comments for UT, other states will work with USFS to get this input from the State liaison, names of other State liaisons have been provided to team leads at BLM.
- Forest Service requested 52 hard copies of the plans on top of BLM's 100. All quantities of copies of the plans must be clearly listed on funding forms going to Sherry.
- ROD will be posted on websites, they are not required to be printed.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 11:27 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Subject: RE: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR-RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-04-29.docx

Hello all,
 Attached are notes from this morning's call.
 Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 6:22 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

NOTE: The second part of the meeting will focus on BLM and Forest Service coordination. Project leads without Forest Service involvement need not participate (but are welcome).

Agenda:

1. WO updates
 - WO Review – status
 - SOL Review – process and coordination
2. Maps
3. Executive Summary – templates developed; EMPSi preparing drafts
4. Printing and NOA package update
5. Postcard notification of Final EIS - is this needed?
 - EMPSi has master mailing list through close of comment period
6. Schedule – updated (see attached)
Critical Paths:
 - Final CEAs – 4/24
 - WO Internal Review Draft EIS – 4/25 to 5/9
 - Coop Agency Review – 4/29 to 5/13
 - SOL/Planning Team Task Force Resolve SOL Cmts – 5/11 to 5/15
 - Need Project Leads to be available to work with SOLs on comments.
 - **Action: PLs send WO send a "not available at this time" schedule for week of 5/11**
7. Round robin on status – all
8. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

1. Incorporation Forest Service comments
2. Other

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

April 29, 2015 9:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Arlene Kasic, CA; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Paul Makela, ID; Erin Jones, CO; Bridget Clayton, CO; John Carlson, MT; Sandy Leach, MT; Joan Suther, OR; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Vicki Herren, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Pam Murdoch, WY

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Derek Holmgren

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Forest Service: Send EMPSi revisions to proposed plans. Work with BLM Project Leads to incorporate any Washington Office edits.
- Project Leads: Send requested information to Sherri for printing.

EMPSi

- Prepare Executive Summaries and get Project Lead review by May 8.

Meeting Minutes

WO Update

- Wyoming 9Plan and Bighorn have been reviewed. Comments have been relatively minor.
- The first 10 minutes of each review will be a quick call with Project Leads to introduce the planning area. There have not been a lot of follow-up calls with Project Leads.
- Solicitor's review is also ongoing.
- Beginning 5/11, WO will set up calls with each Project Lead to discuss solicitor's review. Revisions – three hour time period with SOL to talk through concerns, edits, etc. Mostly Monday and Tuesday. Amendments – two hours scheduled. Stephanie will send a draft schedule.

Maps

- In the Executive Summaries, there will be a map showing PHMA, GHMA, and other BLM lands in planning area. These maps are being produced at the NOC for each planning area.

Executive Summary

- BLM and Department leadership would like all Executive Summaries to have the same look and feel. They created a template for the amendments and revisions. EMPSi will be preparing these and they are due 5/8. They will ask for feedback and review from Project Leads.
- There will be a mention of the SFAs and they will also be shown in the maps.

Printing and NOA Package Update

- Had a call with Communications staff. Each state needs one press release and one COM plan for the state. WO is working on a template for these, hoping to have this by the end of the week.
- Amendments will be covered by the regional NOA. Each revision will have their own NOA package.
- For Montana and Idaho plans, both should mention each other in their press releases.
- Still on schedule for printing. They sent information earlier this week. Project Leads should start sending information to Sherri. She will be out of town the week before we print.
- John has questions regarding printing specifications, but has not heard back from Sherri. John will ask again and will CC Stephanie.

Postcard Notification of Final EIS

- Team feels that a postcard would be useful. Postcard will refer the public to website and from there they can request a CD.
- EMPSi will work with Mitch to get the appropriate links on the national website.

Cooperating Agency Reviews

- Project Leads should remember to let WO (Stephanie and Amy) know if you get questions from cooperators. Questions from the press go to the Department. Questions from Congressionals go to Legislative Affairs.
- Team anticipates that many issues brought up by cooperators will have been brought up during scoping and the DEIS and will have already been addressed.
- WO can write up some talking points that may be helpful. COM plan may be useful to address cooperator concerns on policy issues.

Forest Service Coordination

- Washington Office is reviewing FEIS for fatal flaws until next Thursday. Will work with BLM Project Leads to make changes.
- Madelyn will send comments on all Forest Service proposed plans by COB next Wednesday or sooner. Will be submitting in track changes.
- Forest Service staff are available to assist in Cooperator Review, but they do not have a formal agreement to respond to cooperators.
- BEs under review and will be sent to David. They will be an appendix and will be on the CD. They will not be printed in hard copy.
- Madelyn will send Lauren the appropriate url to use.

Schedule and Other

- EMPSi can be available to help make edits during the week of 5/11. Will incorporate changes from WO, State and field offices by 5/10. Need to receive final edits by 5/4. Then production from 5/15-5/20.
- BAs might be the last pieces to come in.
- Grass bank text changes – Stephanie will send this. “Reserve common allotments” – need definition.
- Dear Reader letter – use June 2015. Needs to be signed and sent to EMPSi as PDF or JPG.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:31 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR-RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-04-22.docx; schedule 4.21.15.pdf

Hello all,

Attached are notes from our call yesterday and updated schedule (note: Cooperating Agency dates are not final). Below is the WO review schedule:

Friday April 24 PM – Kick-off presentation and distribution of materials, including draft plans, detailed instructions about the level of review expected, and comment forms (1 hr).

Monday, April 27 – Tuesday, April 28 – individual review of the plans, SG Team available for questions

Monday April 27 – PM: WY9 RMP Amendment

Wednesday, April 29 – AM: Bighorn Basin RMP Revision; PM: Billings RMP Revision

Thursday, April 30 – AM: Buffalo RMP Revision; PM: HiLine RMP Revision

Friday, May 1 – AM: Miles City RMP Revision; PM: South Dakota RMP Revision

Monday, May 4 – AM: Lewistown Plan RMP Amendment; PM: Idaho and SW Montana RMP Amendment

Tuesday, May 5 – AM: NW Colorado RMP Amendment; PM: Utah RMP Amendment

Wednesday, May 6 – AM: Nevada and NE California RMP Amendment; PM: Oregon RMP Amendment

Thursday, May 7 – AM: North Dakota RMP Amendment

Friday, May 8-Sunday May 10 – Sage-Grouse Strike Team assembles and sends comments to State Planners. Sage-Grouse IMT are also available to assist with concurrent agency comments.

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: David Batts

Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 4:02 PM

To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'

Cc: David Batts

Subject: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

NOTE: The second part of the meeting will focus on BLM and Forest Service coordination. Project leads without Forest Service involvement need not participate (but are welcome).

Agenda:

1. WO updates
2. IMT Consistency Review Comments
 - Key concepts (drop in language Chapters 1 and 2; SFA maps; PH Vs PHMA, etc.)
 - Issues or comments for resolution - discussion
3. Submittal expectations for WO and cooperating review (individual PDF files?)
4. Executive Summary – working on revised template
5. CEAs Update and Reviews – Drew and Project Leads
6. Printing and NOA package update
7. Schedule – updated (see attached)
 - Critical Paths:
 - Final CEAs – 4/24
 - WO Internal Review Draft EIS – 4/25 to 5/9
 - Coop Agency Review – 4/29 to 5/13
 - SOL/Planning Team Task Force Resolve SOL Cmts – 5/11 to 5/15
 - Need Project Leads to be available to work with SOLs on comments.
 - **Action: PLs send WO send a "not available at this time" schedule for week of 5/11**
8. Round robin on status – all
9. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

1. Incorporation of revisions to Forest Service plans
2. Incorporation of BA/BEs - timeline
3. Other

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

April 22, 2015 9:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Erin Jones, CO; Bridget Clayton, CO; John Carlson, MT; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Pam Murdoch, WY;

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Angie Adams

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- ALL: Upload files for WO review by COB Friday.

WO

- Stephanie send: drop-in language for SFAs and associated map needs; language for habitat objectives table; letter template for cooperators.

Meeting Minutes

Washington Office Update

- Communications plan came out and there was a call with State Directors yesterday. There are two sections, one that can be shared now, one shared later.
- Cooperator review will begin early next week. Letters have been drafted and Stephanie will send. State Directors will be setting up meetings over the coming weeks.
- PMs can send email to cooperators with a notification that the FEIS will be sent next week. Cooperators will have a two week review (comments due 5/13). Anticipate having a team in WO to review the cooperator comments when received.
- Will send cooperators a PDF and a comment matrix. Asking for comments within the realm of the MOU with the cooperator.
- WO and Solicitor reviews start next week. The schedule of reviews will be included with the notes. PMs should try to be available on the day your plan is being reviewed.
- Meeting to resolve comments will be week of 5/11-5/15. Project leads should send times they are not available to Stephanie and they will set up times to meet and discuss each plan.

- Implementation team moving forward. Working on Smart from the Start prioritization language; outreach to partners and industry; maps and documents for segregation.
- The Department working on additional language for grazing. Habitat objectives language will be revised to clarify how the habitat objectives are rolled up in land health standards and how these standards are applied at the allotment scale. Hope to have the language in the next couple of days. No additional changes to the FEISs are expected.
- Executive summary – Stephanie meeting with Jim Lyons today. Last week, Jim Lyons reviewed the Executive Summaries and wants them to be consistent across the range and show clearly what we are doing to protect GRSG. He sent an outline and Michael created two drafts (one for revisions, one for amendments). Jim wants economic analysis included. EMPSi may be drafting the project-specific Executive Summaries based on the template provided.
- Briefing requests have been sent, being worked on.
- SFAs in Chapter 1 – introduce the USFWS highly important landscapes. Stephanie will send new drop-in language. For plans without SFAs, they do not have to include this.
- Stephanie will send guidance on the map that is needed.
- PPH/PGH versus PHMA/GHMA – Which terms should be used and in what chapters? No consensus was reached and it appears efforts are approaching this issue differently. Plans will do what they feel is most appropriate.
- Call regarding adaptive management today.

WO Review

- Will use SharePoint site again – Michael will send details. WO would like chapters separately in PDF. Will be reviewing two plans per day. They will have a briefing before each review, making sure reviewers are aware of state-by-state differences.
- Will be sending comments back to sub-regions on a rolling basis.
- Review of revisions will be focused on GRSG portion of plan.
- Expectation that all documents will be uploaded Friday COB.

Printing

- Lauren will call Sherri. We are still on track for the dates. Some issues with the Secretary's schedule, but need to get to printer by 5/21 in order to get distributed by 6/9.
- NOA package – PMs going to Denver on 5/26 to review the proof copies and will also work on other items. Can bring word files as a back up.
- EMPSi will work on 508 compliant document while the printer is printing.
- Michael will follow up with the EPA regarding uploading documents to eNEPA. Could hand deliver CDs.
- NOAs – Stephanie determining what is needed for the packages.

CEA Update

- Working on the final edits for all CEAs. Trying to incorporate all feedback and striving for as much consistency as possible. Will be sending to project leads over the next 24 hours.
- Did receive comments from Solicitors during IMT review – some may need to be addressed during the SOL review. The CEAs will be tech edited during WO review.

Biological Assessment

- Can include the BA or a summary of effects calls and rationale in an appendix. Montana will not be doing this – the BA will be included with the ROD.

Forest Service Coordination

- 9Plan is scheduled for 4/27 in the afternoon. Madelyn will get Pam the Forest Service revisions today.
- Glossary – was addressed last week during IMT review. They incorporated the changes based on Madelyn's crosswalk into the version on the crosswalk site. They are not in track changes.
- Will need to work with Kim Tripp to discuss how to transmit the BAs to USFWS.
- Forest Service WO has been reviewing their plans and they have comments. There is not time for review and incorporation before Friday. Madelyn will work with EMPSi to get the current plans in the documents. Includes everything updated since they were sent in February. David and Madelyn will discuss when the WO changes can be incorporated.

	Step	Due Date	Days to complete	Notes	Included Steps
1	Direction to State Directors	1/23/2015			
2	ADPP Data to NOC	2/13/2015	21		The Pink and Blue steps are concurrent and develop in the Purple/Final EIS
3	Data to FWS	2/20/2015	7	The next steps are concurrent	
4	Subregions revise Chapter 2 with ADPP	2/20/2015	28	Subregions engage Cooperating Agencies	
5	NOC completes CEA tables	3/13/2015	21		
6	CEA Analysis Complete	4/17/2015	35		
7	Direct and Indirect Analysis Complete	3/27/2015	35		Revise Comment Report; Direct and Indirect Analysis Complete
8	BLM/FS ID Teams Review, Response and Modifications for D/I Analysis	4/3/2015	7		
9	BLM/Contractors compile, format, tech edit, and QA PLUPA/FEIS	4/10/2015	7	*Begin chapter 2 presentations to cooperators/WO in preparation for reviews	
10	Consistency, policy and initial legal review by IMT	4/17/2015	7	Key staff sequestered - Denver?	
11	Response and Modifications	4/21/2015	4	processing as available - Key staff sequestered	
12	CEA Analysis Review and Modifications	4/24/2015	7	*SOL can start reviewing, but will not have final/clean yet	BLM/FS CEA Coordinator Review; BLM/FS CEA Coordinator revises CEA based on ID-teams comments
13	DRAFT FEIS	4/25/2015	1	Key staff sequestered throughout next steps - M St 4th Floor - on call/responding	Draft Plans; BLM/Contracts compile, format, tech edit, and QA PLUPA/FEIS based on CEA review and IMT review
13a	Draft FEIS is delivered to cooperating agencies with cover letter	4/29/2015		TBD - April 27, 28, or 29	
14	WO Draft FEIS Review	5/9/2015	14		
15	Reviewed Plans to states for corrections/clean up/Response to SOL	5/11/2015	2	key staff sequestered - processing as available	Reviewed Plans to states for corrections/clean up; States respond to Cooperating Agency comments
13b	Cooperating Agency Draft FEIS Review	5/13/2015	14		
16	SOL/Planning Team Task Force Meet and Address SOL comments	5/15/2015	4		Final SOL Review; Subregional Teams make edits based on SOL Review
16a	SOL comments are resolved	5/15/2015	0		
17	BLM/Contractors make modifications in Public Review versions of the FEIS	5/20/2015	5		
18	Interagency Leadership Briefing	5/20/2015	0		
19	Secretaries of DOI and USDA Briefing - Approval to Print - upload documents to eNEPA	5/20/2015	0	critical path for Fed Register NOA notice	
20	Camera-ready copy to GPO printer	5/21/2015	1		
20a	FEIS 508 compliant PDF posted on websites (documents are made publically available)	5/28/2015	8		
21	Printing and distribution by GPO printer	6/9/2015	19	at the latest	
22	Publish Proposed Plan EISs (falls on a Friday per EPA requirements)	5/29/2015	9	Must be a Friday	
23	Begin work on RODS	5/29/2015			
24	ID Teams begin work on Approved RMPs	5/29/2015			
25	First Draft of RODs	6/26/2015	28		First Draft of RODs; WO Review of Approved RMPs/RODs; Subregional Teams make edits based on WO review
26	Protest Period Ends (30 day mandatory protest period)	6/29/2015	31		
27	SOL Review/Second Draft of RODs	7/10/2015	14		SOL Review/Second Draft of RODs; Subregional Teams make edits based on SOL review
28	Protest Resolution Process Ends	7/29/2015	30		
29	Governor's Consistency Review Ends (60 day mandatory governor consistency review)	7/28/2015	60		
30	Draft ROD for Sec. Review	7/24/2015	14		
31	Interagency Leadership Briefing	7/29/2015	1		Interagency Leadership Briefing; Respond to Governor's Consistency Review comments if any received
32	Secretaries of DOI and USDA Briefing	7/30/2015	1		
33	RODs are signed	7/31/2015	1		Steps not included: respond to Governors Consistency, print/publish RODs/ARMPS
	Formal Consultation for Utah, Wyoming and Montana revision	8/16/2015	135	BO/BA with FWS - 135 days	

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2015 9:06 AM
To: Kathy Mondor
Cc: jfoss@blm.gov; Jon Beck (jmbeck@blm.gov)
Subject: Governor Consistency Review Briefing
Attachments: Gov Consistency Concerns 061915.docx

Kathy,

Can you set up an AD Briefing with Amy Lueders, Brian Amme, Jeff Foss, Stephanie Carman, Lauren Mermejo and Jon Beck – for the week of June 29th (preferably June 30 or July 1st)? Attached is a handout/briefing paper that could be shared to facilitate the call.

Thanks!

Brent Ralston
Acting Deputy State Director (Resources)
Idaho Bureau of Land Management
(208) 373-3812



National Greater Sage-Grouse
Idaho & Southwestern Montana Sub Region
Governor Consistency Review Potential Issues
June 19, 2015



Potential Idaho Governor's Consistency Review Issues

These issues are based on the May 13, 2015 State of Idaho Comment Letter on the Administrative Final EIS review. All of the potential issues are set in the frame that Secretary Salazar encouraged the States to develop their own plan. Idaho did develop its own plan in 2012; however, that plan only applies to BLM and Forest Service lands. The State has subsequently developed an additional plan for State Lands that is consistent with that 2012 plan. The 2012 was included in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana (IDswMT) Draft EIS as a co-preferred alternative. The Proposed IDswMT Plan is a combination of the two co-preferred alternatives. The State has indicated that they will evaluate the consistency of the Proposed Plan in comparison to their 2012 plan, so any changes between that 2012 plan and the proposed plan are potential issues for consistency review. The State has also indicated that there are many pieces of the proposed plan that have been worked on in coordination with the State that they are not likely to object to during the consistency review; however, the primary issues of concern that we expect will be raised during consistency review include:

1. The additional Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs)
 - a. Inclusion of non-greater sage-grouse habitat within SFAs
2. The withdrawal of SFAs from locatable mineral entry
3. The application of no surface occupancy restrictions without exception
4. Grass height requirement

State of Idaho Comment: *The SFA designation adds a 4th habitat tier which is inconsistent with direction that the Secretary of the Interior gave the eleven western states to develop a state-specific regulatory mechanism to conserve the species and preclude the need to list under the ESA.6 This direction was received by Governor Otter, and taken seriously, as shown by its memorialization in Executive Order 2012-02. The Secretary's assurance that Idaho would be allowed to develop its own regulatory mechanism was a portion of Idaho's motivation for creating the State Plan.*

BLM Response:

- SFA designation does not add a 4th habitat tier; rather it adds management actions to a subset of priority habitat to address threats, and protect the best remaining GRSG Habitat.
- Idaho BLM worked collaboratively with the State of Idaho and developed a co-preferred alternative for the Proposed Plan that included parts of the Idaho State and BLM Idaho alternatives.
- SFA designation is consistent with direction given to the States. Working with the BLM, Idaho developed its own regulatory mechanism in the form of a State Plan.

However, BLM identified the need to add additional protections to the best remaining habitat. These additional protections only apply to BLM and FS lands.

State of Idaho Comment: *Donkey Hills, Mt. Borah and other FS mountain tops are not habitat, yet they are managed as SFA.*

BLM Response

- These areas are included with SFA because they provide connectivity with surrounding SFA and BLM/FS habitat.

State of Idaho Comment: *The recommended withdrawal of SFAs to locatable minerals is inconsistent with Idaho Code because it disallows Idaho citizens the opportunity to locate mining claims in SFAs.*

BLM Response:

- The recommended withdrawal would only apply to BLM and FS land in SFAs.
- The withdrawal recommendation does not preclude mining claims on private and state lands, or BLM and FS land outside of SFAs.

State of Idaho Comment: *An NSO with no exception is inconsistent with state statutes because it does not allow for the development, production and utilization of oil and gas in SFAs.*

BLM Response:

- Oil and Gas development is allowed on BLM and FS land with a NSO stipulation.
- Although the NSO stipulation makes development more difficult, the area in Idaho currently under consideration for oil and gas development is not PHMA or GHMA and not in an SFA.

State of Idaho Comment: *A 7 inch grass height requirement in the habitat objectives table will result in increased fire potential in GRSG habitat.*

BLM Response

- The grass height objective applies only to native bunchgrasses, not fire-prone invasive annual species.
- Intact native bunchgrasses communities are resistant to invasion of fire-prone grass species (cheat grass), reducing fire potential in GRSG habitat.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2015 11:29 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Subject: RE: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Notes
Attachments: GBR-RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-06-03.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2015 2:51 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRS GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734
Passcode: 807966#

Agenda:

1. WO updates
2. Communications and Congressional Inquires
3. Data sharing
4. But wait, there's more to do.... Next Steps and Schedule
 - Process of Landscape Report

- Implementation strategy status
- Prep of ELT on 6/16
- Protest resolution
- RODs

5. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

David Batts

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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Boulder, CO 80301
tel: 303-447-7160 cell: 303-652-7047 fax: 866-625-0707
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Brent Ralston

From: Carman, Stephanie
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2015 9:59 AM
To: David Batts
Cc: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; Quamen, Frank R; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; jsidon@blm.gov; Kate Krebs
Subject: Re: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Sorry for the late notice, but can we delay this call 30 minutes? A couple of us have a conflict with another meeting which will be done at 1230 ET. Thanks!

Stephanie Carman
Bureau of Land Management
Sage-Grouse Project Coordinator
office 202-208-3408
mobile 202-380-7421
scarman@blm.gov

On Tue, Jun 2, 2015 at 5:51 PM, David Batts <david.batts@empci.com> wrote:

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

Agenda:

1. WO updates
2. Communications and Congressional Inquires
3. Data sharing

4. But wait, there's more to do.... Next Steps and Schedule

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- Implementation strategy status
- Prep of ELT on 6/16
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BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

David Batts

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Brent Ralston

From: Google Calendar on behalf of scarman@blm.gov
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2015 7:19 AM
To: ssmall@blm.gov; sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; vherren@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; chad.ricklefs@emp.si.com; jmunson@blm.gov; ca.garrison@emp.si.com; fquamen@blm.gov; ssleach@blm.gov; angie.adams@emp.si.com; nhaug@blm.gov; derek.holmgren@emp.si.com; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; lmermejo@blm.gov; meredith.zaccherio@emp.si.com; jarubado@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; david.batts@emp.si.com; bralston@blm.gov; drew.vankat@emp.si.com; mmagalet@blm.gov; kate.krebs@emp.si.com; erjones@blm.gov; peter.gower@emp.si.com; rmickelsen@fs.fed.us; ssieber@blm.gov; holly.prohaska@emp.si.com; bclayton@blm.gov; ksnow@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; gstein@fs.fed.us; jccarlso@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; jmbeck@blm.gov; jtague@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov
Cc: pmurdock@blm.gov; jarubado@blm.gov; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; angie.adams@emp.si.com; erjones@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; jccarlso@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; derek.holmgren@emp.si.com; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; chad.ricklefs@emp.si.com; jmbeck@blm.gov; holly.prohaska@emp.si.com; mdillon@fs.fed.us; akosic@blm.gov; lmermejo@blm.gov; rmickelsen@fs.fed.us; sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov; bralston@blm.gov; ca.garrison@emp.si.com; meredith.zaccherio@emp.si.com; jtague@blm.gov; drew.vankat@emp.si.com; gstein@fs.fed.us; peter.gower@emp.si.com; jmunson@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; jsuther@blm.gov; kate.krebs@emp.si.com; bclayton@blm.gov; ksnow@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssbrooks@blm.gov; david.batts@emp.si.com
Subject: [Update] Rocky Mountain/Great Basin PM/PL Call

Can we move the call back to 1230 ET, 1030 MT today? It should be fairly short, so I don't anticipate this will be a problem. A few of us have a conflict with another meeting at the same time.

Rocky Mountain/Great Basin PM/PL Call

This is an invite to the new joint weekly Rocky Mountain/Great Basin PM/PL Coordination Call. This call replaces the previous Tuesday (10:00 a.m. PST) Great Basin call and Wednesday (9:00 a.m. MST) Rocky Mountain call. This call is to continue coordination among both sub-regions.

Weekly Rocky Mountain/Great Basin PM/PL Coordination Call.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

When Wed Jun 3, 2015 12pm – 1:30pm Eastern Time

Where Conference Call: 218-632-0734 participants: 807966# ([map](#))

Who

- Chad Ricklefs - organizer
- Stephanie Carman - creator
- Meredith Zaccherio

- bclayton@blm.gov
- Carol-Anne Garrison
- fquamen@blm.gov
- gstein@fs.fed.us
- 'Moody, Aaron' (Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov)
- David Batts
- ssmall@blm.gov
- ssleach@blm.gov
- Angie Adams
- 'Tague, Joe
- jccariso@blm.gov
- pmurdock@blm.gov
- jsuther@blm.gov
- bralston@blm.gov
- nhaug@blm.gov
- qfbahr@blm.gov
- mmagalet@blm.gov
- vherren@blm.gov
- Drew Vankat
- Derek Holmgren
- ramiller@blm.gov
- mhildner@blm.gov
- ssieber@blm.gov
- sarah.shattuck@sol.doi.gov
- akosic@blm.gov
- 'jarubado@blm.gov'
- mdillon@fs.fed.us
- jmunson@blm.gov
- lmermejo@blm.gov
- erjones@blm.gov
- Holly Prohaska
- Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov)
- Peter Gower
- sharpay@att.net
- Kate Krebs - optional
- Karl Snow - optional
- Robert -FS Mickelsen (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us) - optional

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

June 3, 2015 9:30 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Johanna Munson, ID; Erin Jones, CO; Joan Suther, OR; John Carlson, MT; Ruth Miller, MT; Sandy Leach, MT; Frank Quamen, NOC; Aaron Moody, SOL; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Matt Magaletti, WO; Pam Murdoch, WY

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Kate Krebs; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- ALL PLs: Review landscape reports by COB Thursday.
- ALL PLs: Email Stephanie by 5 pm EST Wednesday if your plan has grazing closures or AUM reductions.

Meeting Minutes

WO Updates, Next Steps and Schedule

- Landscape report is under preparation by Frank and a team of staff. Will be completed by COB today and sent to Jim and project leads tonight. Project leads should review the summary of decisions and maps for accuracy. Comments due by COB Thursday.
- Protest period is open. Michael is leading the protest resolution task, which will be completed by the WO by July 27. Not much state office involvement expected.
- Stephanie will send a schedule of upcoming tasks when it is completed. Most tasks are at the WO level, but will be informative to the states.
- WO also working on RODs. Matt Magaletti is leading this task. SOL, Department and others are determining how many RODs will be prepared. Hope to have resolution by the end of this week. GRSg portion of RODs will be drafted by a team comprised of Matt, Karen Kelleher, Stephanie, Johanna and Lauren.
- BLM and FS will write their own RODs, but will use the same template. Draft RODs anticipated mid-July. Likely RODs will be signed by late summer.
- BAs are moving along.

Communications and Congressional Inquiries

- WO has received several congressional inquiries. Common request is for the habitat shapefiles. Encourage all states to post data on their websites. Most states have a data link on ePlanning.
- Another congressional inquiry related to impacts on grazing in the plans. Project leads should email Stephanie by 5 pm EST if your plan has grazing closures or AUM reductions.
- Department holding a meeting with industry, scientists, press, interested parties.
- Keep Stephanie informed of public outreach, meetings, etc., especially if the meeting does not go well.

Implementation Strategy Status

- WGA GRSG task force meeting this week will include a discussion about implementation. Meeting with ELT the week after next, which will include a whole day for GRSG. Expect to see some implementation products soon (e.g., business proposals).

Development of the Approved RMP

- Project leads should plan to develop their own approved RMP based on a template. Can work with contractors to complete this.
- Quincy reviewed the BPA and feels that this work would be covered under Task 10. Description of the task ties to the ROD.

BLM/FS Coordination

- Madelyn will send crosswalk tables to project leads by COB Friday. EMPSi can help make 508 compliant for posting to the websites.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 11:56 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; jfleuret@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarls@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Subject: RE: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Notes
Attachments: GBR-RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-06-17.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from our call this morning.
Thanks,
Meredith

From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2015 7:26 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarls@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734
Passcode: 807966#

Preliminary Agenda:

1. WO updates (Michael)
2. ROD/Approved RMP template update (Matt)
3. Admin Records (Michael)
4. Landscape Report (Matt)

5. Cooperator/Stakeholder feedback thus far (all PLs)
 - a. WGA topics/discussion from last week
6. ELT implementation update
7. Other topics?

David Batts

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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Boulder, CO 80301
tel: 303-447-7160 cell: 303-652-7047 fax: 866-625-0707
www.EMPSi.com Twitter: EMPSInc Facebook: EMPSi

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Brent Ralston

From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 1:38 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov; 'jsidon@blm.gov'; Kate Krebs
Cc: David Batts
Subject: CANCELLED - GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Agenda

Due to the Western Governors Association meeting and other conflicts, tomorrow's Great Basin GRSG NEPA Leads weekly call is cancelled. We will plan to hold a call next week. Preliminary agenda items are below; please let me know if you have other topics to add. Thank you.

Preliminary Agenda for next week:

1. WO updates (Michael)
2. ROD/Approved RMP update (Matt)
3. Admin Records (Michael)
4. Landscape Report (Matt)
5. Cooperator/Stakeholder feedback thus far (all PLs)
6. Other topics?

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

June 17, 2015 9:30 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Quincy Bahr, UT; Erin Jones, CO; Bridget Clayton, CO; Joan Suther, OR; Ruth Miller, MT; Frank Quamen, NOC; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Stephanie Carman, WO; Steve Small, WO; Vicki Herren, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Matt Magaletti, WO; Paul Makela, ID; Ethan Ellsworth, ID; Jon Beck, ID; Johanna Munson, WY; Jennifer Fleuret, OR

USFS: Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Derek Holmgren

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- ALL: Review Approved RMP template and provide comments to Matt by COB 6/22.
- ALL: Project leads should review maps and determine where there may be issues in separating Forest Service from BLM lands.

Meeting Minutes

WO Updates

- WGA meeting last week –Probably no allocation or major changes. They may be tweaking language to address some issues. Working with grazing program on developing language to address the concern about voluntary relinquishment applying to transfers.
- Working with Sarah regarding language on remapping habitat. Want to ensure that all plans have specific language stating if remapping necessary, it may require a plan amendment. Most plans already have this.
- Should find out this week about the strategy for how the RODs will be prepared.
- Approved plans will only include BLM plans and data.
- Worked on decision record last week. Looking to get a contract for the WO decision record portion by August. Each plan will have its own decision record.
- Have had numerous requests for map data. Each plan is the source for their map data and should post it on your website. Idaho and Nevada already have posted their data. Stephanie will send guidance on the metadata.
- NOC is working to determine the best way to share the national data.

- Governor's consistency – Plan is to work with states to get consistency and start the conservations early. State Directors should work to determine what are the state's big issues and provide Amy with updates.
- ELT meeting this week included a general status update and next steps. Stephanie will send the schedule that was distributed. It shows the ROD to be signed by late summer.
- Also discussed implementation at the ELT meeting. Focus on GRSG plans, FIAT, and Secretarial Order. Group agreed that BLM/Forest Service will focus on funding, actions, resources in PHMA and SFA. No decisions made regarding how implementation teams would be structured and administered across the BLM and Forest Service. People liked the concept of having regional strike teams focused on preparing NEPA quickly.
- Landscape report – Jim has been working with Sarah and Karen to get edits together. Don't have a draft yet to share. Should be done by Friday.

Approved RMP and ROD

- Matt will email a draft template for Approved RMP amendments. Project leads should review the questions in the document and provide track changes to Matt by COB Monday, 6/22.
- Forest Service not included in the approved RMP amendments. Glen is working with the BLM on ROD development.
- In the Approved RMP, there will be no Forest Service acres presented and no Forest Service lands will be shown on maps. This will be a considerable workload for most sub-regions.
- Suggest having a separate meeting on this with PMs and GIS staff. Project leads – look at maps and see where there may be problems for separating out the Forest Service.
- Numerous detailers will be coming to WO to work on protests. Only one letter received so far from Oregon Wild. Expecting more to come in towards the end of the protest period.
- WO does not expect much sub-regional involvement in protest resolution. Teams will be working based on the content of the document. Questions will be vetted through Michael and Matt. There will be 14 separate protest resolution reports. PLs would like to review these reports if possible.

Sub-Regional Status

- Oregon: Excellent briefing with Governor's staff. Another presentation for SageCon group which includes industry and NGOs. Should have all data and metadata posted by next week. Protest/consistency – have been having discussions. Key issues include grazing relinquishment (terminology); OHV designations.
- ID/MT: Has been quiet. Invitation to talk to Office of Energy Resources – interested in mapping and concerned about NSO in PHMA/IHMA. State of Idaho concerned about locatable minerals. One visit with a county commissioner. Governor sent a letter to two Senators to accept the Bishop Bill which would defer sage-grouse listing.
- Utah: Initially, a lot of individuals reaching out with questions. It has been much quieter recently. Within the next week, have two tribal consultation meetings scheduled. One county has requested a briefing. The state has a group similar to SageCon with industry, local, state

government to implement state plan – they asked for briefing on FEIS. No formal meetings with the state office, but have had a few phone calls. Trying to meet with various groups as requests come in. Trying to get local staff up to speed so they can handle requests from Local Working Groups. Have had a consultation meeting with USFWS regarding questions on BA.

- NWCO: Pretty quiet. Gave presentation to RAC and answered questions. Received a visit from Governor’s representative – they are working on protest letter. Concerns about TransWest and Energy Gateway South exemption and NSO exception language. Have been answering a lot of questions about what is in the plan and what it means. Working on AR.
- WY: Pam has been working with WO on some mapping issues and stipulation appendix language. WY BLM talks with the state frequently. One of primary issues is grazing. Forest Service should contact Pam on how to integrate with state comments for WY nine plan amendment.
- MT: Meeting with Tim Baker at Governor’s Office this Friday.
- South Dakota: Had a conference call with cooperators. Questions regarding protest period and Governor’s consistency review.
- North Dakota: State game and fish provided consistency table comparison which showed BLM plan is consistent with their plan. Probably won’t need a meeting with North Dakota.

Publically-Available Data

- Anthony is leading up effort from NOC – they are posting proposed plan PHMA, GHMA, IHMA and SFAs on national public website. Beyond that, hoping to put links to rest of data on the individual sub-region sites. Have PHMA/GHMA available on Geospatial Gateway, making SFAs available likely today. eGIS will be the ultimate holder of the plan datasets. Stephanie has been working with staff at NOC to compile and send out standard mandatory metadata elements so there’s consistency across sub-regions.
- Working with Communications to get data posted to the BLM public website.
- Frank will keep Madelyn in the loop so she will know what links to give to people who are requesting. Forest Service points to BLM websites and will not be hosting their own data.

Brent Ralston

From: Cundick, Jeffrey
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 2:01 PM
To: Jonathan Beck; Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: Sage Grouse EIS land tenure questions?
Attachments: LandTenureAdj_SG_EIS_Issue_20150603.pdf

The attached map relates to our 2pm conference call for the Dairy Syncline Mine & Land Sale EIS.



JEFF CUNDICK
Minerals Branch Chief
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Pocatello Field Office (LLIDIO2000)
4350 South Cliffs Drive
Pocatello, Idaho 83204

Federal Mine Regulatory Program
Phosphate Operations

Caribou-Targhee National Forest
"Service First" BLM/USFS

Direct: (208) 478-6354
Cell: (208) 709-2027
Email: jcundick@BLM.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Alderman, David <dalderman@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Jun 3, 2015 at 4:26 PM
Subject: Re: Sage Grouse EIS land tenure questions?
To: "Hamann, Lori" <Lori.Hamann@simplot.com>
Cc: "Cundick Jeff (jcundick@blm.gov)" <jcundick@blm.gov>

Lori,

I just received the enhanced map of the land tenure adjustments in the sage grouse EIS. Map 2-10 in appendix A shows the land tenure adjustments. If you look at the attached map, which is based on the GIS layer for map 2-10, you will see that a large part of T09SR44E sec. 6 is designated for retention by the sage grouse EIS. On page 2-17 (chapter 2) of the proposed BLM plan amendment in Table 2, it specifies that "Lands classified as PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA for GRSG will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation gain to the GRSG or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the GRSG. (LR-14)". This section is GHMA habitat. LR-14 on page 2-50 states

"Lands classified as PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA for GRSG will be retained in federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of the lands will provide a net conservation gain to the GRSG or (2) the agency can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect adverse impact on conservation of the GRSG. Land tenure adjustments would be subject to the following disposal, exchange, and

acquisition criteria, which include retaining lands with GRS habitat. Retention of areas with GRS would reduce the likelihood of habitat conversion to agriculture, urbanization, or other uses that would remove sagebrush habitat and potentially impact sensitive plants. Criteria: a. Lands within PHMA, IHMA and GHMA would only be available for disposal through exchange (Appendix K). b. Acquire habitat within PHMA and IHMA, when possible (i.e. willing landowner), and retain ownership of habitat within all Areas, except if a land exchange would allow for additional or more contiguous federal ownership patterns. c. Lands within PHMA, IHMA and GHMA would be retained unless exchange of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity of PHMA or IHMA. d. Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality GRS habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands of higher quality habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRS habitats or lands providing for threatened and endangered species. These potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the extent or continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of PHMA. Higher priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of sagebrush areas within PHMA currently in public ownership. Lower priority would be given to other lands that would promote enhancement in the PHMA and IHMA (i.e., areas with fragmented or less intact sagebrush). e. Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide for connectivity of PHMA."

Section a. of LR-14 states that only land exchanges will be considered for land disposal. I do not believe the list of parcels in appendix K is complete as it only lists lands for three field offices. I believe that these field offices specifically list out these parcels in the land tenure sections of their RMPs while Pocatello divided the lands into zone and therefore individual parcels were not listed. Based on the GIS data for the project it looks like part of the Dairy Syncline land sale falls within the retention area specified in the sage grouse EIS. We are going to talk to Brent Ralston tomorrow and see about the best method to rectify this in the ROD.

Let me know if you have any questions.

David

On Wed, Jun 3, 2015 at 3:56 PM, Hamann, Lori <Lori.Hamann@simplot.com> wrote:

David,

As I mentioned on our EIS call today, I would really appreciate citations to the information you were discussing about land tenure designations in the sage grouse FEIS. Although today would have been better, I can live with getting the information tomorrow.

I found one sentence in Chapter 4 that makes me wonder where it came from relative to this topic, but otherwise I don't know what referencing is causing your concern.

Thank you,

Lori Hamann

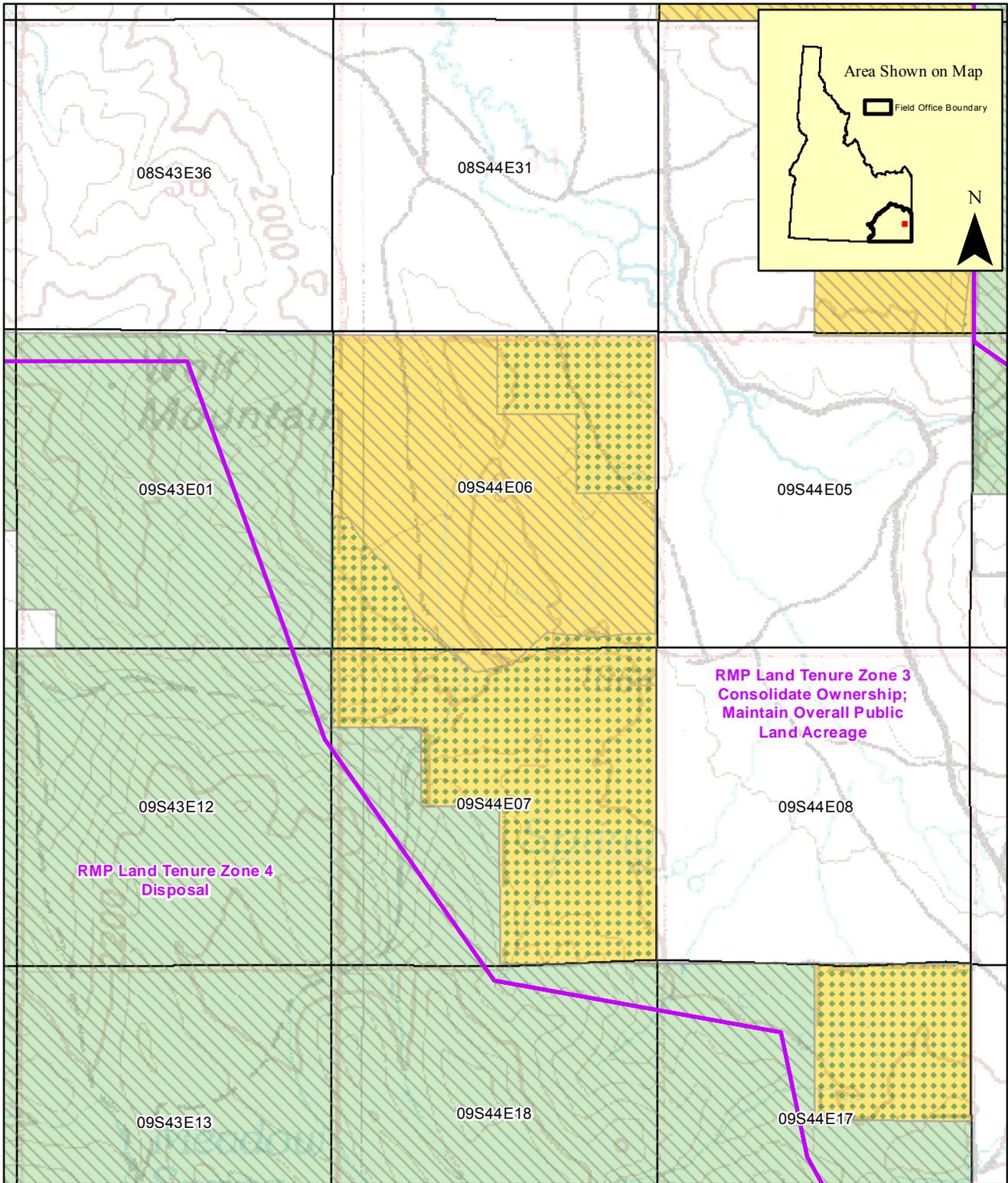
Senior Permitting Manager

J. R. Simplot Company

Tel. (208) 235-5670 | Cell. (208) 241-8484

lori.hamann@simplot.com





Land Tenure Adj. Zone - SG EIS

Disposal

Retention

Land Tenure Adj. Zone - RMP

Surface Management Agency

Bureau of Land Management

Private

US Forest Service

Dairy Syncline Proposed Land Sale

Pocatello Field Office



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Date: June 2015

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.

Brent Ralston

From: Chad Ricklefs
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 8:52 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: Document1.docx

IDMT_PUB_9760
5.1

All,
Please review the attached document prior to today's call. Lauren has highlighted in yellow where BLM is proposing changes to this WH&B global language due to SFAs and prioritization of assessments in those areas.

Chad Ricklefs, AICP

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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 1:31 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

- I. WO review updates

- Any additional questions for WO on guidance
 - GRSG Decision tracking sheet – guidance from Federal Family Mtg
2. Schedule overview (attached)
 3. Printing update
 4. Review of subregional maps
 5. Other topics?
 6. Action Items from past calls
 - Send GIS data to NOC

David Batts

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Wild Horse and Burros

Action WHB 1: For WHB management activities (e.g., gathers), apply applicable conditions outlined in Actions SSS 2, 4 and 5 when reviewing and analyzing projects/activities proposed within GRSG habitat.

Action WHB 2: Manage herd management areas (HMAs) in GRSG habitat within established AML ranges to achieve and maintain GRSG habitat objectives (Table 2-2).

Action WHB 3: Complete rangeland health assessments for HMAs containing GRSG habitat using an interdisciplinary team of specialists (e.g. range, wildlife, and riparian). The priorities for conducting assessments are:

1. HMAs containing SFA
2. HMAs containing PHMA, which include riparian areas
3. HMAs containing only GHMA
4. HMAs containing sagebrush habitat outside of PHMA and GHMA mapped habitat
5. HMAs without GRSG habitat

Action WHB 4: Prioritize gathers and population growth suppression techniques in HMAs in GRSG habitat, unless removals are necessary in other areas to address higher priority environmental issues, including herd health impacts. Place higher priority on Herd Areas occupied by wild horses and burros in SFAs, as these areas are to be managed for zero wild horses and burros.

Action WHB 5: In SFAs and PHMA outside of SFAs, assess and adjust AMLs through the NEPA process within HMAs when wild horses or burros are identified as a significant causal factor in not meeting land health standards, even if current AML is not being exceeded.

Action WHB 6: In SFAs and PHMAs outside of SFAs, monitor the effects of WHB use in relation to GRSG seasonal habitat objectives on an annual basis to help determine future management actions.

Action WHB 7: Develop or amend herd management area plans (HMAPs) to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all HMAs within GRSG habitat, with emphasis placed on SFAs and other PHMAs.

Action WHB 8: Consider removals or exclusion of WHB during or immediately following emergency situations (such as fire, floods, and drought) to facilitate meeting GRSG habitat objectives where HMAs overlap with GRSG habitat.

Action WHB 9: When conducting NEPA analysis for wild horse/burro management activities, water developments, or other rangeland improvements for wild horses, address the direct and indirect effects to GRSG populations and habitat. Implement any water developments or rangeland improvements using the criteria identified for domestic livestock.

Action WHB 10: Due to impacts from horses on private land water sources – but can be used by others: Provide new water locations to ensure dispersal or avoidance of sites heavily impacted by wild horses (Feist 1971; Pellegrini 1971; Ganskopp and Vavra 1986; Naiman et al. 1992) in compliance with State Water Laws and subject to valid existing rights.

Action WHB 11: Coordinate with professionals from other federal and state agencies, researchers at universities, and others to utilize and evaluate new management tools (e.g., population growth suppression, inventory techniques, and telemetry) for implementing the WHB program.

Brent Ralston

From: Drew Vankat
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 2:03 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2015-02-03.docx

IDMT_PUB_9761
5.1

Hello All,

Attached are the notes from today's call. Thank you,

Drew

Drew Vankat
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Sent: Monday, February 2, 2015 3:31 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

February 3, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Frank Quamen, NOC; Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Michael Hildner, WO; Vicki Herren, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY;

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- Wild Horse and Burro language updates (emailed on 2/3/15)
- VDDT language (emailed on 2/3/15)
- Schedule (emailed on 2/2/15; Excel version dated 1/30/15)

Action Items

WO, Sub regional PMs, and Forest Service

- **Action Item:** Matt will share with Lauren the WO's checklist of all items that Frank addressed in the data call. This will help project leads know exactly what needs to be submitted.
- **Action Item:** Matt to coordinate with USFS on their attendance and involvement regarding upcoming NOC meeting in Denver.
- **Action Item:** Lauren will send the project leads instructions for coordinating printing with the NOC.
- **Action Item:** All project leads send their VDDT language to Randy who will combine it and share with the group prior to next week's call.

Meeting Minutes

National, State Director, and SOL updates

- Drop-in language from the Federal Family Meeting is being reviewed by SOL. Hope to release it to project leads next week.
- Also working on Chapter 2 language describing the development of the proposed plan. Will not be part of the drop-in language packet because need to work with public affairs team first. This language should be consistent across all EISs once it's approved and provided to the project leads.
- How to show changes between Draft and Final in the EISs? There will be no grey shading or showing of track changes in the final plans. Instead, Chapters 1 through 4 will each have a section that describes the changes between draft and final in that chapter. We will also have an overview of major, broader changes for the entire EIS in Chapter 1.
- The final list of allocation maps that should be sent to Lauren includes the following:

- New habitat delineations
- Land tenure
- ROW (transmission and major pipelines)
- Utility corridors
- Wind energy
- Solar energy
- Fluid mineral leasing
- Geothermal energy (can combine map with fluid mineral if allocations are the same)
- Locatable minerals
- Salable mineral materials
- Nonenergy leasable minerals
- Trails and travel management
- Livestock grazing
- Maps are only needed for the Proposed Plan; don't need maps for all alternatives
- Submit maps via email to Lauren
- **Action Item:** Matt will share with Lauren the WO's checklist of all items that Frank addressed in the data call. This will help project leads know exactly what needs to be submitted.
- **Action Item:** Matt to coordinate with USFS on their attendance and involvement regarding upcoming NOC meeting in Denver.

Schedule Update

- Chapter 2 must be finalized by February 20 so that direct and indirect impacts can be started on time.
- WO is working on identifying the best time and method for engaging cooperating agencies and specifically the counties (in regards to determining consistency with existing plans).
- Note that consultation with USFWS will be completed before signing RODs; schedule will be updated once a date is known.

Printing

- Group reviewed printing cost estimates. Goal is for consistency in document format and printing instructions so that the printer can meet the aggressive schedule. All project leads will work through Sherri Hendran, printing specialist at the NOC. She will obligate that money through the NOC.
 - **Action Item:** Lauren will send the project leads instructions for coordinating printing with the NOC.
- Not all appendices will be printed (instructions forthcoming), but the printed copies will have CDs containing the entire plan and EIS, including all appendices.
- Group determined that all subregions have remaining printing funds, so no need to ask WO for additional funds.

- Will print 100 copies of each plan. If states have additional funding, they may print additional copies as needed.
- Each subregion will go through the submittal process with EPA individually.
- Will have more information on printing as the dates get nearer, including for eplanning (will likely post PDFs to eplanning).
- Question: Can USFS piggyback on the print order? Would likely need 30 copies total (i.e., approximately 6 copies of each of the 5 EISs USFS is involved in). Answer: This should be OK; will have a definitive answer in the next few weeks.

Wild Horse and Burro Actions

- Group discussed Nevada's revised wild horse and burro text that prioritizes assessments in SFAs, etc. Could be used as a model for other subregions.

VDDT Language

- Is there a desire for standard language introducing VDDT in each plan? Ideally, yes. Will discuss and come to agreement on next week's call.
- **Action Item:** All project leads send their VDDT language to Randy who will combine it and share with the group prior to next week's call.

Update from the NOC

- Datasets due at noon February 11 and don't forget that they need to be approved by DSD before submitting them.
- GIS Data Slivers
 - Slivers often occur as a result of overlaying data layers from different sources. NOC's direction is to ignore slivers; don't need to clean them up.

Brent Ralston

From: Randall Sharp
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:58 PM
To: 'David Batts'; 'Holly Prohaska'; 'Meredith Zaccherio'; 'Chad Ricklefs'; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; 'Quincy Bahr'; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; 'Tague, Joe'; 'Derek Holmgren'; 'Angie Adams'; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; 'Carol-Anne Garrison'; 'Drew Vankat'; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; 'Quamen, Frank R'; 'Drew Vankat'; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; rmickelsen@fs.fed.us; vherren@blm.gov; 'Carol-Anne Garrison'; 'Beck, Jonathan M'; 'Stein, Glen'; mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: VDDT Reference Language.docx

IDMT_PUB_9762
5.1

Attached is the comparison of the VDDT language in the respective ADPPs

Randy

Sharp Consultants Inc
sharphay@att.net
775-746-8791
530-640-4398 (cell)

From: David Batts [<mailto:david.batts@empsi.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 3:01 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe'; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki' (vherren@blm.gov) (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

1. WO review updates
 - Any additional questions for WO on guidance
 - GRSG Decision tracking sheet – guidance from Federal Family Mtg
2. VDDT intro language – Randy
3. CEA update – Buffalo updated per Oregon comments; sent to SOL
4. Chapter I consistency
5. Schedule – immediate critical paths:
 - Comment response team – need to review responses to new direction (DATE?)

- Submit data to NOC (due 2/11)
 - Update Chapter 2 (due 2/20)
6. Review of subregional maps
 7. Other topics?
 8. Action Items from past calls

WO, Sub regional PMs, and Forest Service

- **Action Item:** Matt will share with Lauren the WO's checklist of all items that Frank addressed in the data call. This will help project leads know exactly what needs to be submitted.
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David Batts

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VDDT Reference Language
2/9/15

Idaho-Forest Service (as well as remaining National Forests)

GRSG-GRSGH-O-001-Objective – Every 10 years for the next 50 years, improve greater sage-grouse habitat by removing invading conifers and other undesirable species in the number of acres shown in table 2.

Idaho-BLM

VEG-OBJ-2: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:

- a. Increasing or enhancing canopy cover and average patch size of sagebrush.
- b. Increasing the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal habitats.
- c. Protecting or improving GRSG migration/movement corridors.
- d. Reducing conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats.
- e. Improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.
- f. Reducing the extent of annual grasslands within and adjacent to Priority and Important Habitat Management Areas.

Decadal treatment objectives *by population area* are identified in Table 2.

Idaho-Utah

Within PPMA, increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:

- Maintaining or increasing sagebrush in perennial grasslands, where needed to meet the canopy cover, height, etc. guidelines as noted above, unless there's conflict with other special status species (e.g., Utah prairie dog, black footed ferrets).
- Reducing conifer (e.g., pinyon/juniper) from areas that are most likely to support GRSG at a rate that is at least equal to the rate of encroachment.
- Reducing the extent of annual grasslands.
- Maintaining or improving corridors for migration or movement between seasonal habitats, as well as for long-term genetic connections between populations.
- Maintaining or improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.
- Conducting vegetation treatments based on the following 10-year (decadal) acreage objectives:

Population Areas	Conifer Treatment ¹	Annual Grass Treatment ¹
Box Elder	18,480	53,760
Ibapah; Hamlin	8,070	4,260

Rich; Uinta	143,300	16,440
Carbon	24,770	4,650
Emery	4,600	0
Bald Hills; Panguitch; Parker Mtn	115,230	44,320
Strawberry	8,000	0
Sheeprocks	75,720	29,490
Statewide	398,170	152,920

Note: 1- These acreage figures represent an objective for treatment over a ten-year (decadal) timeframe to support achievement or progress toward GRSG habitat objectives. This accounts for variations in yearly funding availability and does not reflect a maximum or minimum acreage for any one treatment type or total treatment acreage, should funding and site specific conditions allow for more or less treatment acreage than described in order to meet habitat objectives.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 12:23 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: CEA Approach.docx; GBR PM Meeting Notes 2015-02-10.docx

IDMT_PUB_9763
5.1

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call. I have also attached the CEA approach, as discussed on the call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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Cc: David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call tomorrow at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda
I. WO review updates

- Any additional questions for WO on guidance
 - GRSG Decision tracking sheet – guidance from Federal Family Mtg
2. VDDT intro language – Randy
 3. CEA update – Buffalo updated per Oregon comments; sent to SOL
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 5. Schedule – immediate critical paths:
 - Comment response team – need to review responses to new direction (DATE?)
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WO, Sub regional PMs, and Forest Service

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David Batts

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Cumulative Effects Analysis (CEA) Tier II Analysis Proposed Approach

EMPSi will prepare the cumulative effects analysis for each Final EIS in the Rocky Mountains and Great Basin regions. The purpose of this task is to provide a quantitative analysis of effects to Greater Sage-Grouse at the WAFWA Management Zone level. Key features of the analysis include the following:

1. Analysis of effects on Greater Sage-Grouse from threats identified in the US Fish and Wildlife Service's 2010 listing decision and Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report (2013). Any threat which the final COT Report lists as "Present and Widespread" within at least one population in the focal MZ will be analyzed. For example, the analysis for WAFWA Management Zone I will address Energy Development, Infrastructure, Grazing, Spread of Weeds, Conversion to Agriculture, Recreation, and Fire.
2. A quantitative analysis at the WAFWA Management Zone level based on data provided by the NOC. At the GRSB Planning Strategy Team Meeting in July 2011 it was agreed that this geographic scope is biologically appropriate for the CEA. Additionally, this scale will allow the data to be compiled in a consistent format for the Landscape Report (Tier III).
3. The CEA will use common baseline data that is consistent across planning areas (e.g. from Baseline Environmental Report).
4. Inclusion of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future non-federal actions occurring in the Management Zone(s).
5. Inclusion of the state plans for each WAFWA Management Zone (using the most recent available information at the time).
6. Quantification of effects occurring at the subregional (i.e., planning area) level, but only to set the context for the subregion's relative influence on effects occurring at the broader Management Zone scale.
7. Delineation of data and the accompanying analysis will be by habitat type (e.g., priority and general habitat). CEA will not provide analysis for Priority Areas of Conservation (PACs) or populations. The "roll-up" process will address these scales for each Management Zone.
8. Analysis of the cumulative effects for each alternative, including the No Action alternative and Proposed Plan, in the Final EIS.
9. Analysis will use the most recent information available. The focal EIS will use data from the proposed plans of the other EISs in the Management Zone.

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

February 10, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Jessica Rubado, OR; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Michael Hildner, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY

USFS: Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Carol-Anne Garrison

Handouts

- VDDT language from plans

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- National comment response team to reconvene and review national responses in light of the new guidance.

EMPSi

- Review comment response reports to determine which responses may change based on new guidance.

Meeting Minutes

Update from the WO

- New direction provided yesterday. Any questions ask Michael.
- Tribal consultation write-up also provided yesterday which summarizes tribal consultation to date and identifies future steps for tribal consultation.

Mapping

- ID/MT is done and reviewed and will get Deputy State Directory approval today.
- UT is making progress, hoping to finish today and have been reviewing as they go along.
- Oregon sent their maps yesterday but they have some revisions to do.
- Lauren would like PMs and GIS staff to be available over the next couple of days in case they need to make changes.
- Lauren would like a separate map of habitat with PHMA, GHMA, and SFAs, but do not include these habitats on the allocation maps.

VDDT Language

- Randy sent this out earlier today. ID/MT and UT are very similar and both have VDDT broken down by population areas. Population area information was provided by the VDDT outputs.
- Joe was concerned about presenting population area data given that this is a model that may not be accurate at that scale. He wanted to present the data on a statewide basis. Forest Service will be presenting the VDDT by Forest.
- Decision was made to move forward however sub-regions would like to incorporate the data. Some differences between sub-regions is acceptable.

CEA Update

- EMPSi updated the Buffalo CEA working template based on feedback from Oregon. The Solicitor is reviewing now. If project leads have any comments, they can send them to EMPSi by the end of the month.
- The CEA approach and review protocol will be re-sent with the call notes.
- Matt set up a call with David next week, so there might be some additional direction related to the CEAs.

Schedule

- Comment response reports will need to be finalized. Need the national comment response team to review the national responses to see if they need to change based on the new guidance. Deadline is to have it done by 3/27 when direct/indirect is complete.
- If national team makes significant changes, would need to get another SOL review.
- EMPSi will review comment reports to determine which responses may need to be revisited based on new guidance.
- Unsure if Solicitors (BLM and FS) will be able to review complete set of comment responses before WO review, but we will try to make this happen.

Chapter 2

- Due date is 2/20, though some sub-regions may not have all datasets compiled, some may be incomplete. This is a hard date that was used to set up direct/indirect impacts timeframe. If you cannot make 2/20 date, ensure clear/effective communication of information. Do not piecemeal the transfer of Chapter 2. Instead, look into breaking it into bigger segments, such as all the text and then all the data.
- Expectation is that the ADPP will be done by 2/20, not necessarily all of Chapter 2. Need to make sure everything necessary for analysis is ready by that date.

Chapter 1

- Lauren is working to develop a Chapter 1 template that the other sub-regions can use. The Chapter 1 template for the DEIS focused on the DEIS but now needs to be tailored to the FEIS. Also need consistent discussion of the COT, BER, and other guiding documents.

Conservation in Brief

- Summary that addresses each threat and how alleviated in proposed plan. This will go in RODs.

Printing

- Sub-regions should coordinate with Sherry regarding their printing needs.
- Lauren will forward the list from Sherry of what she needs from each sub-region.

Executive Summary

- Michael is working on the template.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 11:52 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Cc: Uriarte, Alex; Joshua Sidon
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2015-02-17.docx

IDMT_PUB_9765
5.1

Good morning,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 3:28 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
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877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

1. WO review updates
 - Any additional questions for WO on guidance
2. Coordination and incorporation of socioeconomic analysis
3. Schedule – immediate critical paths:
 - Submit data to NOC (due 2/13) – Complete (verify)
 - Comment response team – Carol-Anne pulling together the team and approach
 - Update Chapter 2 (due 2/20)
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis (3/27)
4. Other topics?
5. Action Items from past calls

WO, Sub regional PMs, and Forest Service

- National comment response team to reconvene and review national responses in light of the new guidance.

EMPSi

- Review comment response reports to determine which responses may change based on new guidance.

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

February 17, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Frank Quamen, NOC; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

ICF: Alex Uriarte

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Alex send Lauren list of socioeconomic analysis questions by Friday.
- Lauren: follow up regarding consistent FIAT appendix.
- Lauren and Carol-Anne: Coordinate to reconvene the national comment response team.
- Madelyn: coordinate with Rob Mickelsen regarding consistent VDDT appendix.

Meeting Minutes

Questions on National Guidance

- Drop-in language should be used verbatim. Subregions should consolidate similar or related management together.

Coordination and Incorporation of Socioeconomic Analysis

- Similar to the process for the DEIS, ICF will be asking various resource specialists for their input regarding the socioeconomic analysis. Alex will be developing a list of questions that he will send to Lauren by the end of this week. Since the schedule is tight, will need to make sure ICF can work closely with specialists and that the document is consistent throughout.
- There are 37 resource areas among the 5 EISs.
- The socioeconomic impacts will be prepared concurrent with the other direct/indirect impacts. Their work should not be too complicated since the model is already set up, just depends how different the proposed plan is from the preferred alternative. What took time for the DEIS was understanding the nuances between alternatives.
- Subregional project leads should be Alex's first point of contact on the sub-regional level.
- Will determine timeframes next week.

Critical Path: Data to the NOC

- NOC has all data for NV/CA and OR.
- Have most of ID/MT – waiting on two data layers needing Forest Service input. Forest Service will be resolving issues today.
- UT – Lauren and Forest Service are reviewing right now.
- Hope to have all GBR submitted by COB today. Lauren would like to be involved with any QA/QC issues. Frank has a google tracking sheet so all call see the current status.

Critical Path: Comment Response Team

- Lauren and others will talk offline to determine when the national comment team will reconvene.

Critical Path: Chapter 2

- Subregions would like consistent appendices for the FIAT and VDDT. Lauren will follow up regarding the FIAT appendix.
- VDDT appendix: Will not likely need a unique VDDT appendix for each sub-region as the methodology was standardized for the FEIS. Madelyn will follow up with Rob.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 9:24 AM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2015-02-24.docx

IDMT_PUB_9765
5.1

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Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 3:58 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday (2/17) at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

- I. WO updates - Michael

2. CEAs:
 - Review process and timeline – Drew
 - SOL input on Buffalo
3. Need for Logos on maps – question from BLM GIS staff (takes time)
4. Vegetation inventory and vegetation objectives – Quincy
5. Comment response update – Carol-Anne
6. Schedule – immediate critical paths:
 - Updated Chapter 2 (due 2/20)
 - NOC completes CEA tables – 3/13
 - Comment response – 3/20
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
7. Other topics?
8. Action Items from past calls

WO, Sub regional PMs, and Forest Service

- Alex send Lauren list of socioeconomic analysis questions by Friday.
- Lauren: follow up regarding consistent FIAT appendix.
- Lauren and Carol-Anne: Coordinate to reconvene the national comment response team.
- Madelyn: coordinate with Rob Mickelsen regarding consistent VDDT appendix.**EMPSi**

David Batts

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Bringing clarity to the complex™

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

February 24, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Paul Makela, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Stephanie Carman, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY; Vicki Herren, NOC; Frank Quamen, NOC; Sarah Shattuck, SOL

USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Carol-Anne Garrison

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Vicki: Create an appendix for the disturbance caps guidance.
- ALL: Submit ADPP and other requested materials by Friday.
- Lauren: Send socioeconomic questions to the team.

EMPSi

- Drew: Work on CEA timeline and coordinate with project leads.
- Carol-Annie: Coordinate with EMPSi PMs to update the comment responses.

Meeting Minutes

WO Update

- Thanks to all for helping to get data to USFWS.
- There will be a call with state directors later today regarding Chapter 2. Everyone should focus now on meeting with state partners, local USFWS, and Governor's office about ADPP. Subregions should not yet discuss the ADPP with counties or tribes.
- WO is working on some guidance for outreach to be conducted, likely starting the second week of March. This would include outreach to counties and tribes. All outreach would occur concurrently. This will also be a key time to be briefing internally, reaching out to WO programs to discuss some of the key issues.
- Schedule has not changed. Subregions voiced concerns about getting GIS calculations and impact analysis completed on time.
- WO is asking for early review copies of ADPPs, RDFs, Adaptive Management, Monitoring, Mitigation – they will send a list of what they want to see. Subregions do not need their GIS completed for this submittal. They would like to see these ASAP, hopefully by this Friday. They

are doing coordination with ICF regarding socioeconomic analysis and Forest Service regarding the Biological Assessment.

- WO is also working on scheduling their FEIS reviews over a two week window. They anticipate spending ½ day to review each plan and compiling WO comments during that time. They will let everyone know of the proposed schedule so key staff can be available for questions. With only 2 days to respond, WO does not anticipate many changes and will be focused on the most critical issues.
- WO will also need to coordinate with Forest Service reviews.
- Guidance – guidance is mostly final but they did hear about two issues from USFWS – 1) land tenure, doesn't affect Great Basin; and 2) prescribed fire drop-in language – there will probably be a minor edit.
- USGS buffers: there is some confusion about how these will be applied. They will not be applied as allocation decisions, but instead will be applied at the implementation stage. Subregions should not map these or provide quantitative analysis in the FEIS. Instead, the buffers should be discussed qualitatively in the analysis. If a subregion has other allocation-level buffers, that is fine.
- Stephanie will be developing a webinar to clarify this.
- Attachment 5 goes into the FEIS as an appendix.
- Disturbance caps: for implementation, BLM is cross-walking the list of disturbances with the six USGS categories. Vicki Herren will work to adapt the disturbance caps guidance into an appendix.
- Vegetation objectives guidance and grazing authorizations guidance will not be appendices.
- Monitoring Framework stands alone and no changes anticipated.

CEAs

- Have been working on how the review process will work, especially on BLM's side. Management Zone (MZ) reviewers will only have a 3-day review period. Goal is to have BLM project lead and Forest Service review the CEA and send comments to the MZ lead reviewer. The MZ lead reviewer will then vet the comments and compile them into one comment form. This will help to ensure consistency and to simplify the process, as well as reducing conflicts.
- For example, MZ IV includes Idaho, NV, and UT. MZ lead reviewer is Jon Beck. Quincy, Lauren, and the Forest Service will review their CEAs and send comments to Jon.
- Would like to stagger review of CEAs as much as possible. Drew is working on a schedule of when each CEAs will be ready for BLM/Forest Service review.
- Will need to carry forward cumulative analysis for other resources and the FEIS will include the cumulative analysis for GRS that was in the DEIS.
- Buffalo CEA – getting final comments from the Rocky Mountain Region. EMPSi will make appropriate edits to all CEA templates. Anticipate receiving SOL comments by end of this week. By end of next week, will have SOL changes incorporated into other CEA templates. Will send everyone a copy of Buffalo.
- Drew will reach out to project leads and MZ reviewers to discuss the scope of their review and answer questions.

Logos

- GIS staff were wondering if maps need to have BLM and Forest Service logos. Group decided that maps will have logos, the disclaimer, and the name of the document on them.

Vegetation Inventory and Vegetation Objectives

- Utah received comments on their DEIS requesting information related to how much GRSG habitat is/is not meeting Connelly standards. They don't have that information in Utah. Without this baseline, this would seem to make impacts analysis very challenging. Does anyone else have these data or have surrogate data?
- Forest Service does not identify where meeting/not meeting. Their analysis examines the potential for changes across allotments. They assume, if they are meeting, there is no change. Will talk qualitatively about changes where they are not meeting.

Comment Response Update

- The national response team had a call and reviewed some of the responses. Carol-Anne will be updating the national responses per the new guidance. She will work with EMPSi PMs to review local comment responses to make sure they are updated with Proposed Plans. Hoping to have all comment response reports final by 3/20. EMPSi will try to make first stab at responses for BLM review.

Schedule – Critical Paths

- Send Chapter 2 pieces to Lauren who will coordinate submittal to WO.

Other

- Socioeconomic questions – Lauren will send them.
- Lauren send the FIAT introduction for subregions to include.
- VDDT – Rob is working on it.

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: IDMT_PUB_9768
5.1 Wednesday, February 04, 2015 12:35 PM
To: Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado; jmbeck@blm.gov; Brent Ralston; Quincy Bahr
Cc: Matthew Magaletti; lwesch@blm.gov; fquamen@blm.gov
Subject: Additional Direction on GIS Data

Hi All –

A few questions concerning designated corridors, wind, solar, and the ROWs data layers have emerged from a number of GIS specialists. This e-mail is intended to provide further direction and clarification to all of the GIS specialists as they are completing the CEA data layers to send to the NOC.

1. Should the existing designated corridors be shown as “open” on the wind and solar GIS data layers? **Response: NO. The wind and solar data layers should be shown purely as an exclusion or avoidance areas.**
2. Should the ROW data layer (displaying the High Voltage Transmission Lines and Major Pipelines) show the existing designated corridors as “open”? **Response: YES. The ROW data layer should include the existing designated corridor data and show those linear features as “open”.**

If there are any questions concerning this direction, please give me a call.

Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin GRSG Project Manager
BLM Nevada State Office
775 861-6580 (Office)
775 223-2770 (Cell)

Brent Ralston

From: Adamski, Joseph
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 11:49 AM
To: Brad Jessop; jacqueline.b.cupples@state.or.us; Jason Vernon; Richard White; Aaron Roth; Alan Crouch; Andrew Daniels; Anne Halford; arik jorgensen; Bradley Washa; Brandon Knapton; Brent Ralston; Brian Watts; caine daugherty; Casey Burns; Casey O'Connor; Chad Lewis; Chad Rott; Chris Colt; Chris Munday; Coreen Francis; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Deb Koziol; Derek Messmer; Dominika Lepak; Don Kemner; Donald Major; Douglas Havlina; Douglas Kile; Elena Shaw; Erin McConnell; Ethan Ellsworth; Glen Burkhardt; Greg Emerson; James (Chris) Bryan; James P -FS Tucker; Jamie Jasmine; Jason Pyron; Jason Wright; Jay Martini; Jeffery Foss; Jeremy Bisson; Jeremy Maestas; Jesse German; Johanna Munson; Jordan Adams; Joseph Adamski; Justin Boeck; Justin Kincaid; Katie Powell; Kurt Wiedenmann; kyra reid; Lara Fondow; lara niell; Leisa Wesch; Lund, Elizabeth; Mace Crane; Mark Freese; Mark Williams; Megan McGuire; Michael Boomer; Michael Pellant; Morgan Trieger; Paul Makela; Peter Gower; Ralph Falsetto; Rebecca (Bekee) Hotze; Rob Mickelsen; Robert Burton; Rodney Collins; ryan elliot; Sarah Kulpa; Scott Hoefler; Sean Cottle; Shawn Servoss; Steve Foree; Steven Jirik; susan joyce; Tate Walters; Terry Thomas; Thad Heater; Theresa Burcsu; Thomas (Tom) Warren; Thomas Reid; Tim Metzger; Tom Rinke; Travis Cooper; travis Mote; William Brown; William Dragt; William Lutjens

Subject: No Action Requested: Remapped R&R is posted through SharePoint
Attachments: Comparison Tables for ReMap of Resistance & Resilience for FIAT Assessment Areas.xlsx

IDMT_PUB_9774
5.1

Hello NGB / SSB Team -

IN the spirit of facilitating open communication, please be aware the FIAT effort has received a revised Resistance & Resilience data layer to be incorporated in the FIAT 2 reports. Due to the short time frame no action is required at the District and Field Office level. The new R&R data will be processed by Core Team Members at the ISO.

In addition to processing this new data, we are incorporating comments from the districts, partners, WO, Tech Team, and USFWS into a second edition. The second edition is to be completed by Feb 18. From Feb 19-27 the reports will be reviewed by a Writer / Editor. On Feb 27 the FIAT 2 Assessments will be provided to the State Directors.

Again, thank you for your participation and engagement in the process - Joe

*Joseph Adamski
BLM Idaho State Forester and Natural Resource Supervisor
1387 S. Vinnell Wy., Boise, ID 83709
208.373.4022 work
208.994.1534 cell
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Smith-Campbell, Victoria <vsmithcampbell@blm.gov>
Date: Tue, Feb 3, 2015 at 4:27 PM
Subject: The Remapped R&R is posted through SharePoint
To: Douglas Havlina <dhavlina@blm.gov>, Krista Gollnick <kgollnick@blm.gov>, Sandra Gregory

<s50grego@blm.gov>, Michael Pellant <mpellant@blm.gov>, Kenneth Collum <kcollum@blm.gov>, Craig Goodell <cgoodell@blm.gov>, Joseph Adamski <jadamski@blm.gov>, Jolie Pollet <jpollet@blm.gov>, Dianna Sampson <dsampson@blm.gov>

Doug and Teams,

The Remap of the R&R was computed westwide (not currently broken out by assessment area) and posted to the BLM server. The link has been posted in SharePoint.

To reach the data:

- Open the main FIAT SharePoint site [[FIAT \(Fire & Invasives Assessment\) Working SharePoint Site](#)]
- Click on the [DOWNLOADABLE DATA](#) link
- Scroll down or click on the link to the [STEP 2 DATA](#)
- To download Click on the Download Link using the Internet Explorer browser.
The Data Name is: **2015 New Resistance and Resilience Layer (Remap)**

There is an excel spreadsheet attached to this email that was calculated by Susan Goodman (OWF) that is an acre comparison between the original layer and the re-map layer.

Please let me know if any alterations or adjustments are needed. And just as a reminder- this download feature is only available to DOI employees on the network or on VPN. If any outside partners need the data please have them contact me.

Thank you,

Victoria Smith-Campbell
Fire Program Liaison

Bureau of Land Management
National Operations Center
Division of Resource Services
Denver Federal Center, Bldg 40
Denver, CO 80225

Email: vsmithcampbell@blm.gov

Phone: 303-236-6538

	New Acres	New Acres	New Acres	New Acres	New Acres
RR Class	Central Oregon	Northern Great Basin	Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead	Southern Great Basin	Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin
0	30,146	368,832	580,991	522,761	137,679
1A	21,387	371,898	67,599	1,046,755	243,648
1B	143,894	1,420,109	586,168	741,740	267,972
1C	109,007	1,600,356	1,617,745	95,548	119,283
2A	5,240	832,634	34,616	1,335,332	412,849
2B	50,995	1,409,144	505,709	1,869,604	662,170
2C	434,556	2,087,091	1,665,937	639,835	1,899,554
3A	569	684,967	75,687	876,343	372,344
3B	10,052	1,663,050	142,322	2,859,198	1,010,069
3C	7,853	4,670,712	201,679	2,926,013	1,990,499

	Original Acres	Original Acres	Original Acres	Original Acres	Original Acres
RR Class	Central Oregon	Northern Great Basin	Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead	Southern Great Basin	Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin
0	909	317,406	547,275	468,231	102,601
1A	23,997	457,913	68,005	1,260,983	280,554
1B	149,044	1,690,658	598,876	1,067,268	321,940
1C	121,114	2,033,675	1,654,928	151,658	183,318
2A	117	43,344	8,967	246,575	36,852
2B	6,667	157,703	36,902	86,672	124,317
2C	19,967	179,525	201,208	6,592	68,476
3A	3,173	1,391,615	101,366	1,747,771	715,215
3B	51,890	2,648,494	610,509	4,363,972	1,509,320
3C	436,822	6,163,706	1,650,416	3,513,407	3,773,423

	New Acres	Original Acres	Difference in Acres
RR Class	Central Oregon	Central Oregon	Central Oregon
0	30,146	909	29,237
1A	21,387	23,997	(2,610)
1B	143,894	149,044	(5,150)
1C	109,007	121,114	(12,107)
2A	5,240	117	5,124
2B	50,995	6,667	44,328
2C	434,556	19,967	414,589
3A	569	3,173	(2,604)
3B	10,052	51,890	(41,839)
3C	7,853	436,822	(428,969)

	New Acres	Original Acres	Difference in Acres
RR Class	Northern Great Basin	Northern Great Basin	Northern Great Basin
0	368,832	317,406	51,426
1A	371,898	457,913	(86,014)
1B	1,420,109	1,690,658	(270,549)
1C	1,600,356	2,033,675	(433,319)
2A	832,634	43,344	789,291
2B	1,409,144	157,703	1,251,441
2C	2,087,091	179,525	1,907,566
3A	684,967	1,391,615	(706,647)
3B	1,663,050	2,648,494	(985,444)
3C	4,670,712	6,163,706	(1,492,993)

	New Acres	Original Acres	Difference in Acres
RR Class	Southern Great Basin	Southern Great Basin	Southern Great Basin
0	522,761	468,231	54,529
1A	1,046,755	1,260,983	(214,227)
1B	741,740	1,067,268	(325,528)
1C	95,548	151,658	(56,110)
2A	1,335,332	246,575	1,088,757
2B	1,869,604	86,672	1,782,932
2C	639,835	6,592	633,243
3A	876,343	1,747,771	(871,428)
3B	2,859,198	4,363,972	(1,504,774)
3C	2,926,013	3,513,407	(587,394)

	New Acres	Original Acres	Difference in Acres
RR Class	Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead	Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead	Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead
0	580,991	547,275	33,716
1A	67,599	68,005	(406)
1B	586,168	598,876	(12,708)
1C	1,617,745	1,654,928	(37,183)
2A	34,616	8,967	25,648
2B	505,709	36,902	468,807
2C	1,665,937	201,208	1,464,730
3A	75,687	101,366	(25,679)
3B	142,322	610,509	(468,187)
3C	201,679	1,650,416	(1,448,738)

	New Acres	Original Acres	Difference in Acres
RR Class	Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin	Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin	Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin
0	137,679	102,601	35,078
1A	243,648	280,554	(36,906)
1B	267,972	321,940	(53,968)
1C	119,283	183,318	(64,036)
2A	412,849	36,852	375,997
2B	662,170	124,317	537,853
2C	1,899,554	68,476	1,831,078
3A	372,344	715,215	(342,871)
3B	1,010,069	1,509,320	(499,251)
3C	1,990,499	3,773,423	(1,782,924)

Brent Ralston

From: Adamski, Joseph
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 9:48 AM
To: Brad Jessop; jacqueline.b.cupples@state.or.us; Jason Vernon; Aaron Roth; Aimee Betts; Alan Crouch; Andrew Daniels; Anne Halford; arik jorgensen; Bob Brammer; Bradley Washa; Brandon Knapton; Brandon Miller; Brendan J Cain; Brent Ralston; Brian Watts; Bruce Sillitoe; caine daugherty; Casey Burns; Casey O'Connor; Chad Lewis; Chad Rott; Chris Colt; Chris Munday; Christopher Simonson; Codie Martin; Coreen Francis; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; David Pacioretty; Deb Koziol; Derek Messmer; Dominika Lepak; Don Kemner; Donald Gonzalez; Donald Major; Douglas Havlina; Douglas Kile; Elena Shaw; Elizabeth Maclean; Erin McConnell; Ethan Ellsworth; Glen Burkhardt; Greg Emerson; James (Chris) Bryan; James Fincher; James P -FS Tucker; Jamie Jasmine; Jason Pyron; Jason Wright; Jay Martini; Jeffery Foss; Jeffrey A Rose; Jeremy Bisson; Jeremy Casterson; Jeremy Maestas; Jesse German; Jill Silvey; Johanna Munson; Jordan Adams; Joseph (Gene) Seidlitz; Joseph Adamski; Julia Sullens; Justin Boeck; Justin Kincaid; Karen Rice; Kathi Kershaw; Katie Powell; Ken Ockfen; Kurt Wiedenmann; kyra reid; Lara Fondow; lara niell; Leisa Wesch; Linda Price; Lund, Elizabeth; Mace Crane; Mark Freese; Mark Williams; Megan McGuire; Michael Boomer; Michael Courtney; Michael Pellant; Michele McDaniel; Morgan Trieger; Pat Brown; Paul Makela; Peter Gower; Ralph Falsetto; Rebecca (Bekee) Hotze; Richard White; Rob Mickelsen; Robert Bob Pietras; Robert Burton; Rodney Collins; ryan elliot; Sarah Kulpa; Scott Hoefler; Sean Cottle; Shawn Servoss; Steve Foree; Steven Jirik; susan joyce; Tanya Thrift; Tate Fischer; Tate Walters; Terry Thomas; Thad Heater; Theresa Burcsu; Thomas (Tom) Warren; Thomas Reid; Tim Metzger; Todd Kuck; Tom Rinke; Travis Cooper; travis Mote; William Brown; William Dragt; William Lutjens

Subject: NGB / SSB FIAT meeting MUST DO list and Habitat Matrix Priorities
Attachments: FIAT Coord Must_do_punchlist (C) 02 17 2015.docx; Final Draft Habitat Matrix Priorities 2-17-15 (2).docx

IDMT_PUB_9775
5.1

Hello Team -

Here is most recent information of guidance documents.

The most recent version of the MUST DO punch list. Some slight modification in Items 17 and 18.

The most recent guidance of identifying Habitat Matrix Priorities for Fire Ops, Invasive Annual Grass, and Conifer Expansion.

These documents will provide a format for our meetings.

Thanks. Please contact me if you wish to discuss. - Joe

*Joseph Adamski
BLM Idaho State Forester and Natural Resource Supervisor
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208.373.4022 work
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208.373.3805 fax*

Must Do	Who	Due
1) Present 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd order priorities for all mgmt. strategies and potential treatments (all program areas)	FIAT teams	
2) Present or review new fire operations 1 st /2 nd /3 rd order priorities with unit-level folks (because they are being implemented in 2015)	FIAT team leads	
3) Insert “common to all assessments” sections 1. Focal habitats, emphasis areas, PPAs: how derived and used 2. Native plants and seeding boilerplate	Doug Mike	
4) List all districts within assessment area in a table	Teams	
5) Revise priority areas/treatment opportunities, and associated tables/narratives/findings using new prioritization guidance document and updated habitat matrix layer	Teams	
6) Insert summary tables for all program areas in section 5 (see FWS example below)	Teams	
7) Identify and list NEPA-compliant treatments ready for implementation (can include in FWS table below)	Teams	
8) Include new map of the R/R matrix – section 2 or 3?	Teams	
9) Include map of the soil subclasses – section 2 or 3?	Teams (coming from NIFC)	
10) Include soil subclass spreadsheet into assessment – section 2 or 3?	Teams (coming from NIFC)	
11) Describe how fire risk/threat used to identify treatments	teams	
12) Complete and insert Summary Table (see below) provided by USFWS (FWS comment 1)	Teams	
13) Ensure that cross-boundary management strategy/treatment identification occurs. Certain documents have state line boundaries where there are many treatments on one side and none on BLM lands just across the line (FWS comment 3) (OR / ID state line)	Team leads	
14) Provide obvious biological rationale for proposed management actions outside of focal habitats (FWS comment 4)	Teams	

15) Assess fire ops response time, water availability, and prepositioning to enhance suppression capability. Incorporate into Fire Ops mgmt. actions (FWS comment 3 example). Use Central OR as an example for content and detail.	Teams	
16) Analyze acres and % of high and very high burn probability for each PPA. Get the burn probability grid at the sharepoint, clip to your assessment area, and fill put in a table in each PPA....example below		
17) Name each Potential Treatment Area for each implementation strategy (habitat restoration, fuels, fire ops, esr.).	Teams	
EXAMPLE: Burn Probability for Owyhee N. PPA		
Acres Very High BP in PPA % of PPA		
Acres High Burn BP in PPA % of PPA		
Total acres High/Very High BP in PPA % of PPA		

18)

Once the above is presented, we then need to complete the table (below) which USFWS has asked for. In this table, teams should document potential treatments (any on-the-ground management). Note that I added a “project priority” column, **which is needed to refine our very large amounts of potential treatments**. We will present this table for all fuels mgmt., habitat restoration, and on-going rehabilitation for each PPA in Section 4. We will also use the table as a “master summary” for all potential treatments for all PPAs in the appendix. You may wish to have this in the form of a spreadsheet you can fill out in “real time” during workshops, or assign as homework which Districts will complete off line.

(below TABLE 02-17-2015 version)

Project (PPA)	Treatment Type	Project Metrics ¹	Project Priority (1 st , 2 nd , or 3 rd)	Threats Addressed	NEPA Needed	NEPA Complete	Treatment Timeframe ²	Certainty of Effectiveness ³	Maintenance Timeframe ⁴

¹E.g., total acres, total miles.

²Provide incremental objectives and dates for achieving them.

³Describe how the project reduces the threat(s).

⁴Provide quantifiable performance measures to monitor both implementation and effectiveness. If specific, measurable, time-bound, incremental objectives are not available, provide additional information that explains why the project or treatment type is on the correct trajectory to provide functional habitat given adequate time.

EXAMPLE

Priority 1 Treatment Areas:

- Cherry Creek Leks: Removal of phase 1 PJ within 2 miles of the Butte Valley and East Valley leks (no polygon).
- East Medicine Bench: PJ removal/thinning in 3C areas on valley bottoms/alluvial fans adjacent to East Medicine Range.
- Cherry Creek Basin: Conifer removal/thinning in 1B areas in summer habitats in Cherry Creek Basin – priority 1 because of lack of brood rearing habitat.

Water Sage-Grouse Wildfire, Invasive Annual Grasses, and Conifer Expansion Assessment January 2015
Southern Great Basin
Working Draft for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Review

4. Focal Habitat and Project Planning Areas

- Cherry Creek Basin Riparian 1: Integrated vegetation management around riparian areas and springs in 3C areas in conjunction with riparian fencing/pipelines/troughs to expand the riparian vegetation area (no polygon).
- Cherry Creek Bench: PJ removal/thinning in 3B areas on valley bottoms/alluvial fans adjacent to Cherry Creek Range (bench areas).

Priority 2 Treatment Areas:

- Butte Mountain Bench: PJ removal/thinning in 3B areas on valley bottoms/alluvial fans adjacent to Butte Mountain Bench.
- Cherry Creek WUI: Assess and strategically treat cheatgrass in the Cherry Creek WUI area.
- Cherry Creek Basin Riparian 2: Integrated vegetation management around riparian areas and springs in 3B in conjunction with riparian fencing/pipelines/troughs to expand the riparian vegetation area (no polygon).

Priority 3 Treatment Areas:

- High Bald Peaks: Conifer removal/thinning in 1B areas in summer habitats in the Medicine Range (High Bald Peak).
- Medicine Range Corridors: Assess the creation or enhancement of corridors from nesting to summer habitat in the Medicine Range (no polygon).
- Snow Creek Seeding: Re-establish native plants within crested wheatgrass seeding using locally collected seed or seedlings.
- Butte Fire: Assess fire rehab areas such as the Butte Fire for possible cheatgrass invasion and re-establishment of native plants.

Summary Table (VERSION 02-10-2015 Punch list for comparison only) – from USFWS comments

Project	Treatment Type	Project Metrics ¹	Project Details	Threats Addressed	NEPA Needed	NEPA Complete	Treatment Timeframe ²	Certainty of Effectiveness ³	Maintenance Timeframe ⁴

¹E.g., total acres, total miles.

²Provide incremental objectives and dates for achieving them.

³Describe how the project reduces the threat(s).

⁴Provide quantifiable performance measures to monitor both implementation and effectiveness. If specific, measurable, time-bound, incremental objectives are not available, provide additional information that explains why the project or treatment type is on the correct trajectory to provide functional habitat given adequate time.

Feb 17 2015

Final Draft (2-17-2015) Prioritization Process for Wildfires and Invasive Annual Grasses and Conifer Expansion

The F&WS review of the draft assessments identified a lack of consistency in applying Tables 2 and 4 in the Chambers et al. 2014 General Technical Report. This resulted in different approaches among the assessment teams in identifying and prioritizing the application of management strategies. The purpose of this guidance is to provide a common approach for prioritization that incorporates the “remapped” resistance and resilience categories in a baseline priority for the nine cells in the Habitat Matrix in the GTR. Table 4 is used to refine these priorities with the input of the assessment teams and partners.

An example of a Project Planning Area and the strategies to prioritize management strategies within it is currently being circulated for review by the assessment team leads and members of the FIAT Technical Team. It will be attached to this document when finalized.

Prioritization Process for Invasive Annual Grasses and Wildfire Threats

The prioritization process identified in the following table is based on the FIAT principles that the low resistance and resilience areas with >25% sagebrush landscape cover are a high priority for application of management strategies. This process was further refined to identify the moderate resistance and resilience areas with >25% sagebrush landscape cover as a higher priority for application of management strategies than the high resistance and resilience areas.

Columns for all management strategies are prioritized by proportion of landscape dominated by sagebrush: first priority = >65% ; second priority = 25-65%; third priority = 0-25%. Application of management strategies in the 0-25% category is limited to projects that protect adjacent higher sagebrush landscape cover areas or reconnect habitat areas with >25% landscape sagebrush cover.

Rows for application of management strategies are prioritized: first priority = low R&R, second priority = moderate R&R; third priority = high R&R. Again application of management strategies in the 0-25% category is limited to projects that protect adjacent higher sagebrush landscape cover areas or reconnect habitat areas with >25% landscape sagebrush cover.

Priorities for Application of All Management Strategies to Address Threats of Wildfire and Invasive Grasses			
Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush			
	Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High > 65%
R&R Low-Mod-High	9 th *	6 th	5 th
	8 th *	4 th	3 ^d
	7 th *	2 nd	1 st

*0-25% Sagebrush Landscape Cover areas have significant restrictions in terms of implementing management strategies. Fuels management projects are limited to strategically protecting nearby areas where sagebrush landscape cover is >25%. For example, a road that is planned for a fuel break may be implemented if it makes sense to go through or parallel a small portion of a 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover to tie the fuelbreak into a strong anchor point. Fire suppression may be identified as a priority in these areas if there is a high potential for a wildfire to spread into landscapes with >25% sagebrush landscape cover. Both habitat restoration and post-fire rehabilitation can only be implemented if the project strategically reconnects two or more disconnected habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover. Reconnecting habitat with these two programs is limited to within the focal habitat or between gaps or narrow strips between adjacent focal habitats.

Post-fire habitat that is recovering appropriately following wildfire and post-fire seedings that are trending towards meeting Sage-grouse habitat requirements are exceptions to not applying management strategies in areas with less than 25% sagebrush landscape cover. Even though sage-grouse may not be utilizing these areas in the early stages of succession, recovery of these areas are important for the long-term maintenance of habitat given the current rate of loss to habitat to wildfires.

The moderate resistance and resilience category includes a range from the warm/dry to the cool/moist soil moisture and temperature regimes. Based on local knowledge and experience, priorities can be adjusted from the moderate R&R category and justified in the assessments. For example cool/dry sites in some portions of the Great Basin have the same responses after wildfires (conversion to cheatgrass) as the warm/dry sites and could thus be identified as a high priority.

Feb 17 2015

Consult GTR Table 4 for narratives and scenarios that identify different situations that modify the priorities for application of management strategies. Deviations from the priorities in the **Priority Order for All Management Strategies** table must be described and the rationale included in the Project Planning Area descriptions (including GIS figures). In some situations seasonal habitats that are limiting for Sage-grouse populations may be assigned a higher management strategy priority.

Just to reiterate, this prioritization process is not intended to be a “cookbook” to direct the priority for all management strategies. Assessment teams are a critical component in the selection and prioritization of management strategies in or near the focal habitats. **Also, it is recommended that the Invasive Annual Grasses and Wildfire Assessment be conducted prior to addressing conifer expansion treatments. The R&R data from this assessment can provide useful information in identifying areas for conifer expansion treatments (see example).**

There is a recommendation for the five assessments to identify first, second, and third priorities for all management strategies in or near the focal habitats. Assessment teams are advised to conduct their assessments based on the 9 cells and their prioritization in the table above and roll the data up in the following format for a three level prioritization summary.

Reportable Priorities for Application of All Management Strategies to Address Threats of Wildfire and Invasive Grasses		
Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush		
	Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%
R&R Low-Mod-High	Treatments limited to application of management strategies that help to protect or reconnect habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover.	Third Priority
		Second Priority
		First Priority

The following tables represent the percent of total Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) selected for initial assessments that fall within each R&R category and reflects the latest re-map effort conducted in Jan 2015. These tables help to visualize the percent of acreages in each of the nine R&R categories. It is important to note that the “A” column which represents the 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover is a minor component (about 15%) across all five priority PACs. Given the rationale for implementing management strategies described above and the relatively low acreage in this category, the amount of treatments proposed to be implemented in these areas will be correspondingly small.

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R&R Matrix Summary of % of Total PAC Acres by Category							
All FIAT Assessment Areas				Snake, Salmon, Beaverhead			
	A	B	C		A	B	C
1	4%	8%	9%	1	1%	11%	30%
2	6%	11%	16%	2	1%	9%	30%
3	5%	14%	24%	3	1%	3%	4%
Central Oregon				Southern Great Basin			
	A	B	C		A	B	C
1	3%	18%	13%	1	4%	8%	9%
2	1%	6%	53%	2	10%	14%	5%
3	<1%	1%	1%	3	7%	22%	23%
Northern Great Basin				Western Great Basin			
	A	B	C		A	B	C
1	2%	9%	11%	1	3%	4%	2%
2	6%	9%	14%	2	6%	9%	27%
3	5%	11%	31%	3	5%	14%	28%

Commented [PML1]: The totals in the five assessment areas don't reflect the averages in the "All FIAT Assessment Areas" table. For example the average value for the 5 assessment areas in the A category is 2.6 not 4% as shown in the summary total. What I am missing (math was not my favorite subject)?

Prioritization for Conifer Expansion Threat per the FIAT Protocol

The process to prioritize conifer removal treatments in areas with conifer expansion (not historic conifer communities) is different from the process used to determine focal habitats based on the invasive annual grasses and wildfire prioritization process. The FIAT protocol doesn't recommend Table 2 and 4 in the R&R GTR to be the primary source to prioritize conifer treatments. However, the R&R spatial data can be used to inform treatment strategies to control conifers (see example). The FIAT protocol excludes areas with 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover from consideration for conifer removal as these areas support only marginal populations of Sage-grouse. FIAT directs that focal habitats (conifer expansion in >25% sagebrush landscape cover in the PAC) are the areas that would receive conifer removal treatments. Conifer expansion occurring in the 75% Breeding Bird Density areas was identified as "emphasis areas" (e.g. higher priority) for treatments than the remainder of the focal habitat.

Based on this approach, the priorities for addressing conifer expansion are:

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		Conifer Expansion Prioritization Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush		
		Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High >65%
Phase III II I	Treatments limited to application of management strategies that help to protect or reconnect habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover.	Third priority		Third priority
		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat
		First-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat		First-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat

The first priority for conifer removal treatments is within the 75% BBD areas in Phase I and II areas. The second priority for conifer removal treatments in the remainder of the PAC is where Phase I or II conifer expansion exists. Treatments in Phase III conifer expansion are a low (third) priority.

It is important to identify and support appropriate management strategies to address multiple threats that occur in the focal habitats. Management strategies for all three threats would be proposed and the rationale described in the assessments. The process for prioritizing other types of treatments, for example fuel breaks or post-fire rehabilitation follows the same strategy as for the invasive annual grass and wildfire strategy described above. For example, conifer removal would not be proposed in the 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover areas unless it was tied to fuels management, habitat restoration, or post-fire rehabilitation as described above. Also, areas with conifer expansion would be prioritized for fire operations, habitat restoration and post-fire rehabilitation according to the invasive annual grass and wildfire strategy.

Similar to the strategy for Annual Grasses and Wildfires, areas of Phase III woodland may be prioritized for fuel breaks where they are adjacent to high priority areas. They also may require rehabilitation following high severity wildfires.

This strategy to address prioritization of management strategies replaces the “Supplement for Using Table 4 from Resistance and Resilience General Technical Report 326 (Chambers et al. 2014) for FIAT Assessments.”

Brent Ralston

From: Adamski, Joseph
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 8:17 AM
To: Brad Jessop; jacqueline.b.cupples@state.or.us; Jason Vernon; Aaron Roth; Aimee Betts; Alan Crouch; Andrew Daniels; Anne Halford; arik jorgensen; Bob Brammer; Bradley Washa; Brandon Knapton; Brandon Miller; Brendan J Cain; Brent Ralston; Brian Watts; Bruce Sillitoe; C Mark; caine daugherty; Casey Burns; Casey O'Connor; Chad Lewis; Chad Rott; Chris Colt; Chris Munday; Christopher Simonson; Codie Martin; Coreen Francis; Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; David Pacioretty; Deb Koziol; Derek Messmer; Dominika Lepak; Don Kemner; Donald Gonzalez; Donald Major; Douglas Havlina; Douglas Kile; Elena Shaw; Elizabeth Maclean; Erin McConnell; Ethan Ellsworth; Glen Burkhardt; Greg Emerson; James (Chris) Bryan; James Fincher; James P -FS Tucker; Jamie Jasmine; Jason Pyron; Jason Wright; Jay Martini; Jeffery Foss; Jeffrey A Rose; Jeremy Bisson; Jeremy Casterson; Jeremy Maestas; Jesse German; Jill Silvey; Johanna Munson; Jordan Adams; Joseph (Gene) Seidlitz; Joseph Adamski; Julia Sullens; Justin Boeck; Justin Kincaid; Karen Rice; Kasey Hill; Kathi Kershaw; Katie Powell; Ken Ockfen; Kurt Houston; Kurt Wiedenmann; kyra reid; Lara Fondow; lara niell; Leisa Wesch; Linda Price; Lund, Elizabeth; Mace Crane; Mark Freese; Mark Williams; Megan McGuire; Michael Boomer; Michael Courtney; Michael Pellant; Michele McDaniel; Morgan Trieger; Pat Brown; Paul Makela; Peter Gower; Ralph Falsetto; Rebecca (Bekee) Hotze; Richard White; Rob Mickelsen; Robert Bob Pietras; Robert Burton; Rodney Collins; ryan elliot; Sarah Kulpa; Scott Hoefler; Sean Cottle; Shawn Servoss; Steve Foree; Steven Jirik; susan joyce; Tanya Thrift; Tate Fischer; Tate Walters; Terry Thomas; Thad Heater; Theresa Burcsu; Thomas (Tom) Warren; Thomas Reid; Tim Metzger; Todd Kuck; Tom Rinkes; Travis Cooper; travis Mote; William Brown; William Dragt; William Lutjens
Subject: Fwd: call notes
Attachments: Final Prioritization Process for Wildfires and Invasive Annual Grasses and Conifer Expansion 2-19-15.docx; 2-19-15 FIAT Remap Example.pptx

IDMT_PUB_9776
5,1

Good morning FIAT Team members -

Here are the latest documents that provide information regarding the R&R remap prioritization process. This will be helpful to review before our district meetings. (Idaho Falls and Winnemucca have already met and followed this process).

Thanks - Joe

*Joseph Adamski
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1387 S. Vinnell Wy., Boise, ID 83709
208.373.4022 work
208.994.1534 cell
208.373.3805 fax*

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Pellant, Michael <mpellant@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Feb 20, 2015 at 11:36 AM
Subject: Re: call notes
To: "Havlina, Douglas" <dhavlina@blm.gov>, Donald Major <dmajor@blm.gov>

Cc: Sandra Gregory <s50grego@blm.gov>, Kenneth Collum <kcollum@blm.gov>, Craig Goodell <cgoodell@blm.gov>, Joseph Adamski <jadamski@blm.gov>, Tom Rinkes <rinkes.t@gmail.com>

All: Attached are the final example and guidance documents for conducting the remap effort. Most changes over previous versions are relatively minor. However, I participated with the N GB assessment team yesterday in a field office webex and it brought up a point that we haven't addressed before. Conifer expansion has been identified as a priority for all areas in the assessment PACs where it is occurring in areas of greater than 25% sagebrush landscape cover not just in the Project Planning areas. I don't think this will make much of a difference in the Project Planning Area emphasis since these areas encircle 75% BBD areas which are the emphasis areas for conifer control.

--

Mike Pellant

Great Basin Ecologist

1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709

208-373-3823, mpellant@blm.gov

http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/environmental_education/science-research/gbri.html

Final Draft (2-19-2015) Prioritization Process for Wildfires and Invasive Annual Grasses and Conifer Expansion

The F&WS review of the draft assessments identified a lack of consistency in applying Tables 2 and 4 in the Chambers et al. 2014 General Technical Report. This resulted in different approaches among the assessment teams in identifying and prioritizing the application of management strategies. The purpose of this guidance is to provide a common approach for prioritization that incorporates the “remapped” resistance and resilience categories in a baseline priority for the nine cells in the Habitat Matrix in the GTR. Table 4 is used to refine these priorities with the input of the assessment teams and partners.

An example of a Project Planning Area and the strategies to prioritize management strategies within it is currently being circulated for review by the assessment team leads and members of the FIAT Technical Team. It will be attached to this document when finalized.

Prioritization Process for Invasive Annual Grasses and Wildfire Threats

The prioritization process identified in the following table is based on the FIAT principles that the low resistance and resilience areas with >25% sagebrush landscape cover are a high priority for application of management strategies. This process was further refined to identify the moderate resistance and resilience areas with >25% sagebrush landscape cover as a higher priority for application of management strategies than the high resistance and resilience areas.

Columns for all management strategies are prioritized by proportion of landscape dominated by sagebrush: first priority = >65% ; second priority = 25-65%; third priority = 0-25%. Application of management strategies in the 0-25% category is limited to projects that protect adjacent higher sagebrush landscape cover areas or reconnect habitat areas with >25% landscape sagebrush cover.

Rows for application of management strategies are prioritized: first priority = low R&R, second priority = moderate R&R; third priority = high R&R. Again application of management strategies in the 0-25% category is limited to projects that protect adjacent higher sagebrush landscape cover areas or reconnect habitat areas with >25% landscape sagebrush cover.

Priorities for Application of All Management Strategies to Address Threats of Wildfire and Invasive Grasses			
Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush			
	Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High > 65%
R&R Low-Mod--High	9 th *	6 th	5 th
	8 th *	4 th	3 ^d
	7 th *	2 nd	1 st

*0-25% Sagebrush Landscape Cover areas have significant restrictions in terms of implementing management strategies. Fuels management projects are limited to strategically protecting nearby areas where sagebrush landscape cover is >25%. For example, a road that is planned for a fuel break may be implemented if it makes sense to go through or parallel a small portion of a 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover to tie the fuelbreak into a strong anchor point. Fire suppression may be identified as a priority in these areas if there is a high potential for a wildfire to spread into landscapes with >25% sagebrush landscape cover. Both habitat restoration and post-fire rehabilitation can only be implemented if the project strategically reconnects two or more disconnected habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover. Reconnecting habitat with these two programs is limited to within the focal habitat or between gaps or narrow strips between adjacent focal habitats.

Post-fire habitat that is recovering appropriately following wildfire and post-fire seedings that are trending towards meeting Sage-grouse habitat requirements are exceptions to not applying management strategies in areas with less than 25% sagebrush landscape cover. Even though sage-grouse may not be utilizing these areas in the early stages of succession, recovery of these areas are important for the long-term maintenance of habitat given the current rate of loss to habitat to wildfires.

The moderate resistance and resilience category includes a range from the warm/dry to the cool/moist soil moisture and temperature regimes. Based on local knowledge and experience, priorities can be adjusted from the moderate R&R category and justified in the assessments. For example cool/dry sites in some portions of the Great Basin have the same responses after wildfires (conversion to cheatgrass) as the warm/dry sites and could thus be identified as a high priority.

Consult GTR Table 4 for narratives and scenarios that identify different situations that modify the priorities for application of management strategies. Deviations from the priorities in the **Priority Order for All Management Strategies** table must be described and the rationale included in the Project Planning Area descriptions (including GIS figures). In some situations seasonal habitats that are limiting for Sage-grouse populations may be assigned a higher management strategy priority.

Just to reiterate, this prioritization process is not intended to be a “cookbook” to direct the priority for all management strategies. Assessment teams are a critical component in the selection and prioritization of management strategies in or near the focal habitats. Also, it is recommended that the Invasive Annual Grasses and Wildfire Assessment be conducted prior to addressing conifer expansion treatments. The R&R data from this assessment can provide useful information in identifying areas for conifer expansion treatments (see example).

There is a recommendation for the five assessments to identify first, second, and third priorities for all management strategies in or near the focal habitats. Assessment teams are advised to conduct their assessments based on the 9 cells and their prioritization in the table above and roll the data up in the following format for a three level prioritization summary.

Reportable Priorities for Application of All Management Strategies to Address Threats of Wildfire and Invasive Grasses			
Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush			
	Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High > 65%
R&R Low-Mod--High	Treatments limited to application of management strategies that help to protect or reconnect habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover.	Third Priority	
		Second Priority	
		First Priority	

The following tables represent the percent of total Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) selected for initial assessments that fall within each R&R category and reflects the latest re-map effort conducted in Jan 2015. These tables help to visualize the percent of acreages in each of the nine R&R categories. It is important to note that the “A” column which represents the 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover is a minor component (about 15%) across all five priority PACs. Given the rationale for implementing management strategies described above and the relatively low acreage in this category, the amount of treatments proposed to be implemented in these areas will be correspondingly small.

R&R Matrix Summary of % of Total PAC Acres by Category									
All FIAT Assessment Areas				Snake, Salmon, Beaverhead					
	A	B	C		A	B	C		
1	4%	8%	9%	1	1%	11%	30%		
2	6%	11%	16%	2	1%	9%	30%		
3	5%	14%	24%	3	1%	3%	4%		
Central Oregon				Southern Great Basin					
	A	B	C		A	B	C		
1	3%	18%	13%	1	4%	8%	9%		
2	1%	6%	53%	2	10%	14%	5%		
3	<1%	1%	1%	3	7%	22%	23%		
Northern Great Basin				Western Great Basin					
	A	B	C		A	B	C		
1	2%	9%	11%	1	3%	4%	2%		
2	6%	9%	14%	2	6%	9%	27%		
3	5%	11%	31%	3	5%	14%	28%		

Prioritization for Conifer Expansion Threat per the FIAT Protocol

The process to prioritize conifer removal treatments in areas with conifer expansion (not historic conifer communities) is different from the process used to determine focal habitats based on the invasive annual grasses and wildfire prioritization process. The FIAT protocol doesn't recommend Table 2 and 4 in the R&R GTR to be the primary source to prioritize conifer treatments. However, the R&R spatial data can be used to inform treatment strategies to control conifers (see example). The FIAT protocol excludes areas with 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover from consideration for conifer removal as these areas support only marginal populations of Sage-grouse. FIAT directs that focal habitats (conifer expansion in >25% sagebrush landscape cover in the PAC) are the areas that would receive conifer removal treatments. Focal Habitat is all areas within the PAC (not just the PPA) where conifer expansion is occurring (second priority). First priority (emphasis area) is conifer expansion in 75% BBD polygons.

Based on this approach, the priorities for addressing conifer expansion are:

		Conifer Expansion Prioritization Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush		
		Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High >65%
Phase I II III	Treatments limited to application of management strategies that help to protect or reconnect habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover.	Third priority		Third priority
		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat
		First-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat		First-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat

The first priority for conifer removal treatments is within the 75% BBD areas in Phase I and II areas. The second priority for conifer removal treatments in the remainder of the PAC is where Phase I or II conifer expansion exists (not limited to PPAs). Treatments in Phase III conifer expansion are a low (third) priority.

It is important to identify and apply appropriate management strategies to address invasive annual grass, wildfire, and conifer threats especially where they occur together in focal habitats. In this situation, management strategies for all three threats would be identified and the rationale described in the assessments. The process for prioritizing other types of treatments, for example fuel breaks or post-fire rehabilitation in conifer expansion areas follows the same strategy as for the invasive annual grass and wildfire strategy described above. For example, conifer removal would not be proposed in the 0-25% sagebrush landscape cover areas unless it was tied to fuels management, habitat restoration, or post-fire rehabilitation treatments. Treatments to control conifer expansion where cheatgrass or medusahead is present and could increase with treatment disturbances should include management actions to reduce the threat of annual grass increase.

Similar to the strategy for Annual Grasses and Wildfires, areas of Phase III woodland may be prioritized for fuel breaks where they are adjacent to high priority areas. They also may require rehabilitation following high severity wildfires.

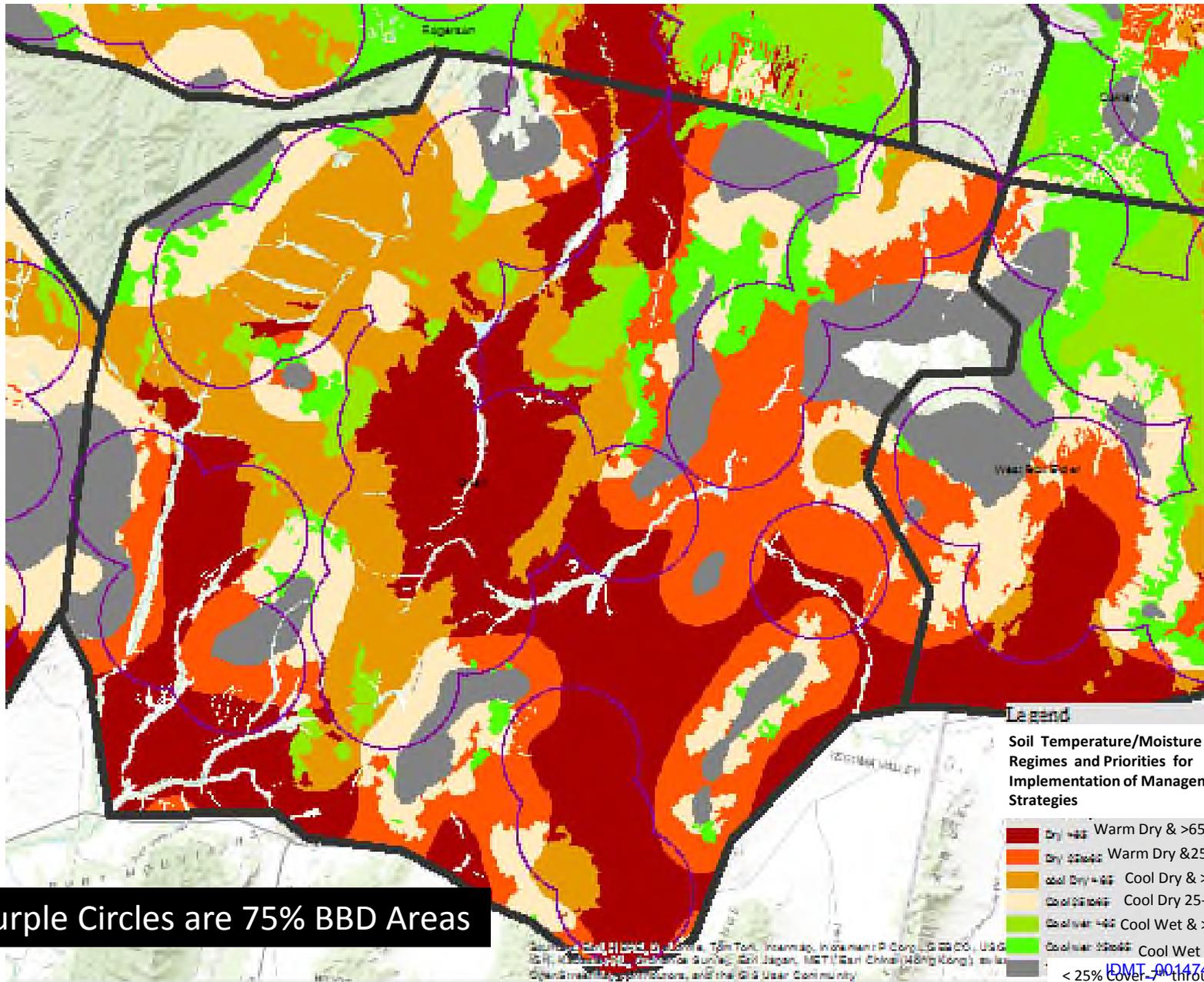
This strategy to address prioritization of management strategies replaces the “Supplement for Using Table 4 from Resistance and Resilience General Technical Report 326 (Chambers et al. 2014) for FIAT Assessments.”

2/19/15 FIAT Example Using “Remapped” Soil Moisture/Temp. Regimes Introduction

- Only an **example** using some hypothetical situations to illustrate application of Step 2 management strategies. This example is more relevant to large PPAs compared to relatively small ones. There may be some PPAs where this approach is not needed due to small size or lack of complexity of landscape.
- Purpose of example is to assist in applying a consistent approach in prioritizing areas for application of management strategies within and among the five assessment areas.
- Approach used in example is to conduct invasive annual grasses and wildfire component of the assessment using R&R first. Then conduct the conifer expansion portion of the assessment using the R&R information to help inform treatment options.
- Example only addresses Invasive Annual Grasses, Wildfire, and Conifer Expansion issues in one Project Planning Area (PPA). Critical that adjacent PPAs be considered and management strategies integrated in the assessment process.

**GOAL: Identify the Best Habitat for the Most Sage-grouse and
Manage, Conserve, and Restore These Areas**

Project Planning Area Example Remapped R&R



Purple Circles are 75% BBD Areas

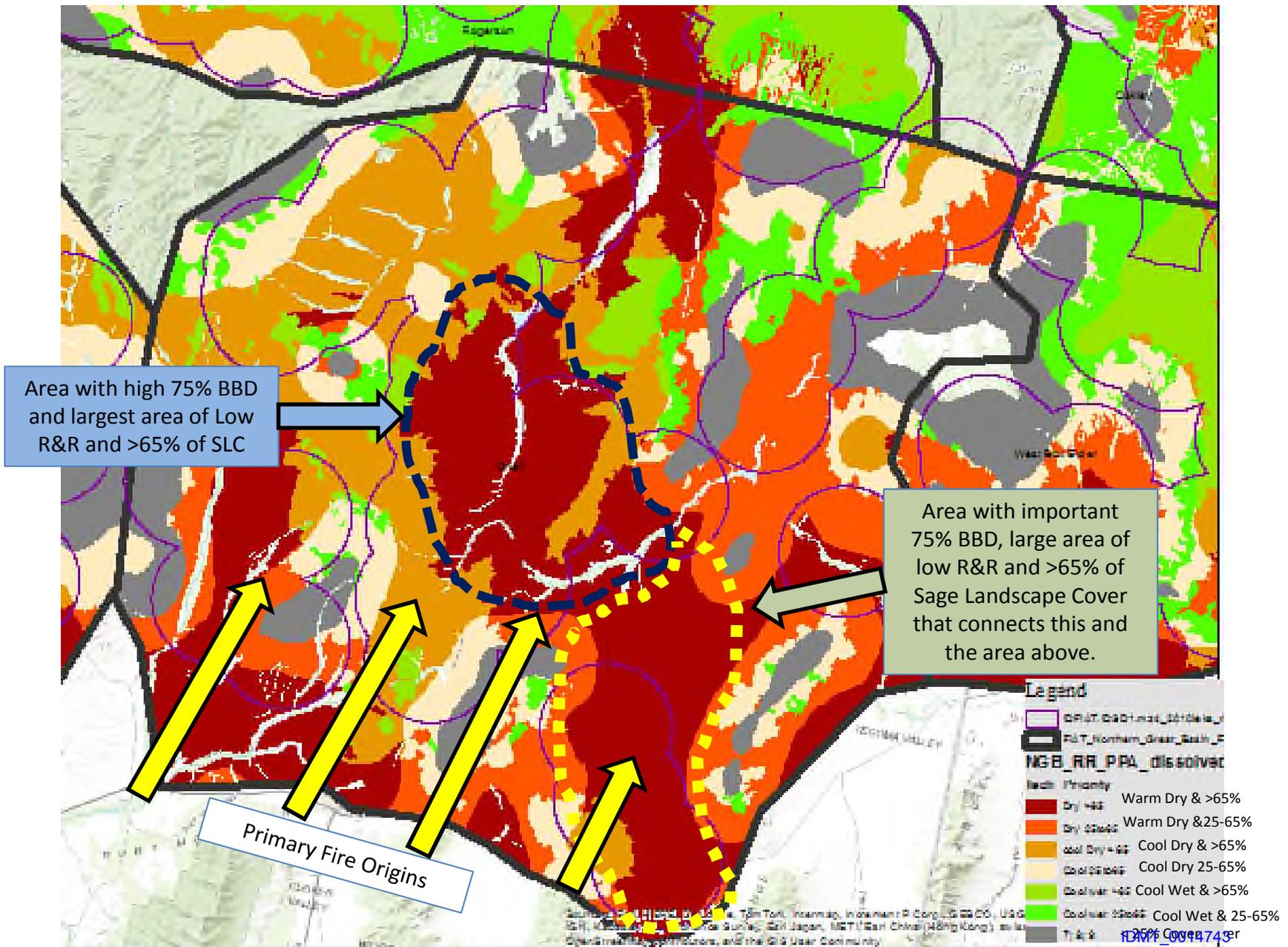
Management Strategy Prioritization (Invasive Annual Grasses/Wildfires) for Project Planning Area (PPA)

- Utilize this table for Management Strategies prioritization:

Priorities for Application of All Management Strategies to Address Threats of Wildfire and Invasive Grasses			
Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush			
	Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High > 65%
R&R Low-Mod--High	9 th *	6 th	5 th
	8 th *	4 th	3 ^d
	7 th *	2 nd	1 st

- How can prioritization be more strategic in terms of addressing the “Best Habitat for the Most Sage-grouse” in each PPA?

Potential Linear Fuels Management Projects Identified by Assessment Team



Higher Priority Sagebrush Habit in PPA

- Highest probability of wildfire starts is along a major highway on the Southern portion of the Project Planning Area (PPA).
- Two higher priority, low elevation (warm/dry) sagebrush dominated areas with >65% landscape cover were identified:
 - Dark blue dashed line surrounds a large block of 75% BBD habitat sagebrush.
 - Yellow dashed polygon surrounds a important connectivity area between major high BBD area to the north (dark blue dashed polygon) and a high BBD area to the south.
- Application of Management Strategies to these two priority polygons
 - Fire Suppression and Fuels Management—Utilize fuel breaks identified by Assessment Teams that reduce risk of wildfire in the two priority polygons in PPA (see next slide). May need to supplement and reprioritize fuel breaks in Step 3 to better address the major wildfire origin issue in this example.
 - Areas in polygons would be a higher priority for post-fire rehabilitation and habitat restoration/recovery treatments than other areas in this PPA.

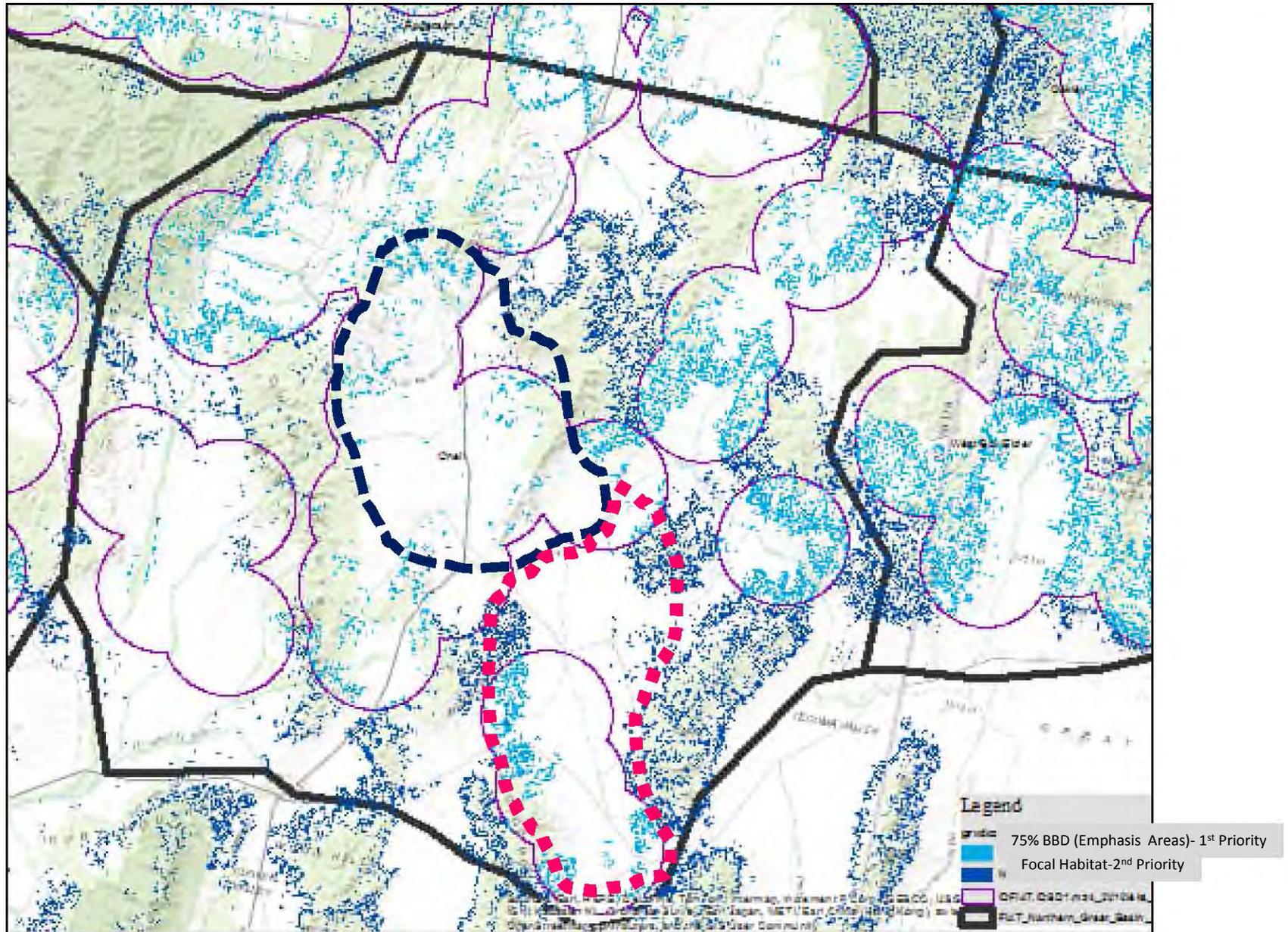
Management Strategy Prioritization for Conifer Expansion in and around PPA

- Focal Habitat is all areas within the PAC (not just the PPA) where conifer expansion is occurring (second priority. First priority is in conifer expansion in 75% BBD polygons).

		Conifer Expansion Prioritization Proportion of Landscape Dominated by Sagebrush		
		Low < 25%	Moderate 25-65%	High >65%
Phase	III	Treatments limited to application of management strategies that help to protect or reconnect nearby habitats with >25% sagebrush landscape cover.	Third priority	Third priority
	II		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat	First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat
	I		First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat	First priority-75% BBD Second-Remainder of focal habitat

- Based on previous slides, there are two higher priority invasive annual grass/wildfire polygons within the PPA where conifer control could be a higher priority compared to other areas in the PPA (see following slide).
- Conifer phase (I, II, III if available) can help to prioritize treatments in that Phase III conifer stands require expensive restoration treatments to return them to suitable habitat for Sage-grouse and are not cost-effective relative to the benefits.

Conifer Expansion Treatments



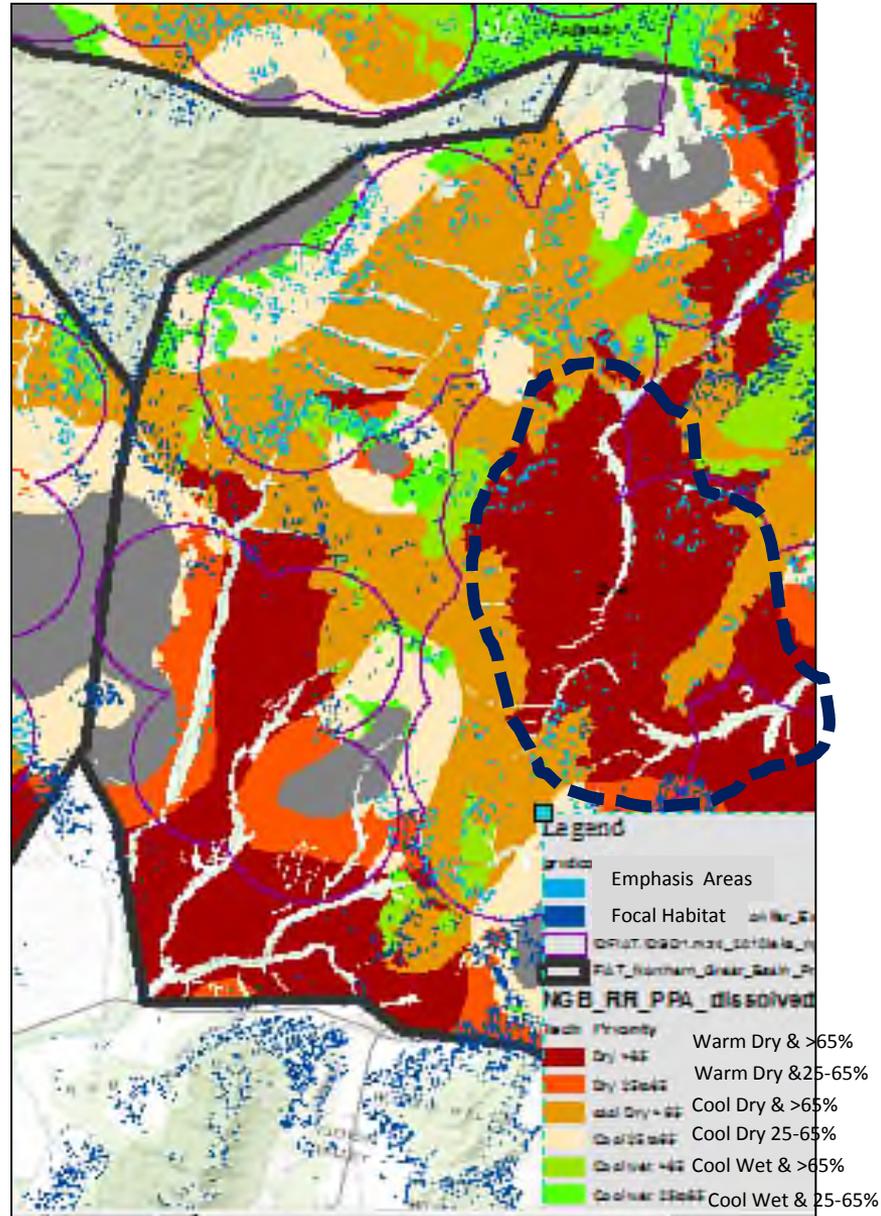
Application of R&R Concepts to Conifer Expansion

- The FIAT protocol did not use R&R concepts to prioritize conifer expansion treatments. However, there is utility in using remapped soil temperature/moisture information to help inform conifer control treatments.
- Treating conifer expansion in cool /dry soil moisture and temperature regimes may be a more cost effective treatment approach than doing the same types of treatments in the warm/dry zone. Surface disturbance associated with conifer control in the warm/dry zone could increase cheatgrass and require additional treatments to address this issue. The same treatments in the cool/dry zone may be implemented with no need for additional treatments.
- Soil moisture and temperature regimes and associated R&R information will help in terms of evaluating the resilience of an area and its potential for native plant recovery.
- The two high priority areas identified as priorities for management strategies for invasive annual grasses and wildfires are not necessarily the highest priority for conifer treatments (see following slide).
- Remember that the Project Planning Area (PPA) is not the focal habitat for conifer expansion treatments. By definition in FIAT the focal habitats are all areas within the PAC that have conifer expansion in greater than 25% Sagebrush Landscape Cover. Areas that meet this criteria inside 75% BBD polygons (emphasis areas) are the first priority. Focal habitat is the second priority. So, it is appropriate to include conifer treatments outside the PPA as a for treatment given their proximity to leks inside the PPA.

Conifer Expansion Example

Conifer treatments may be more effective in terms of native understory recovery and require minimal follow-up treatments in the cool/dry areas compared to the warm/dry areas in the priority polygon (purple dashed line). Habitat response after conifer removal (understory native plants) may be even greater in the cool/wet zones.

Local biologist input into the priorities for conifer control is essential in making recommendations for conifer control within each PPA.

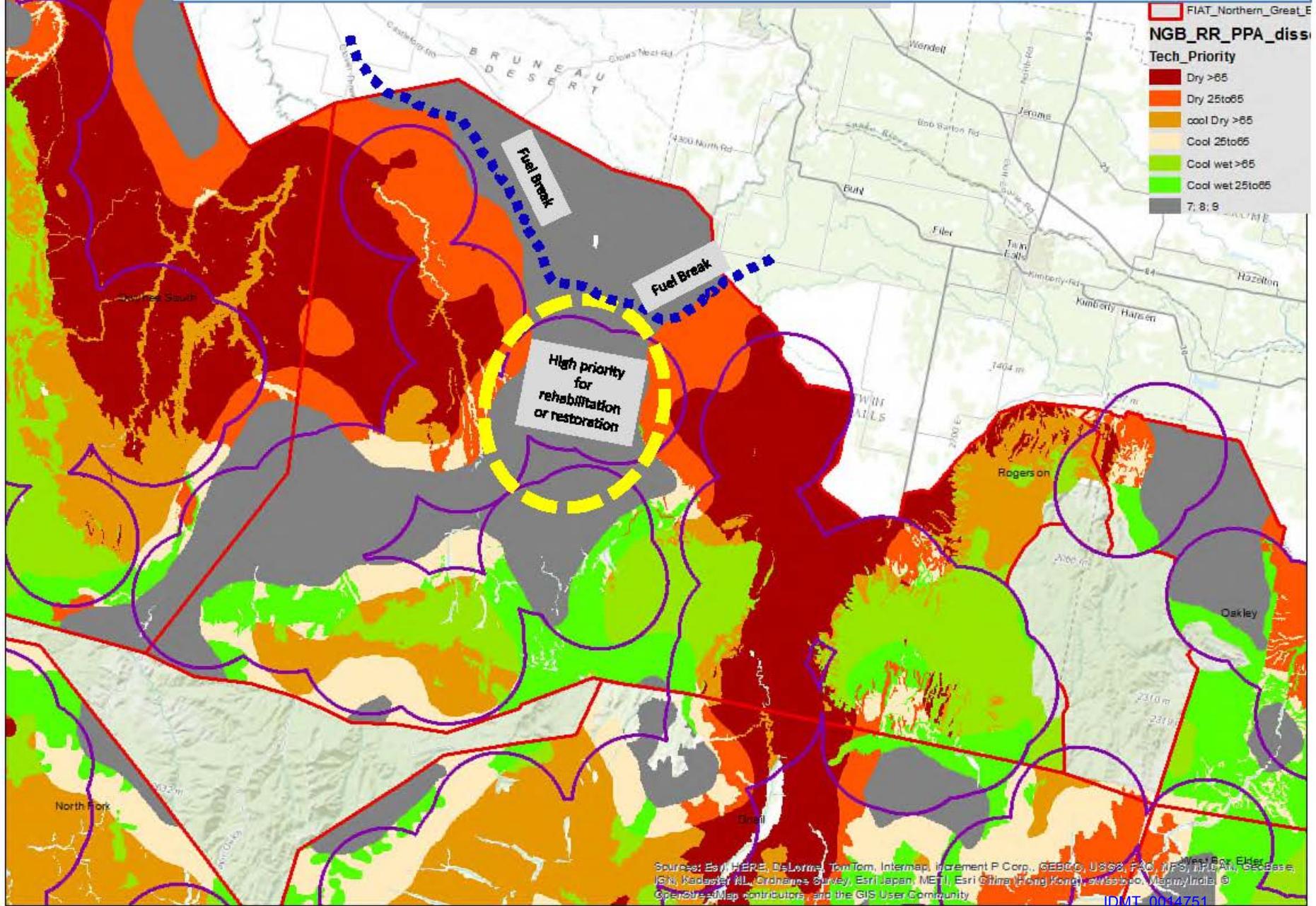


Post-fire Rehabilitation and Restoration/Recovery Priorities Example

- Using a portion of a different PPA than previous example to illustrate application of R&R concepts to post-fire rehabilitation and restoration/recovery treatments.
- Large wildfire perimeter (gray fill on following slide) includes soil temperature/moisture regimes from warm/dry in the North to cool/wet in the South. First priority for post-fire rehabilitation and habitat restoration would be the warm/dry zone inside the yellow dashed polygon. This area is within the 75% BBD and has sagebrush landscape cover >25% on both sides of the burn.
- Cool/dry zone would be the second priority for both management strategies unless there was a potential for cheatgrass becoming a dominant after a wildfire. If this situation exists, it is appropriate to identify these areas as a first priority treatment area as they are functioning as a warm/dry site relative to lower resistance to invasive annual grasses.
- Remainder of cool/dry, the cool/moist and cool/wet zones would be a third priority for habitat restoration and post-fire rehabilitation. However habitat recovery (grazing or off-road vehicle use restrictions) to facilitate the recovery of native vegetation is a priority outside of the warm/dry zones.
- Given the value of this area if it is successfully rehabilitated after a wildfire or has a successful habitat restoration project, it is appropriate to establish fuel breaks (see following slide) on the northern perimeter and to consider this area as a high fire suppression priority.

Post-Fire Rehabilitation & Habitat Restoration Example

Rogerson Project Planning Area



BLM Idaho's Implementation Strategy 3/10/15

BLM Idaho's GRSG implementation strategy can be broken into three distinct parts. The first part is the application of anthropogenic disturbance caps and adaptive management triggers. The Second part is the exception screening criteria and coordination with the State of Idaho for potential projects in PHMA or IHMA. The third part is coordination of GRSG Decisions and Policies with BLMs Existing Plans and/Major Activities in Idaho.

Part 1: Disturbance Caps and Adaptive Management

Idaho BLMs disturbance caps and adaptive management strategy is grounded in the Idaho Key Habitat map that has been updated on a yearly basis for the last 12 years. BLM is using this existing map as the base layer for determining the extent of any anthropogenic disturbance cap of 3% and the adaptive management thresholds of sagebrush loss. There will be one person, at the Idaho State office that is responsible for calculating disturbance and adaptive triggers as proposals are received by the field. This person will coordinate with the field offices, their State of Idaho counterparts and other adjoining States if the calculations trip or approach a trigger.

Part 2: Exception Criteria

The Idaho plan provides exception criteria for infrastructure projects in PHMA or IHMA. Idaho BLM will run the proposal through their screen that consists of the following steps: 1) BLM will determine if the proposal is precluded by the plan. For example, a solar project in PHMA (PHMA is solar exclusion solar). 2) If the proposal is not precluded by the plan and it may meet the exception criteria, BLM will share the proposal with the State to begin their screening process. While BLM Idaho is running the proposal through their screening process the State of Idaho will conduct their own screening process where they determine if the exception criteria are met. Idaho BLM will coordinate with the State of Idaho and receive a recommendation from Idaho's task force, through the State on whether the State recommends a project in PHMA or IHMA meets the exception criteria. 3) If the proposal meets the exception criteria, and the decision is made to move the proposal forward, BLM will analyze the effects. BLM will work with the proponent to avoid and minimize effects. 4) BLM will share residual effects with the state who can determine compensatory mitigation if warranted.

Part 3: Coordination of GRSG Decisions and Policies with BLMs Existing Plans and/Major Activities in Idaho

There are five existing policies that are linked to the GRSG planning effort that need to be coordinated with BLMs existing plans or major activities. The policies are 1) Secretarial Order; 2) FIAT; 3) HAF; and 4) GRSG Vegetation Objectives. These policies will require an update in the Idaho BLMs Fire Management Plans, and ESR programmatic EAs. They will cause fuel break projects, vegetation treatments, any reclamation projects, and grazing permit renewals to be prioritized.

PRELIMINARY - IDAHO SG IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY SUMMARY

Assumptions:

BLM, FWS/FS and State agencies are currently implementing significant portions of the SG RMP Proposed Plan guidance. Key habitat area maps (source docs for PHMA/IHMAs/GHMA) were developed 12+ years and are updated annually. Idaho BLM and its state and federal partners have been working together to implement conservation measures to ameliorate anthropogenic threats in key SG habitat for many years.

BLM anticipates that changes will be needed in Idaho BLM guidance to ensure effective and consistent implementation of plan allocation decisions and other guidance across the state e.g., Sagebrush Focal Area, adaptive management, mitigation and monitoring directives. The project proposal screening process applied to proposals in Priority and Important SG Habitat will be adapted to address key allocation and other plan decisions.

Cooperative agreements/MOUs with state and federal partners, and internal/external review and analysis processes, will need to be updated to accommodate RMP allocation and other decisions.

The HAF is the primary assessment tool used to determine if grazing allotments are meeting standards and guidelines and vegetation objectives. All programs utilize HAF to complete RHAs for grazing permit renewals.

Monitoring/Data Collection: State and Federal agencies currently collect population data to support monitoring and adaptive management programs, but BLM will likely rely on the State to inform population trigger exceedences. BLM and FS will be the primary source of habitat disturbance data, and are in the best position to make determinations related to trigger exceedences.

Review/coordination process: BLM will work with the State, FS and FWS to further define and implement a coordination process to implement adaptive management, disturbance cap and mitigation direction and policies. Define limitations, authorities and other issues to ensure an effective, collaborative implementation processes.

Vegetation decisions impacting policy/plan/project updates and training: Secretarial Order 3336 and planning decisions including application of the FIAT, HAF and Vegetation Objectives will inform prioritization of projects and be incorporated in:

- Fire management plans
- Fuels and fire break projects
- ESR treatments and programmatic EAs
- Vegetation restoration projects
- Disturbance reclamation projects
- Grazing permit renewals

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 1:39 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2015-03-03.docx

IDMT_PUB_9786
5.1

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2015 3:40 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; 'Tague, Joe; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday (2/17) at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

Agenda

- I. WO updates – Michael

2. Schedule – immediate critical paths:
 - Chapter 2 Status (due 2/20)
 - Proposed Plan
 - Forest Service Plans
 - GIS for acreage allocations (all alternatives)
 - GIS for impact analysis
 - Supporting appendices (e.g., RDFs, mitigation monitoring, etc.)
 - Chapter write up
 - NOC completes CEA tables – 3/13
 - Comment response – 3/20
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
3. Schedule and quality
 - EMPSi QA and Submittal Process = write section, technical review, technical edit, formatting and production, management review.
 - Impact of schedule slips and quality
4. CEAs Update – Drew
 - Received SOL Comments
 - Schedule
 - Integration of subregional analysis into the MZ CEA
5. Comment response update – Carol-Anne
6. Other topics?
7. Action Items from past calls

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Vicki: Create an appendix for the disturbance caps guidance.
- ALL: Submit ADPP and other requested materials by Friday to WO.
- Lauren: Send socioeconomic questions to the team.
- All subregions to include logos on maps.

EMPSi

- Drew: Work on CEA timeline and coordinate with project leads.
- Carol-Annie: Coordinate with EMPSi PMs to update the comment responses.

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

March 3, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Skye Sieber, UT; Jon Beck, ID; Johanna Munson, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Vicki Herren, WO; Frank Quamen, NOC; Matt Magaletti, WY; Mitch Snow, WO
USFS: Glen Stein; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Carol-Anne Garrison

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Julie: Follow up with ICF regarding when they need their inputs to re-run IMPLAN.
- ALL: Provide inputs to ICF as soon as they are ready.

Meeting Minutes

WO Update

- Department has convened a separate communications team to prepare a communication plan. Initial focus is on outreach to counties and other formal cooperators. Will be presented to State Directors on Thursday and then the WGA during a webinar on Friday. Will also develop national roll outs and coordination with Forest Service, USFWS and NRDC.
- Formal direction (who to talk to, when, talking points) will be provided to sub-regions, so please don't reach out yet to other cooperators. Continue working with states, Forest Service, and USFWS.
- Department wants to approve everything, including state variations.
- WO also working on in-reach, getting the various WO offices up to speed on the decision points.
- WO have been reviewing Proposed Plans, Great Basin looks good.
- Disturbance appendix is under development. No due date yet.

Schedule – Critical Path Updates

- Proposed plans – done
- Forest Service plans – sent out to each of the states
- GIS for acreage allocations
 - OR – remaining acreage allocations will be sent tomorrow; impact analysis not complete until Monday, March 9
 - ID/MT – anticipate impact analysis complete by 3/13.

- UT – anticipate data sets for proposed plans and associated impact analysis complete by 3/13 (originally anticipated 3/11).
- NV/CA – they are behind because they are revising all maps for other six alternatives to send to NOC for CEA. Then will calculate acreages for Chapters 3 and 4.
- Appendices – important these are available for impact analysis (e.g., RDFs, mitigation) since many are highly supportive to Chapter 2. Most sub-regions are close to finishing the appendices.
- Printing – maps and RDFs will be printed. If sub-regions have others that need to be printed, that is fine, but should be cognizant of time needed to print the document (5 day printing window).
- CEA tables – NOC has been incorporating some changes; if they received all NV/CA data and it passes QA/QC, should be on track to finish on 3/13.
- Comment response – internal due date is 3/20. Carol-Anne will be revising the national responses, but additional work will be needed on the sub-regional level to finalize and incorporate in FEIS.

Schedule and Quality

- EMPSi provided an example of the QA and submittal process, including technical review, edit, formatting, and management review. This process is incremental and takes time. When there is a schedule slip, need to eliminate some of the QA measures, which will impact quality.
- Expect some of the QA may not be implemented for some of the reviews (e.g., BLM may review a rougher draft than normal, but the document will eventually get through formatting/tech edit).
- EMPSi will be clear with sub-regions regarding expectations and what/what not to comment on.

Cumulative Effects Analysis Update

- Received comments on the CEA template from Solicitors. May have questions for Sarah/Aaron, and EMPSi is spending this week addressing them. They will be updating all CEA templates.
- Working on calendar dates for when each CEA will be sent to BLM reviewers. Drew will be in touch with Lauren and Matt.
- Integration of sub-regional analysis into the MZ CEA - DEIS included Tier I qualitative sub-regional GRSG analysis. EMPSi is incorporating that analysis as part of the Tier II cumulative.

Definition of High Voltage Transmission

- There has been some conflicting direction and confusion. It is important that we have a consistent definition of what a high voltage transmission line is across all sub-regions. Likely this threshold will be 100-kV.

Other

- Team is unclear when ICF needs their socioeconomic inputs. Julie will follow up with ICF regarding this. Sub-regions should provide the inputs as soon as they are ready. Input for socioeconomic relies on the output from other resources, so delays will trickle down.

- Idaho tripped hard trigger in Owyhee where it abuts Oregon. WO had an extensive discussion with the Solicitors and Department and will meet with Steve Ellis to talk about it. Some concern about tripping triggers that aren't yet triggers (plans not finalized). Hold off on analysis right now while they discuss legal/policy ramifications.
- Lauren and Matt will discuss merging this call with the Rocky Mountain Region's weekly call.

Brent Ralston

From: Holly Prohaska
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 4:48 PM
To: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Subject: RE: GRSJ joint GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds
Attachments: GBR and RMR PM Meeting Notes 20150311.docx

Good afternoon—Attached are the draft notes from today's call. Please email me any changes/ comments.

Respectfully,
Holly Prohaska

Holly Prohaska
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 1:55 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRSJ joint GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

NOTE – New call in information:

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

Agenda:

1. Confirm day and time for the call
2. WO updates – Michael
 - Response to WO input (Friday)
3. Coordination with FWS and State
4. Need for a dear reader letter and executive summary template for amendments
5. Glossary and references
 - New references and terms - incorporation in appropriate chapters and appendices.
6. Schedule –
 - Reminder of upcoming critical paths:
 - Chapter 2 (due 2/20)
 - NOC completes CEA tables – 3/13
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
 - Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
 - Round robin on status – all
7. CEAs Update – Drew
 - Changes to template from internal review of Buffalo CEA
 - Net Conservation Gain. Should we drop this concept from the CEAs or will a definition be created in time?
 - CEA WebEx. Confirm March 25 date for this WebEx.
8. Comment response update – Carol-Anne
9. Other topics?
10. Action Items from past calls

David Batts

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

March 11, 2015 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM:

CO: Erin Jones, Bridget Clayton;

ID: Jon Beck;

MT: John Thompson, Ruth Miller

NOC: Frank Quamen;

NV: Lauren Mermejo, Randy Sharp;

OR: Joan Suther, OR;

SOL: Aaron Moody, SOL; Sarah Shattuck, SOL;

UT: Quincy Bahr, Skye Sieber;

WO: Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow

WY: Matt Magaletti; Pam Young

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Drew Vankat; Meredith Zaccherio

Action Items

WO

- Stephanie will review NTT guidance and follow up with group on RDF direction.
- WO developing definition for net conservation gain.
- WO will provide briefing schedule on the 6 revisions (Buffalo, etc.).
- Stephanie will follow up with group on what can be shared and with USFWS and the states by the end of the week.
- WO will draft dear reader letter (s).
- Vicki will provide guidance on Vegetation objectives/standards/ etc.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- If questions on WO input on ADPPs please call Michael or Stephanie. PMs should send back table to WO with responses to comments by this Friday (03/13).
- All references and acronyms from main document and appendices should be put in their respective chapters in the main document.
- David and Lauren to check FFM notes and get back to group on PPH/PGH to PHMA/GHMA guidance.
- Idaho BSU definition will be provided to the other subregions.

EMPSi

- Working on Executive Summary Template.
- Chad to send out outlook reminder about new 9 AM Pacific meeting time.

- David and Lauren to check FFM notes and get back to group on PPH/PGH to PHMA/GHMA guidance.

Meeting Minutes

Confirm day and time for the call

- -Change call to 9 AM Pacific / 10 AM Mtn./ 12 PM Eastern
- -Chad to send out outlook reminder

WO updates – Stephanie and Michael

- Response to WO input (Friday)
 - If questions on WO input please call Michael or Stephanie. There is some confusion from the pre-consistency review because some guidance has superseded NPT guidance and comments have not followed those changes. Need to know what is still applicable from April NPT guidance.
 - PMs should send back table to WO with responses to comments by Friday.
- Communications effort: Meghan and Randy were in WO and put together a draft communication packet....probably a couple of weeks until it gets put together. Includes county and tribal consultations all contact except for USFWS, USFS and State liaisons.
- Required Design Features
 - Everyone is applying RDFs all in PHMA. Not all have been applied in GHMA. All RDFs need to apply to PHMA and GHMA.
 - In NTT mostly applied to PHMA. The only guidance for GHMA was applied to fluid minerals.
 - April guidance says RDFs will be applied to sagegrouse habitat= PHMA will now be applied to GHMA.
 - Concern that by saying applicable to GHMA it will increase workload for every site specific project.
 - As a rule of thumb need to apply RDFs from the NTT report to our Proposed Plan that apply to PHMA and GHMA.
 - Stephanie will review NTT guidance and follow up with group on RDF direction.
- High Voltage= 100Kv
- Net conservation gain- WO developing definition.
- Vegetation objectives table questions- The Vegetation objectives table should be based on local ecology as well as bird lifecycle requirements. Question on whether objectives or standards or what? Stay tuned for discussion on this with Vicki.
- Transwest Express- Affects WYO, UT, and CO...WO preparing for briefing with ASLM. Stay tuned on direction. Will not affect our plans, but will affect the Transwest Express plan. Q from TWE- UT said they are consistent by being excused from the plan. But still need to evaluate impacts on the sage grouse in project level analysis and expect it to be addressed in UT plan under cumulative. Also will be included in 3% disturbance.
- Assistant Secretary of Lands and minerals has concern over recent oil and gas sales and sage grouse habitat and appearance. Want to be briefed ahead of time for any projects in sage grouse habitat.
- 6 revisions (Buffalo, Bighorn, etc.)- Request for briefings from front hallway on these ahead of the drafts...expected mid-April. Any news on NOAs on those 6 revisions? Status is not known at this time. Options are review revisions April 24th and brief director second week or brief before and then review after. Stay tuned on direction.

Coordination with FWS and State

- Q: Are planners in the states allowed to share chapter 2 with the states? Most states have already shared their ADPPs on an individual basis. Direction for states is not known from WO.
- Status:
 - NV has shared the draft ADPP with the state of NV rep on the ID team and USFWS.
 - Utah has not shared the plan with state or whole plan with USFWS, just parts of it.
 - Oregon has a state rep on ID team and it has been shared with him. He has shared that up the ladder but not sure how far. Elements have been shared with governor's reps. but enough people in state office have it that it has probably been shared with governor. But, not with county.
 - Idaho has shared with ID Fish and Game and USFWS asked not to share with other departments yet. Sure it has been given to governor.
 - CO told the states what is in document but has not given them a hard copy. Have not shared with Coops.
 - WYO shared with states, but has not had opportunity to work with USFWS. Have not given any hard copies out.
 - MT has done a briefing with USFWS and State of MT but has not shared any hard copies.
- Everyone needs to coordinate with USFWS asap. But only share hard copies.
-Stephanie will follow up with group on what can be shared and with USFWS and the states by the end of the week.
- Q: If still doing pre-consistency review, should we wait to share those documents? Good point. Ideally, prefer you share Chapter 2 instead of just ADPP to provide context.

Need for a dear reader letter and executive summary template for amendments

- Peter Gower of EMPSi is writing Executive Summary template
-Revisions will stick with existing executive summaries from their drafts.
-WYO 9 and NW CO already have an executive summary. But, they will review template and see if it fits and how to incorporate to be as consistent as possible.
- The Dear Reader letter is an important place for outlining how plans are different and protest information, feel there should actually be three dear reader letters- BLM revisions, BLM and FS amendments and BLM amendments.
-WO will draft dear reader letter (s).

Glossary and references

- Q: Should all references from main document and appendices be put in the main document. Yes.

Schedule

- Reminder of upcoming critical paths:
 - Chapter 2 (due 3/20)
 - NOC completes CEA tables – 3/13
-95% done, waiting on NVCA for NA or Proposed (due today at noon) and any Oregon changes on Wind and Solar. No meetings for Oregon wind and solar have been set so think we should move forward on Oregon as is. Then ETA for doc to EMPSI on track for Friday.
-USFWS data deadline has been met. USFWS is requesting metadata. Data request from Frank for a paragraph stating how derived PHMA and GHMA-Need it by March 31st.
-NOC also making progress on landscape report.

- Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
-Should include subregional cumulative analyses as well. Then review for delivery to WO on 4/10.
- Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
- April 12-17th-Consistency review for entire FEIS, except CEA...be prepared for calls/questions. Buffalo needs to coordinate with Stephanie.
- April 25th CEA submitted for WO review.

Round robin on status – all

- MT-Met with State FWS, briefed on proposed plan last week. On schedule for plan ...one issue with SD with format that needs to be cleaned up. Need a common definition for a biologically significant unit. Asked USFWS and they said that was a BLM term. Need to determine the definitions. Group of leks and lek clusters? Or equal to PHMA? Concept came out of FFM in Oregon. Need to review notes and follow up. The definition will be different all the subregions. A BSU is defined in working with the state wildlife agency to delineate an area where disturbance monitoring and adaptive management would apply. Definition should start with intent...Idaho language will be provided to the subregions.
- CO-No update.
- WYO-On track for nine plan and big horn...recreating revision for buffalo because of ePlanning issues. Taking PDFs, converting into word and redeveloping entire document. Not sure if entire document will be available for the consistency review. Meeting scheduled with state and USFWS for Friday morning. And meeting with State Fish on Friday or Monday
- OR-Gave all acreage summaries to EMPSi. EMPSi working on impacts. Holding ID team meetings weekly. Meeting with ODFW with ID team today and USFWS later in the week. Continue to meet with WO on wind and solar.
- NVCA- ID team kickoff for impacts, realized proposed plan data had an error so resubmitting meeting with SETT on Monday March 16th. Amy continues to coordinate with governor's office and USFWS.
- ID-Meeting with state last week and discussed SFAs and buffers. Concerns about areas outside of priority habitat that are in SFAs. Following up with Frank and Stephanie. Think they are large areas, but are not. Getting EMPSi appendices and finalizing numbers this week for impact analysis. Talk with USFWS weekly. On track.
- UT- Met with State last Friday and went over concepts and aspects for ADPP. Still some issues with Anthro and West TAV. Also meeting with states about habitat objectives as well and trying to get local level information to determine what those should be. Met with USFWS two weeks ago-Went over changes from Draft. Acreage overlays for impacts to be done this Friday. EMPSi working on impacts. On track.

CEAs Update – Drew

- Changes to template from internal review of Buffalo CEA
-On track to have templates ready to go and start populating them next week. Will coordinate with Frank on receiving data
-March 25th CEA webex.
- Net Conservation Gain. Should we drop this concept from the CEAs or will a definition be created in time?
- CEA WebEx. Confirm March 25 date for this WebEx.

Comment response update – Carol-Anne

- On track with review and updates. She has finished review of four plans and has coordinated with the PMs on those plans.

Other topics

- PPH/PGH to PHMA/ GHMA

Makes sense that talk about pph and pgh in chapter 1 and 3, and PHMA and GHMA in 2, 4 and 5. But not all plans are doing this.

-In MT/DK left it as pph and pgh in chapter 3.

-UT uses occupied in chapter 1 and 3. But Utah has a unique situation with its habitat.

-FFM direction was PHMA and GHMA throughout all chapters with a crosswalk table in chapter 1.

-Is it appropriate to call it a management area in chapter 3?

-David and Lauren to check FFM notes and get back to group.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2015 4:05 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Subject: RE: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR and RMR PM Meeting Notes 2015-03-18.docx

IDMT_PUB_9788
5.1

Hello all,
Attached are notes from yesterday's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 3:04 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

Agenda:

1. WO updates
2. Status of dear reader letter and executive summary templates
3. Drop in language – use as provided; EMPSi is only giving it a basic edit and not changing any content.
4. FS review of impact analysis chapter
5. Comment response process and update – Carol-Anne
6. PPH/PGH vs PHMA/GHMA guidance*
7. Schedule –
 - Reminder of upcoming critical paths:
 - NOC completes CEA tables – 3/13 – finalizing NV/CA
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
 - Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
 - Review PLUPA/FIES – 4/17 (WO strike team)
 - Final CEAs – 4/24 (other reviews before)
 - Round robin on status – all
8. CEAs Update – Drew
 - Schedule and handling CA/NV timeline
9. Other topics?
10. Action Items from past calls

WO

- Stephanie will review NTT guidance and follow up with group on RDF direction.
- WO developing definition for net conservation gain.
- WO will provide briefing schedule on the 6 revisions (Buffalo, etc.).
- Stephanie will follow up with group on what can be shared and with USFWS and the states by the end of the week.
- WO will draft dear reader letter (s).
- Vicki will provide guidance on Vegetation objectives/standards/ etc.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- If questions on WO input on ADPPs please call Michael or Stephanie. PMs should send back table to WO with responses to comments by this Friday (03/13).
- All references and acronyms from main document and appendices should be put in their respective chapters in the main document.
- David and Lauren to check FFM notes and get back to group on PPH/PGH to PHMA/GHMA guidance.
- Idaho BSU definition will be provided to the other subregions.

EMPSi

- Working on Executive Summary Template. – submitted
- David and Lauren to check FFM notes and get back to group on PPH/PGH to PHMA/GHMA guidance.

* FFM August 2014 PDX:

- **OUTCOME:** It is agreed that sub-regions will continue to use priority and general habitat (core and important for Idaho) as the geographical delineator for management measures and analysis, but that all plans will include a crosswalk that overlays priority and general habitat with PACs.

- Clarity is needed to demonstrate to others that these ADPPs provide conservation certainty. Changes in boundaries across stateliness will make telling the story difficult. While there might be a reason, we need to assess if it is worth doing it that way. Use only two terms: preliminary priority habitat and preliminary general habitat.

FFM September 2014 Denver:

- **OUTCOME:** Agreed to terms “Priority Management Area” and “General Management Area.” The Final EIS needs to document any changes to nomenclature. Plans can use other subsets for areas with other special management (e.g., restoration areas or connectivity areas).
- **OUTCOME:** Each plan will develop a crosswalk with the BLM management area terms (e.g., priority management area and general habitat area) and State plan nomenclatures in each of the ADPPs.

David Batts

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Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2015 6:21 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Subject: RE: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET
Attachments: GBR and RMR PM Meeting Notes-2015-03-25.docx

IDMT_PUB_9789
5.1

Hi all,
I apologize for the delay in sending these, I guess things have been busy!! ☺ Attached are the notes from last week's combined Great Basin and Rocky Mountain call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2015 3:24 PM
To: Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; lmermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; Drew Vankat; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Carol-Anne Garrison; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; Chad Ricklefs; mmagalet@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; vherren@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; mhildner@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; fquamen@blm.gov; scarman@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; qfbahr@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Cc: David Batts
Subject: GRSG GBR/RMR NEPA Leads Call - Weds 9AM PT / 10AM MT / 12PM ET

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Wednesday at 9AM Pacific Time / 10AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

Access Number: 1-218-632-0734

Passcode: 807966#

NOTES:

- (1) *The second part of the meeting will focus on BLM and Forest Service coordination. Project leads without Forest Service involvement need not participate (but are welcome).*
- (2) *Please review the action item list below and let me know if anything is complete and should be removed; we want to make sure nothing slips through the cracks and have a useful list for everyone.*

Agenda:

1. WO updates
 - Direction on transmission line analysis
 - Comm plan
 - Drop in language on actions, habitat objectives, disturbance
 - Dear reader and exec summary
2. Path forward for NOAs/WO Briefings
3. CEAs Update – Drew
4. Submittal of the IMT Consistency Review – MS Word files to extent possible
5. Footers to include month and year of Proposed LUPA/Final EIS (June 2015)
6. Schedule –
 - Reminder of upcoming critical paths:
 - Direct and Indirect impact analysis - 3/27
 - Compile PLUPA/FEIS – 4/10
 - Review PLUPA/FIES – 4/17 (WO strike team)
 - Final CEAs – 4/24 (other reviews before)
 - Round robin on status – all
7. Other topics?

BLM / Forest Service Coordination (FS and BLM CO, WY, UT, ID, NV, and WO)

1. Status of BAs
2. Comm Plan review by FS
3. Impact analysis review and incorporation
4. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls

WO

- Provide written guidance for Administrative Record regarding use of PPH/PGH and PHMA/GHMA in FEIS.
- WO will provide briefing schedule on the 6 revisions (Buffalo, etc.).
- WO will draft dear reader letter (s).
- Vicki will provide guidance on Vegetation objectives/standards/ etc.

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- All references and acronyms from main document and appendices should be put in their respective chapters in the main document.
- Idaho BSU definition will be provided to the other subregions.

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Sage-Grouse Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Regions Project Management Team Weekly Call

March 25, 2015 9:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Erin Jones, CO; Bridget Clayton, CO; Jon Beck, ID; Johanna Munson, ID; Sandy Leach, MT; John Carlson, MT; Lauren Mermejo, NV; Randy Sharp, NV; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Aaron Moody, SOL; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Quincy Bahr, UT; Stephanie Carman, WO; Michael Hildner, WO; Mitch Snow, WO; Vicki Herren, WO; Matt Magaletti, WY; Pam Murdoch, WY

Forest Service: Glen Stein

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat; Meredith Zaccherio

Action Items

WO

- Send additional drop-in language when available

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- PMs: Let Glen and Madelyn know when you need impact analysis feedback returned next week.
- PMs: Discuss county cooperator review with your State Director.

Meeting Minutes

WO Updates

- Had a follow up call last week regarding transmission line analysis for Presidential priority projects and a subsequent call with WO staff and SOL. Decided that 1) intention of the language is that Presidential priority projects are not just excepted from the allocation for ROW, but for everything within the plan. GRSG will be addressed during NEPA for the transmission lines; and 2) the priority projects should be analyzed in the CEA, and WO will provide drop-in language to use for the direct and indirect impacts.
- MT would like guidance for any other large projects, such as a proposed pipeline.
- COM plan draft was distributed last week. Having a call tomorrow to discuss comments. Ed and Steve called State Directors yesterday to discuss other communications with partners.
- Other drop-in language that WO is working on (expected this week):
 - Lead in paragraph for habitat objectives table
 - Disturbance appendix
 - Ongoing discussions regarding grazing and some clarifications will be provided, including a definition of site potential.
 - Mitigation language – clarification of what that applies to. Based on Table 2 in the Monitoring Framework.
- There are a lot of moving parts, still changing guidance.

- Working on Executive Summary. Dear Reader letters are ready to be distributed.
- Will be talking to the states at the WGA task force meeting next Monday/Tuesday.
- Submit FEIS to IMT as word files except some appendices which will be PDFs. Let WO know if you won't be able to make the deadline. May be using a SharePoint site.
- Oregon and Adaptive Management –Stephanie will follow up with WO staff for clarification.

Path Forward for NOAs/WO Briefings

- Less than a month to prepare for this. Plan was to have individual NOAs for revisions and one NOA each for amendments in Great Basin and Rock Mountain Regions. Stephanie will check to see if this has been approved.
- WO IMT review of plan revisions – they will focus on GRSG portions for consistency.

CEA Update

- CEA webinar will follow this call. In the webinar, Drew will review the CEA outlines, what they do and don't do. Finishing several initial draft CEAs to be sent out on Monday.
- For each CEA, the lead Management Zone reviewer will coordinate with the affected project leads. Their comments will go to the Management Zone reviewer so EMPSi gets one set of consolidated comments.

Footers

- All footers will have the title of document with June 2015 as the date.

Round Robin on Status

- Most sub-regions indicated that they are continually finding issues that need to be resolved or errors revised. A common error cited was GIS errors.
- Oregon – Continue to find things they need to revise. Very close to being on schedule, but some data requests have been sent to EMPSi late. State Directors have not met with any cooperators.
- Idaho – Finished socioeconomic inputs this morning and sent to Julie. Have provided information to EMPSi and EMPSi is sending impacts analysis this week. Seem to be on schedule. State is not meeting with BLM anymore, they are having phone conversations. Sent Chapter 2 digitally to the state this morning.
- Utah – Have not met with state or USFWS specifically related to GRSG. They would like to see the plan, but have not received approval to distribute. Similar to Oregon, they are barely on schedule, as little things keep requiring revisions (e.g., acreage calculations). Everything is to ICF and EMPSi. Plan is to get inputs from EMPSi this Friday (BLM is writing GRSG and climate change internally). ICF will provide analysis on Monday. Next week, will be reviewing analysis with internal ID team. Preparing language for Chapter 2, and compiling appendices and maps.
- NV/CA – Has also had some issues with acres. They are writing their own analysis and providing to EMPSi for QA and formatting. Plan on having everything to EMPSi by this Friday. No formal meetings with state or USFWS, but talk with USFWS regularly. ICF is supposed to have social/economic analysis by this Friday. Warning that IMT review draft will be in rough shape.
- WY – They are not meeting with state or USFWS this week. Discovered potential issue related to data submitted to NOC. Some errors in data for two alternatives, may affect the CEA, but unsure. WY on schedule.
- CO – Met with local USFWS last week and meeting with Governor's office and DNR this Friday. Supposed to have socio/economic analysis on 4/3. Otherwise will submit everything to EMPSi by this Friday.

- MT – They are on schedule, but finding small issues as they go. Received permission to share Chapter 2 hard copy with state partners. Unsure whether they are approved to share with USFWS. Regarding the coalition of counties that challenged the NTT/COT/BER under the Data Quality Act, most of the Montana county cooperators have signed on to this challenge. Does this affect how they interact with them? SOL are looking into it.

Forest Service Updates

- Biological Assessment is nearly final, but Glen was unsure of dates. Joan will follow up with Chris Colt regarding timeframe. BA will be included as an appendix.
- Utah and Montana were two plans that were under consideration for formal consultation. MT will be informal. The 135 day review period for USFWS is a concern, but Utah heard that they won't need the full review period.
- Forest Service reviewed the COM plan and are developing their own. Concerned about release of FEIS on website since they don't have an external GRSG website.
- Impact analysis review – need to know from each sub-region when they need input. All sub-regions will let him know.
- Reasonably foreseeable future actions – updated these for all project leads. Let Glen know if there are any issues with the list.
- UT – another change regarding Anthro. Glen and Quincy will discuss.
- Next week, getting together in Ogden to review impacts analysis. Looking for fatal flaws.
- Consistency review will look at both Forest Service and BLM, where applicable.

Other

- Chapter 6 – Is there language that can be used consistently regarding coordination with counties between draft and final? Decision was made to focus chapter 6 discussion on federal coordination, as county coordination is discussed elsewhere.
- Unsure when county cooperators will review plans. Project Leads should discuss with their State Director.

Brent Ralston

From: Drew Vankat
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 12:30 PM
To: David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov
Cc: Carolyn Sherve-Bybee; Mary Bloom; Todd Yeager; Brian Hockett
Subject: RE: GRSG CEA Review Presentation
Attachments: GRSG CEA Outline 20150325.pdf

IDMT_PUB_9791
5.1

Hi Everyone,

I appreciate you taking the time to attend today's CEA call and presentation. Attached to this email is a copy of the presentation. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, etc. (my phone number is in my signature below, or feel free to email me). The first CEAs will be delivered to the BLM/FS for review starting early next week!

Thank you,

Drew

Drew Vankat

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-----Original Appointment-----

From: Drew Vankat

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 1:00 PM

To: Drew Vankat; David Batts; Holly Prohaska; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Imermejo@blm.gov; mmagalet@blm.gov; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; scarman@blm.gov; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R; ssmith@blm.gov; mdillon@fs.fed.us; 'rmickelsen@fs.fed.us' (rmickelsen@fs.fed.us); 'Herren, Vicki (vherren@blm.gov)' (vherren@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); 'Stein, Glen' (gstein@fs.fed.us); mhildner@blm.gov; akosic@blm.gov; nhaug@blm.gov; ssieber@blm.gov; erjones@blm.gov; jlchaffi@blm.gov; bclayton@blm.gov; ramiller@blm.gov; aaron.moody@sol.doi.gov; pmurdock@blm.gov; jccarlso@blm.gov

Cc: Carolyn Sherve-Bybee; Mary Bloom; Todd Yeager; Brian Hockett

Subject: GRSG CEA Review Presentation

When: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 1:30 PM-2:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: GoToMeeting

Hi Everyone,

I will be hosting a conference call and online presentation for the GRSG CEAs on Wednesday, March 25 at 10:30am Pacific. This will be an opportunity to familiarize yourselves with the CEAs, their methodology and content, and the review process and schedule.

Please use the following link to **view the presentation** during the call:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/657249565>

And please use this phone number and code **for audio** during the call:

218-632-0734

Code: 3775#

Thank you and talk with you on Wednesday,

Drew

GRSG Cumulative Effects Analyses (CEAs)

Analyzing cumulative effects on GRSG
at the WAFWA Management Zone
level (i.e., Tier II analysis)

For 14 separate EISs

Builds off of, and replaces, the Tier I
analysis in the Draft RMP/As

Methodology and Assumptions

- Developed with staff at the NOC and vetted and approved by GRSG leadership team (2013-2014)
- Utilizes MZ-wide datasets provided by the NOC
 - RMP/LUP allocations for each alternative
 - Delineated by PHMA and GHMA
- COT report used to identify “present and widespread” threats in each Management Zone

Methodology and Assumptions

- List of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions for each MZ
 - From Draft RMPs and correspondence with planning leads
- Quantitative analysis focused at the Management Zone level
- Quantification of effects occurring at the subregional level, but only to establish context for subregion's relative influence on the larger Management Zone

Methodology and Assumptions

- Analysis for each alternative
 - Always assumes the Proposed Plans in the rest of the Management Zone are being implemented
- Timeframe for analysis is 10 years
- Utilizes “net conservation gain” concept

CEA Outline

- Introduction
- Methods and Assumptions
- Existing Conditions in Management Zone and Planning Area
 - GRSB Populations and Habitat (MZ level)
 - Planning Area Habitat Conditions
 - RMP alternatives themes
 - Population Trends in the MZ

CEA Outline

- Regional Efforts to Manage Threats to GRSG
 - Statewide efforts
 - Working groups
 - NRCS
 - Other Regional Efforts (e.g., tribal efforts, state plans under development, local conservation plans, etc.)
- Relevant Cumulative Actions (past, present, reasonably foreseeable)

CEA Outline

- Threats to GRSG in Management Zone
 - For each threat:
 - Nature and Type of Effects
 - Conditions in the Management Zone
 - Impact Analysis by Alternative (NOC Data)
 - Present and describe NOC data
 - Follow with discussion of past, present, reasonably foreseeable future actions
 - Conclude with cumulative impact of each alternative in conjunction with past, present, reasonably foreseeable future actions

CEA Outline

- Conclusions
 - For each alternative
 - Management Zone focus
 - Inclusive of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions
- Also included: References and Appendix of Relevant Cumulative Actions

Presidential Priority Transmission Lines

- Currently receiving guidance on how these will be analyzed in the CEAs.
- These projects are exempt from all requirements in the GRSR EISs (but are still subject to other applicable laws and regulations, IMs, etc.)
- Will be analyzed by name in the CEAs
- Developing text right now

What the CEAs Do

- Landscape-scale NEPA analysis
- Includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Includes “coarse” grain data
- Focuses on the MZ, not the planning area
- Focuses on “present and widespread” threats
- Uses PHMA as a proxy for key items such as leks, early brood rearing habitat, etc.
- Focuses conclusions on impacts on the bird

What the CEAs Don't Do

- Do not include modeling (USFWS is running their own models)
- Do not include data by PAC or population
- Do not focus on the planning area
- Do not specifically analyze predation (omitted from list of threats in Final COT report)

CEA Process and Schedule

- NOC Data – Delivered to EMPSi
- Crunch data and insert into Word tables
- Internal Draft CEA reviewed by EMPSi project manager
- Draft CEA sent to BLM/FS for review
 - Management Zone lead reviewer(s) and planning lead
- CEA included in larger EIS for WO review

CEA Process and Schedule

- Management Zone Reviewers:
 - MZ I: John Carlson
 - MZ II: Jenny Morton
 - MZ III: Randy Sharp and Arlene Kusic
 - MZ IV: Jon Beck
 - MZ V: Joan Suther

CEA Process and Schedule

- BLM/FS reviewers have three business days to review each CEA
- Matt and Lauren developed process for coordinating edits between MZ leads and planning leads
- All comments in track changes
- Submit one track changes CEA to EMPSi at end of each review period

CEA Process and Schedule

- MZ I CEAs Submitted by Close of Business:
 - 9-Plan: COB April 9
 - Billings: COB April 6
 - Buffalo: COB March 30
 - HiLine: COB April 2
 - Lewistown: COB April 9
 - Miles City: COB April 6
 - North Dakota: COB April 6
 - South Dakota: COB April 15

CEA Process and Schedule

- MZ II Submitted by Close of Business:
 - 9-Plan: COB April 9
 - Bighorn: COB March 30
 - Billings: COB April 6
 - NW Colorado: COB April 3
- MZ III Submitted by Close of Business:
 - Nevada/California: COB April 10
 - Utah: COB April 14

CEA Process and Schedule

- MZ IV Submitted by Close of Business:
 - Idaho/SW Montana: COB March 30
 - Oregon: COB April 2
 - Utah: COB April 14
- MZ V Submitted by Close of Business:
 - Nevada/California: COB April 10
 - Oregon: COB April 2

Brent Ralston

From: Beck, Jonathan
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 12:56 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: one pager on imp strat

IDMT_PUB_9793
5.1

Shouldn't blm be on top!!

On Tue, Mar 10, 2015 at 12:55 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Jon,

Here is the coordination flow chart and associated description. This is for inclusion in the Final EIS but also may have some use for the DSD meeting this week.

Brent Ralston

Special Projects Lead

Jarbidge & Owyhee Grazing Permit Process

208-373-3812

From: Beck, Jonathan [mailto:jmbeck@blm.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 2:23 PM
To: Johanna Munson; Kurt Wiedenmann; Brent Ralston
Subject: one pager on imp strat

I'm not looking for suggestions. If something is wrong or needs changed, do it in track changes and send back.
Jon

--

Jonathan Beck

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho State Office

208-373-4070

--

Jonathan Beck
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
208-373-4070

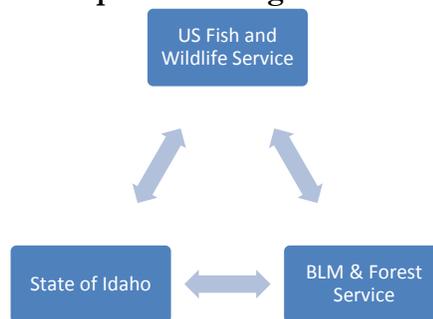
GRSG Implementation and Coordination

The BLM, Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Idaho have coordinated on GRSG monitoring and management for numerous years as part of the 2006 Idaho Sage Grouse Conservation Plan. Much of this ongoing work provides a firm foundation from which to build future coordination efforts, especially in regard to implementation of the GRSG RMP Amendment. With some specific adjustments and additional inclusions in those efforts the effective implementation of the GRSG RMP Amendment can be achieved.

There are several decisions, or components of decisions that would benefit from close coordination between the State of Idaho, BLM, Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. These include: application and assessment of the adaptive management strategy; application of the right-of-way screening process; and development and implementation of any potential project mitigation efforts.

Figure 1 describes a conceptual relationship between the agencies for coordination and project evaluation/implementation.

Figure 1 – Conceptual Relationship Between Agencies



For description an example project proposal will be tracked through the consideration and evaluation process.

I. Project Proposal is Initially Screened by BLM or Forest Service

This initial screened would evaluate whether the proposal conforms to the land use plan allocation decisions (Open, Open with Limitations, Closed). The BLM/Forest Service Field Office or Ranger District would work in coordination with the State or Supervisor's Office to evaluate this conformance.

For BLM if the proposal is not in conformance then a non-conformance letter from the State Director would be sent to the project proponent and the project would not be considered further.

If the project were found to conform to the land use plan allocations then consideration would continue.

II. Project Proposal would be Coordinated with State and USFWS

The State Implementation Task Force (set up through Idaho Executive Order) would convene to apply the right-of-way screening process to the proposal, informed by GRSG population monitoring accomplished by IDF&G. This evaluation would be vetted through the Governor's Office and a recommendation from the Governor would be provided to the BLM/Forest Service.

The BLM and/or Forest Service would work with local offices to apply the right-of-way screening process to the proposal, informed by the disturbance level (cap), and habitat conditions (amount).

The BLM/Forest Service decision maker would utilize the information from internal review and State recommendations to determine whether the project conforms to all land use plan guidance and whether to consider the project further.

For BLM if the proposal is not in conformance then a non-conformance letter from the State Director would be sent to the project proponent and the project would not be considered further.

If the project were found to conform to the land use plan guidance then consideration would continue.

III. BLM and/or Forest Service would Initiate Project NEPA

The NEPA analysis would be developed by the local unit office in full consideration of local habitat conditions. This process would describe alternatives to the proposal that would reduce or eliminate impacts and full identify residual impacts to GRSG.

IV. Share Residual Impacts with the State of Idaho and USFWS

The State Implementation Task Force would consider the residual impacts and work to develop an appropriate mitigation package to be included within analysis of the project proposal. This Governor would recommend to BLM the inclusion of the mitigation package within the project proposal.

V. BLM Incorporates and Analyzes Mitigation in NEPA Evaluation

VI. State of Idaho would Administer Mitigation Consistent with the Mitigation Strategy

As part of the implementation of the GRSG RMP Amendment the BLM and Forest Service will work cooperatively with the State to develop a Mitigation Strategy. Part of this strategy will define the operating procedures such as credits, banking, funding process, etc. This component is likely to strongly involve State oversight, with the specifics remaining to be determined.

VII. Mitigation is Implemented

Brent Ralston

From: Miller, Ruth
Sent: Monday, July 07, 2014 2:39 PM
To: Brian Hockett; Adam Carr; Brent Ralston; Carolyn Sherve-Bybee; Cornelia Hudson; Craig Drake; Diane Friez; Gary Benes; Gary Smith; Geoff Beyersdorf; James Sparks; Jamie Connell; Jessica M Montag; John Carlson; Katherine Kitchell; Kelly Bocking; Marian Atkins; Mark Albers; Mary Bloom; Melodie Lloyd; Michael Philbin; Mitchell K Iverson; Peter McFadden; Phillip Perlewitz; Richard Hotaling; Rick Rymerson; Samuel Herbert; Sandra Brooks; Stanley Jaynes; Susan Bassett; Timothy Zachmeier; Todd Yeager
Subject: Agenda
Attachments: RMP_critical_path_agenda_07_08_2014.docx

If you have anything to add to the agenda, please let me know... otherwise, should be a fairly short meeting. Thanks... Ruth.

Ruth Miller
Planning and Environmental Specialist
Montana State Office
406.896.5023 (desk)
406.896.5293 (fax)

Notes - State Director RMP Critical Path Briefing – July 8, 2014

Call-in number: 406.896.5345 Passcode: 1014#

RMPs	Field Office Issues/Updates/Concerns	
Miles City	• Update:	
HiLine	• Update:	
Billings/PPNM	• Update:	
South Dakota	• Update:	
North Dakota	• Update:	
Lewistown	• Update:	
Dillon	• Update:	
Issues	Discussion/Updates	Decision/Follow-up
Consistency	Hydraulic fracturing direction for finals. Irma is updating template with what she has done for MCFO RMP to share with the other RMPs.	• Irma will send Sandy the fracturing documents this week.
	Socio-economics and Air – Social Cost of Carbon discussion.	• By August, make sure Susan has correct Proposed Plans to use for modeling.
Sage-grouse Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent all data to the NOC last week – working on some issues with a couple plans this week. • EMSPi will work on MZ cumulative once NOC is done with data (potentially 4 weeks for NOC, 4 weeks for EMPSi). • A white paper from the WO is expected this week on the disturbance issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need Adaptive Management Plans (identify triggers and responses) for all RMPs, and direction on disturbance cap. • Finalize BMP appendix with 'new' mitigation document – for revisions. • Direction needed on fire – John has been talking to Johanna on the approach for our plans. • Team Leads make sure responses to FWS matrix table are documented and in your administrative record (responses to the FWS letter will be in the FEIS).
Reviews and Briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still need Billings FO responses to MSO review. • One comprehensive briefing on all the plans for the WO – Director/NPT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Karan revisions when they go to WO. • Revise schedule. • Amendments still need MSO review.
<p>Items decided/sent to FOs for incorporation into FEIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oil and Gas Stipulations ○ Predators: John C. drafted a section to drop into chapter 3 regarding predators. ○ COT report threats table: North Dakota and Colorado examples provided to add to Chapter 4 of each plan. ○ Future PH/GH delineation changes. No need to add text to the RMP - minor boundary adjustments can be done with plan maintenance. Large boundary adjustments would probably need an amendment. ○ EMPSi recommendations on similar comment responses sent to Team Leads to review/incorporate changes. ○ Allocations confirmed by WO. 		

Notes - State Director RMP Critical Path Briefing – July 8, 2014

		WO Memo Approved/ Data Layers to NOC	WO and SOL Review	NPT/Director Briefing	Ready to Print	Publication and Governors' Consistency Review and Protest Period	ROD
Revisions		06/02/2014	07/01/2014	08/01/2014	08/15/2014	09/02/2014	11/14/2014
Amendments		06/02/2014	08/01/2014	08/29/2014	09/15/2014	10/01/2014	12/15/2014

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

June 19, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Nika Lepak; Trisha – NRCS; Natalie Cooper; Mike McDonald; Bruce Schoeberl; Dustin Miller; Cally Younger; Katie Powell; Brandon Knaptan; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Over the last 6 weeks, have been responding to National Policy Team direction and have submitted several memos to the Washington Office (WO). USFWS has been briefing through their channels as well. No official word yet, but there is a meeting this afternoon and expecting approval to move forward. UT also still waiting, but NV/CA and OR have received approval.
- The delay is likely due to concerns with other plans that have been a higher priority for WO.
- Forest Service has been working on their proposed plan. Received and incorporated comments from forests and have been conducting final reviews. Expecting an approved proposed plan today. The plan was developed on a rangewide scale and will be used as a framework on a subregional basis. We will modify it to reflect the subregional EIS (e.g., incorporating the 3-tiered habitat system).
- Forest Service has also begun some preliminary effects analysis because the FS approach to grazing is different from BLM.
- BLM map has been finalized, preparing to send GIS to the NOC.
- Brent has been incorporating comments on the proposed plan and compiling associated appendices. Hoping to send out final proposed plan within a week.
- Next steps – once final approval for the proposed plan, then send out to team and pull together for a 2 week cooperating agency review.
- Then developing the final EIS –make edits to the DEIS based on internal and public comments;
- Natalie has been looking at some corridor-related information. Preparing data layer and sending to Marcia at EMPSi by the end of the week. She will compile the maps to look at disconnects between state boundaries on a regional level.

Preparation of FEIS

- Document is separated into chapters. Brent has been revising Chapter 1 and proposed plan. EMPSi revising Chapter 2. Some format decisions to be made (removing the big table of alternatives; inclusion of Alternatives D and E).
- Appendices – most in support of proposed plan. Some other appendices have supporting information for the other portions of the document.
- Chapters 3 and 4 – ID team will review each resource section and identify changes in response to public comments as well as other changes to improve the section. Ensure we have laid the

foundation in Chapter 3 for what we say in Chapter 4 (e.g., GRSG – population information is not discussed in Chapter 3 but is analyzed in Chapter 4).

- Brent reviewed the list of resource sections and who will take the lead. Some resources only have a Chapter 3 section, while others have both Chapters 3 and 4.
- Teams can look at NV/CA and OR DEIS analyses to see what they've done.
- If we get approval, will likely set up a call early next week to start moving forward.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

July 24, 2014 10:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Rod Collins; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Karen Porter; Natalie Cooper; Bruce Schoeberl; Kathleen Hendrick; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- BLM IDT will review comment report and send revisions to EMPSi.
- EMPSi will send the latest comment report.
- EMPSi ID team will send their current drafts of the proposed plan impacts analysis to their BLM counterparts.

Meeting Minutes

Project Status Update

- Administrative draft proposed plan went out to internal team and cooperators. Comments due tomorrow. Brent will be making changes in response to comments.
- Forest Service proposed plan has been in development for a while. Forest Service developed a template that would apply to all subregions. Rob has been customizing it for the subregion, incorporating the adaptive management strategy and biologically significant unit for the disturbance calculation. Intent is that the approach and scale is the same as BLM, just needs to be put into FS direction. Some questions remain on MT management.
- Next week – review of Forest Service proposed plan by all forests in ID and make necessary revisions. Final FS plan is due to FS management August 1.
- Comment report – EMPSi will send a new report by early next week. BLM IDT to review responses.
- Montana – working to determine their adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance management. Anticipate that anthropogenic disturbance will be consistent with WY direction. Still unsure of the adaptive management strategy.

Schedule

- Short-term goal is to finish proposed plan, including Forest Service and BLM components.
- Hope to get GIS completed in the next few weeks to finish impacts analysis.
- EMPSi keeping a list of changes for the other alternatives, but this is not the focus right now.
- NOC is nearly done with their calculations for the roll up and cumulative effects analysis.

- Another federal family meeting in August for BLM, FS, USFWS to discuss proposed plans, mapping across state boundaries. Unsure whether there will be state involvement.
- Compare proposed plan and comments from USFWS. How they were addressed.
- After federal family meeting, FEIS will be prepared within 2 weeks to share with National Policy Team and cooperators, then go to print in the fall.
- ROD – unsure whether there will be one ROD for the western US or for the Great Basin Region, with sub-decisions for each sub-region.

ESA Consultation and Biological Assessment

- Scott Hoefer is the local contact. Agreement was that Forest Service would write the BAs and do most of the consultation since a lot of the species are on Forest land. However, in Idaho, have slickspot peppergrass – concerns that there will be impacts on this species from GRSG management. BLM may need to help prepare the BA for this species.
- Would like to incorporate the conservation measures in the latest conservation agreement. Meeting tomorrow morning to review and agree on the 2014 version of the conservation agreement.
- USFWS indicates that BLM will need formal consultation for this species. Want to ensure that consultation for the LUPA will be sufficient when site-specific consultation is needed.
- Make sure the team is in contact with Level I team for Boise (Brandon) and Twin Falls (Kate Forster) districts, as this might help streamline the process.
- Chris Colt (Forest Service) updated the group on the status of the BA. The consultation group (BLM, USFWS, FS) has been meeting and reviewing the list of species. Main species at issue is the slickspot peppergrass. Have been tailoring the BA template to the ID/MT subregion. Completed GIS overlay (acres and maps) of GRSG habitat on the different critical habitats.

New and Ongoing Components

- Received final FIAT report. Wildfire and invasive species assessments will be included as part of the plan and appendices. There will be an associated IM which is supposed to be out by the end of this week. Will be identifying members of teams by field office that will be conducting the assessments. Will likely start assessments prior to the final. Timeframes are uncertain.
- Monitoring framework plan will be incorporated.
- Still working to define the biologically significant units (BSUs) to calculate the adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance. Hoping to finalize this with Forest Service and USFWS today.

Document Status

- Chapter 1 – Brent is making some changes
- Chapter 2 – Meredith has been making changes
- Chapter 3 – making a few GIS changes.

- Chapter 4 – teams have met, reviewed assumptions, GIS requests, and proposed plan. Assumptions almost complete – need to finish up minerals.
- EMPSi will send the current versions of their impact analysis to their BLM counterparts and will CC Brent.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 7, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Mike McDonald; Dustin Miller; Jason Pyron; Josh Sidon; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- ID swMT ADPP BLM Decisions 080614 Working

Action Items

- Send comments/revisions to the comment response report to Brent by Friday, 8/8/14
- Send comments/revisions on the first draft of the proposed plan impact analysis to EMPSi counterparts and CC Brent by Friday, 8/8/14

Meeting Minutes

Forest Service Plan Update

- Rob still working on the FS plan. Addressing comments from Forest Service management and making sure it's consistent with FS direction. Comparison table shows that the Forest Service plan is very consistent with the BLM plan, but is more specific and does not include as many management actions. Some of the language is specific to Idaho, and Rob is explaining this to Forest Service management. Hoping to finalize tomorrow.
- Working on habitat desired conditions table.
- Will the two plans require separate impact analysis? Will keep plans separate in Chapter 2. Intend to do the effects analysis for the planning area without breaking out Forest Service and BLM in the discussion of effects.

Reminder for Work Assignments

- Send comments/revisions to the comment response report to Brent by Friday, 8/8/14.
- Send comments/revisions on the first draft of the proposed plan impact analysis to EMPSi counterparts and CC Brent by Friday, 8/8/14.

Review of Comments on the Proposed Plan

- Ongoing discussions about whether adaptive management measures would apply to all Core/Important or all nesting/wintering habitats within Core/Important.
- Coordination of mitigation with state effort – not sure how much detail will go in EIS. Have talked about an implementation plan, can maybe fill some of the details in.
- Meeting next week with USFWS and the state to resolve some questions and inconsistencies.
- Rob working on VDDT modeling for acres of treatment. Should have treatment acres and projected habitat conditions in the next 1-2 weeks.

- Seasonal habitat desired conditions – Jesse will work with others to resolve questions. FS changed “perennial grass height” to adequate nest cover, not 7 inches.
- Proximity of trees – Jesse, Rob, and Nika will work to review comments on this table.
- Mapping –if there is habitat outside of core/important/general during project level activities, should this area be managed as general habitat? A team will review this idea and how we would incorporate this.
- MA-4: A lot of discussion about no net unmitigated loss of GRSG habitat. Other subregions have no net loss in all GRSG management areas. However, this would affect mitigation opportunities. It would be best to do mitigation in core/important that needs restoration, but no net unmitigated loss would not allow for this. Instead, could state no net loss of key habitat within core/important – use key habitat map to delineate where there is effective habitat and restoration opportunities. Added language in MA-4 for this. Would provide a net conservation benefit to GRSG. Applies to both on- and off-site mitigation.
- Why mitigate for disturbance in non-habitat? Needs further discussion.
- MA-6: Pull key habitat in as a more functional piece. Included to help update the map.
- Adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance – comments to help strengthen the administrative record. Would like to have a discussion with biologists on these questions.
- RDFs – they are required. Added that they would be COAs in any post-lease activities. And they would be included as BMPs for locatables to the extent allowable. In RDF appendix – deleted BMP column and moved to column with BMPs that are required when conditions occur.
- Clarifications added to mitigation actions.
- FLM-7 added for consistency with Great Basin Region.
- Several comments for Nika that Brent will pass on.
- RM-1: Forest Service makes decisions about changes in management for grazing allotment at the site-scale, not plan-scale. Put in triggers/guidelines for grazing that will be applied for annual adjustments if necessary.
- Travel – need to include administrative use text. Clarification added for subsequent travel management planning.
- Appendices – baseline map – need to include description
 - Need to identify areas no longer identified for disposal for each plan.
 - Functioning of Boards – needs a description developed.

Other

- GIS team is providing revisions to the NOC for some rollup questions.
- COT objectives – how alternatives do/do not meet these objectives. Would like to see this more clearly specified in Chapter 4. Use the stop light table.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 14, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Katie Powell; Kelly Bocking; Robin Fehlau; Mike Kuyper; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- EMPSi incorporate GIS and revisions into proposed plan analysis.
- EMPSi and BLM GRSG team to meet and review proposed plan analysis.
- EMPSi compile proposed plan analysis into one document and send to Brent by Wednesday, August 27.
- EMPSi incorporate changes to the comment response report.

Meeting Minutes

Project Updates

- Team has reviewed the comment response report and Brent has sent comments to EMPSi. They will make changes and provide another version.
- EMPSi has sent a first draft of effects analysis, BLM/FS provided comments. EMPSi incorporating those revisions. Since the GIS is mostly done, EMPSi will incorporate the numbers and the GRSG team will have another conference call to ensure that expectations are met, including USFWS. EMPSi will then compile the sections into one document and send to BLM.
- Most of the EIS will be the same, but we'll be changing Chapter 2 to incorporate the proposed plan.
- Had a meeting with the state to review and address their comments on the proposed plan. Two main topics were discussed:
 - BSUs: Will have 10 BSUs within the subregion for anthropogenic disturbance and adaptive management calculations. One is SW MT, one is UT Sawtooth, then 2 units per Conservation Area in Idaho – one for Core and one for important. Includes nesting and wintering habitat in these areas. Further work needs to be done by Rob, Brent, and Kelly for the UT and sw MT areas.
 - What happens if you have reached the 3% disturbance threshold in a BSU? Then, no further development in that BSU. Core and Important are calculated separately and the base map based on 2011 lek and habitat data. BSUs will be updated every 5 years.
- Changes to the key habitat map will be made annually based on restoration effort, fires, etc. to determine new acres of key habitat.

- The ability to change things is limited now, due to concerns about consistency between subregions at a higher level.
- Brent will be finishing the proposed plan. Rob is working on the proposed plan and will be final by the end of this week.
- Vegetation modeling – working with Don Major to take the NOC data for LANDFIRE and separate it by land ownership. They created one dataset across the Great Basin. At the end of the re-run, will have outputs for projected conditions for 10/50 years; also, the amount of acres estimated for treatment that would be needed to restore habitat up to 70%. Will have numbers for BLM and FS ownership. Should be available in the next two weeks.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 28, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Natalie Cooper; Don Kemner; Mike McDonald; Bruce Schoeberl; Katie Powell; Kasey Prestwich; Karen Porter; Gloria Jakovac; Rob Mickelsen; Chris Colt; Jesse Rawson

Meeting Minutes

Section 7 Consultation Update

- Working closely with Boise and MT FWS offices. Finishing the northwest CO biological assessment this week and will use that as a template for the ID/MT biological assessment. Most significant issues is slickspot peppergrass, but will also consider impacts to grizzly bear, wolf and lynx. Will prepare a preliminary draft over the next three weeks for USFWS review. Afterwards, will determine the need for formal consultation.

Federal Family Meeting

- Meeting in Portland last week. Met with all state directors and staff from the Department. Meeting looked at whether management direction for each GRSG population was consistent with National Policy Team guidance. A lot of discussions over the week and items identified that need resolution. Some of the topics got pushed off until after the Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting in two weeks.
- For ID/MT plan, concerns raised, but no major changes made at the meeting. Issues included fluid minerals management; solar/wind energy and difference between avoidance/exclusion in Important areas; disturbance threshold is now a “disturbance cap”; buffers.
- WO working on buffers. ID/MT did a good job citing references and including rationale, but other subregions need better rationale/citations.
- Waivers language for fluid minerals: In the current plan, Core is closed in low/no potential areas; NSO and waiver in moderate/high potential areas (e.g., Bear Lake). Waiver tied to anthropogenic disturbance criteria. This will be changed to state that the NSO can be waived if you’re developing in non-habitat areas as determined by an interagency group of biologists.
- Fluid mineral allocations: will change our allocations so that Core and Important will be NSO with no waivers, exemptions, and modifications except for the one waiver above.
- Not much discussion about transmission lines, roads, etc.
- Disturbance cap – Frank Quamen from the NOC described the formulas for calculating disturbance. Some confusion about how the three percent cap will be calculated. Final decision was to send it back to the disturbance and monitoring subteam which will meet today. WO will finish their white paper on disturbance but will not release until after the Rocky Mountain federal family meeting.

Next Steps

- Larger schedule is that final decisions and adjustments from the Department should come in mid-October after the Great Basin, Rocky Mountain, and state meetings are completed.
- Brent will be working to finish proposed plan by the end of next week. Will then update the GIS and effects analysis and hope to have a working draft by the end of September.
- Not a lot of work for the team until the proposed plan is final.
- Next week, will review the Forest Service plan and GIS/maps.

Anticipated Development

- Call today to discuss the description of potential impacts and likely development in the planning area in the foreseeable future. Unsure of the scale of the effort at this point, but more details likely forthcoming on the call.

Other

- Treatment objectives for VDDT should be distributed by the end of next week. BLM acres will be presented by population area, Forest Service acres by Forest.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 4, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Rod Collins; Natalie Cooper; Bruce Schoeberl; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; Kasey Prestwich; Karen Porter; Dustin Miller; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None

Action Items

- None

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Having a federal family meeting for the Rocky Mountain Region next week. Compiling numbers on existing rights and activities for the USFWS. Utilize numbers from the DEIS for Montana.
- White paper on Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) – Brent shared with some staff for review and will also send to Kelly. Using 2011 data for population and habitat. In general, we are not close to the disturbance cap. May receive national guidance on how the disturbance cap will be calculated, but Brent has been working on some new possible calculations. Call at 10 am today to discuss disturbance.
- Process – waiting to hear about changes in the proposed plan. Have changed to a disturbance “cap” and the waiver, exemption, modification language has been changed. Will likely change Core habitat from closed to NSO for fluid mineral leasing.
- Meeting with GIS and Rob to review the Forest Service plan. Would like to ensure that maps are consistent across BLM and FS boundaries.

Proposed Plan Follow Up

- Lands –Core/Important are not available for disposal/sale. Need to review existing plans for any description of lands identified for sale. Check if these lands are in Core/Important and if so, need to clearly identify that they are no longer available for sale (by parcel description). 1) Review LUPs; 2) take legal descriptions and compare to map; 3) make separate appendix that states which parcels are no longer for sale.
- Forest Service Wild Horse Territory – none in our subregion.
- Comments related to livestock grazing and fire – Brent will have to follow up with some staff about this.

- Some concern over prescribed fire in less than 12 in precipitation zones. Pat was supposed to provide language. This language will be sent with the notes from the Great Basin federal family meeting.
- For areas post-rehabilitation, when do they meet the criteria to be called effective mitigation? Must meet the key habitat standard and needs to be consistent within the plan (e.g., Table 2).
- Anthropogenic disturbance criteria – regarding co-location in Important habitat, will rephrase to say that it would be located to minimize effects, if possible, through co-location in Important. This is because co-location may not be the best way to minimize impacts in all areas.
- Need to review the proposed plan to make sure we have addressed Montana appropriately.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 11, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Don Kemner; Bruce Schoeberl; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; Karen Porter; Ethan Ellsworth; Connie Breckenridge; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German

Handouts

- None

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Brent is almost done editing the proposed plan. A few items to follow up on.
- Disturbance meeting tomorrow. Have discussed doing a moving window analysis for the anthropogenic disturbance calculation. Showed that much of WY, eastern MT, UT, and OR are over the 3 percent cap. Other areas are under the 3% cap. This calculation doesn't roll up easily to a larger scale.
- Have been responding to questions from the Rocky Mountain meeting, such as a justification for three-tiered habitat management system.
- Brent will send out the BLM and Forest Service proposed plans with the allocation maps in the next couple of days.
- Brent scheduling a meeting with Montana staff in mid- to late October to make sure the proposed plan reflects their needs. Also reviewing the MT state GRSG plan that was just signed. Will need to incorporate that to some extent. Disturbance calculation and adaptive management still a question.
- Brent will share the BSU paper with the team.

Proposed Plan Additional Information/Work

- Implementation-related details needed (probably would not require changes to the proposed plan): 1) mitigation team and strategy (e.g., how the boards work); 2) the adaptive management evaluation process.
- Need definition of "high voltage" versus "minor rights-of-way". Check to see what the FS has and NPT recommends. Might be 100 kV.
- Brent will send Montana the habitat objectives table to review from their perspective.
- Rob is working on VDDT acres. Had a webinar yesterday to go over the results with Craig.
- How to manage habitat that is lost or gained? Lost habitat will still be managed for GRSG until there is a mapping plan amendment/adjustment on a five year basis. Some thought that gained/new GRSG habitat could be managed as general habitat, but since allocations are tied to

general habitat, changes would require a plan amendment. Don, Paul, and Ethan will work on criteria to include, such as following RDFs, seasonal restrictions, and buffers.

- Included broad prioritization language from the Great Basin Region federal family meeting that discourages use in Core/Important habitat and pushes uses outside of GRSG habitat.
- Continuing to work and identify lands for disposal in existing plans. When you acquire lands, they're not automatically open to mineral entry. Need to say that lands acquired would be managed for the appropriate management zone except not automatically open to minerals.
- Will need to augment the appendix describing project-level key habitat map adjustments based on site conditions/surveys. Ethan and Paul will work on this and share with others.
- Regarding disturbance, need to make sure that we are consistent in how ROWs are counted as disturbance. In the BSU description, it says we would follow the monitoring framework, but elsewhere it mentions ROW width.
- Waiting for the *Lepidium* conservation agreement to be signed. Will ensure those conservation measures are in our RDF appendix.
- Need to provide justifications/rationale for the decisions we made in the administrative record. List of items: Why 2011 for baseline? Why 10% and 20% change for adaptive regulatory triggers? Why is maximum number of males the appropriate measure? Why is 3% the disturbance cap? (need USFWS input on some of these).
- Questions about Forest Service versus BLM standards for grazing and what can be changed. Forest Service standards are designed to meet viability requirements for wildlife because of the certainty of implementation. Certainty of implementation is the same for Forest Service standards and guidelines, except that a standard needs a plan amendment to change. Biological benefit would be the same. Will have a meeting to discuss how GRSG concerns were incorporated into the Owyhee permit renewals. Implementation plans should help with consistency.
- Once the final EIS is out for internal review, would like to have a series of half-day or one-day workshops in each of the BLM district offices and including nearby Forests. Will have a presentation to the field on what the decisions are by program area. Then will work through some examples, to help with implementation Probably November at the soonest.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 18, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Katie Powell; Trisha Cracroft; Brandon Knapton; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Jesse German

Meeting Minutes

Meetings This Week and Ongoing

- Meeting in Reno regarding implementation of the FIAT.
- Another meeting in Reno with Deputy State Directors to talk general implementation planning.
- Meeting in DC this week with regional leads to discuss the federal family meeting outcomes. Brent has been responding to more questions on our plan.
- Coordination meeting with the states will be the week of October 9th. Unsure what the agenda is or intended outcomes.

Project Update

- We have been finishing GIS calculations and developing maps.
- Brent sent the next version of the draft proposed plan which highlights the actions that have been changed. Some further changes are being made to conifer objectives and additional language in mapping section regarding management areas. Very nearly complete.
- Brent will try to include the maps with the next version.
- Brent will be following up with state director Tim Murphy and sending final version to field and district office managers likely within the next week. Would like to put together a day-long workshop for each of the district offices (including BLM and FS staff), likely after the FEIS goes to WO for review.
- EMPSi starting on effects analysis and including revisions based on feedback from BLM and Forest Service, changes to the proposed plan, the Forest Service proposed plan, VDDT, and GIS. EMPSi staff will contact BLM staff if needed for input. Goal is to send all sections to lead BLM counterpart by next Friday and CC Brent and Meredith.
- Disturbance team met last Friday. Goal was to determine definitive scale and how it will be measured. Did not get conclusions on these topics. Will set up another call, but probably not this week due to other meetings.
- Awaiting outcomes and possible changes from federal family meetings, though some of the GBR outcomes have been incorporated into the current version of the plan.
- Staff have been working on the land tenure assignment. Some of the parcels are split between GRSG management zones. Decision was to take the whole parcel out of consideration for disposal if part of it is within GRSG habitat. Staff should identify split parcels. Due by the end of the month.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 25, 2014 11:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Kelly Bockting; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Karen Rice; Vince Guyer; Kasey Prestwich; Trisha Cracroft; Brandon Knapton; Rob Mickleson

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- There was a project management call for the Great Basin Region with an update on the project from the Washington Office
- A schedule has been prepared and is under review at the department level.
- At this point, specific dates have not been shared.
- Should be seeing the schedule in the next week or so.
- A couple policy decisions (below) have been made, though most won't specifically affect IDMT.
 1. A *No Net Unmitigated Loss* approach has been adopted across both RM and GB regions. IDMT's approach is linked to Key Habitat. We'll need to figure out and define what this means for MT.
 2. Lek Buffers: Right now a team of USGS scientists is reviewing literature on lek buffers in order to determine an approach on which lek buffers are best for various activities. IDMT did this already and submitted that information to the Washington Office and WO has commissioned the USGS to do the same thing.
 - The USGS team should have results back to BLM by October 6th. USGS is considering pulling in outside scientists and the Solicitor is looking into whether this would violate FACA (Federal Advisory Committee Act).
 - IDMT's approach won't be modified too much by the results of this research, since IDMT has already done this work within their subregion. This work is more likely to impact other subregions.
 3. Cumulative Effects Analysis: All the *Important* management zones will be lumped together with the *General* management zones for the CEA. This was a decision made by the WO Solicitors and is more of a worst-case-scenario look at cumulative effects. The tentative deadline of getting the CEA data to the NOC is the 2nd or 3rd week of October. For the most part it's all ready to go. This timeframe will be easy to meet.
 4. Record of Decision: Currently leadership is leaning towards the idea of having two RODs, one for each region (GB and RM).
 5. The final review of the FEIS won't be due to Washington until after the holidays. We're looking to have our pieces pulled together by after Thanksgiving and then hand that over to EMPSi for editing etc. so that we'll be on track to get everything to Washington by January.
 6. *This decision DOES impact IDMT*
 - We're changing the names of our management areas again.
 - We still have 3 habitat categories: Priority, Important, and General.

- These will now be referred to as *Habitat Management Areas*. We will now need to refer to our habitat categories as: PHMAs, IHMAs, and GHMAs.
- Other subregions will be using a similar naming convention.
- This will result in a lot of changes to our document, but it won't be impacting any substantive decisions we've made.
- This is most likely the final name change.

Work Items In Progress

- Brent has been working on a paper that describes the anthropogenic disturbance and adaptive management science and calculations. Brent will share this paper more broadly after it's been reviewed by Rob. Brent should be able to share this out by early next week.
 - October 24th will be the deadline to express any questions and concerns about this paper to Brent. If there are significant questions or concerns, please give Brent a call so these can be discussed.
- There is an information bulletin (IB) that will go out likely next week. It is currently being reviewed in the State Office. The IB transfers the Administrative Draft Proposed Plan and the Admin Appendices to District and FO managers that are involved in this process. This will probably result in workshops in January. The purpose of the workshops will be to share out pieces of the implementation strategy that have already been discussed, and also to discuss how to develop a final implementation plan to be included as part of the FEIS.
- EMPSi will send out revised sections to the BLM tomorrow (Friday). Please make sure you read through them and make sure they've captured all the important parts. When looking over the sections, consider the big picture and make sure the analysis captures that. Consider whether the section has captured all the management actions, whether the effects have been talked about, whether all administrative units have been accounted for (BLM, BLM MT, FS, FS MT, Sawtooth NF), and whether cumulative effects have been considered.
 - The timeline for the review of the section is as follows: EMPSi will get revised section to BLM on September 26th. The BLM will have until October 24th to review those sections and provide comments back to EMPSi. EMPSi will have until November 1st to turn those comments around and get the revised sections back to the BLM. The BLM will review the draft between November 1st and Thanksgiving. A pseudo-final draft will then be ready after Thanksgiving. The BLM will get one final look before the WO review in January.
 - These next 4 weeks are the last big look the BLM will get at these sections, so look carefully and be thorough.

Other

- There is a meeting scheduled in Montana at the Dillon Field Office on October 21st to go through the administrative draft proposed plan to make sure everything is captured for Montana. Kelly will look at the plan ahead of time to flag potential issues.
- There will be no call next week. Brent will be on leave starting next Wednesday.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

October 30, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Don Kemner; Mike McDonald; Karen Porter; Jon Beck; Kelly Bockting; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- Meeting next Tuesday in the ID SO at 1 pm to discuss task force and adaptive management items (tentative, pending attendee availability).
- Meredith will follow up with Zoe regarding the livestock grazing GIS request.

Meeting Minutes

Update on Washington Office Direction

- Several meetings with the state and the Department regarding state plans and adjustments by state. Twelve overall issues that USFWS is looking at (discussed below).
- Last week, state directors met prior to ELT meeting and reviewed these 12 issues. Refined the issues and will be providing direction. Had expected direction last week, but new USFWS memo has delayed this. No direction yet on how the memo will factor into the direction. Still numerous discussions ongoing. USFWS memo is not widely distributed. Should have final approach communicated either tomorrow or early next week.
- Dan Ashe and Neil Kornze briefing Sally Jewell tomorrow.

USFWS Issues to be Resolved

- In addition, 5 related sub-issues for ID/MT to address.
- 1. PAC boundaries in UT and NV. Does not apply to ID/MT.
- 2. Management decisions for populations that cross state lines (e.g., SW Idaho, SE Oregon, NW Nevada; Bear Lake in ID/UT/WY). Once national guidance received, may have further discussion about these differences in management and develop rationale for how the outcomes for the bird would be similar.
- 3. Monitoring, specifically regarding adaptive management. ID/MT plan is fairly descriptive: population triggers collected by the state; BLM will track habitat through key habitat map and annual updates.
- 4. Disturbance calculation. Unsure on how this will affect the ID/MT effort but hopeful we will be consistent with WO guidance and white paper that will be released.

- 5. Adaptive management. ID/MT has a good description of how adaptive management works in Idaho; need to finalize for MT. Will have a call/meeting next Tuesday at 1 pm to discuss remaining issues (removing adaptive management once measurements are below trigger level. In other words, reversing a tripped trigger).
- 6. Mixed ownership lands and allocations – state/private/BLM lands. Does not apply to ID/MT plan.
- 7. Lek buffers – USGS is reviewing lek buffers related to anthropogenic disturbance. They will provide feedback on what is the best science for each of the buffers. They are not providing the buffers, but reviewing the science. It was supposed to be received in early October, but has not been received.
- 8. ROW Avoidance and exclusion areas – some potential changes for ID/MT.
- 9. NSO and oil/gas – all core/important areas in ID/MT identified as NSO. RDFs include a 2 mile lek buffer around any occupied lek. Probably no changes for ID/MT.
- 10. Closures related to limiting disturbance in priority habitat. Probably no changes for ID/MT.
- 11. Mitigation – USFWS would like to see a commitment to do a mitigation strategy after the ROD. This language was in the appendix and will be pulled into our proposed plan.
- 12. How to address improper grazing. WO looking at this and developing different approaches. Brent and Nika have been providing feedback.
- 5 sub-issues for ID/MT – 1) commitment to mitigation; 2) management direction across state boundaries; 3) disturbance; 4) additional detail on how the implementation task force would function. Would be similar to the Idaho Roadless Rule- Brent has drafted an MOU to describe the intent behind how the task force would work; 5) adaptive management and untripping hard triggers – define criteria for removing a tripped trigger.

Effects Analysis

- Resolution of a few issues.
- Vegetation – in the DEIS, we used one layer for vegetation and VDDT. Now, new layer (LANDFIRE EVT) from NOC for VDDT. Should we use the old DEIS layer or the new NOC VDDT layer to calculate all vegetation?
- Rob recommends using EVT just for VDDT. For proposed plan, use old vegetation layer used in the DEIS. Will only need to calculate Alternative G vegetation requests.
- VDDT – likely need to run other alternatives with the new EVT vegetation layer.
- Livestock grazing and seasonal habitat – GIS request to identify acres open to grazing and AUMs in different GRS habitat (related back to the habitat objectives table). Forest Service will be providing the same details and BLM will share what they have been working on with Forest Service.
- Paul proposes lumping nesting and late brood-rearing habitat as there is no map available for late brood-rearing. Will call it “breeding/late brood” and will encompass lek, nesting, early and late brood-rearing habitats. This will be one map. MT is providing their inputs. Initially talked about calculating AUMs in winter habitat, but grazing is less important in winter habitat. Paul feels there would be no value added to quantify that for grazing analysis. He will include a table

in Chapter 3 (GRSG section) to quantify seasonal habitats and undetermined areas by population areas. For effects analysis (grazing section), table for each alternative showing acres open to grazing and AUMs but only focusing on breeding/late-brood habitat. Forest Service analysis will be pretty similar. Have a description in the table or text regarding why winter habitat was not calculated.

- Meredith will follow up with Zoe to make sure this meets the intent of her GIS request.
- Minerals – Karen will revisit the issues they were working through regarding locatable minerals.
- Jon may have some follow up calls with resource specialists.

Schedule

- Schedule is changing, but the last schedule had final EIS to WO after the holidays. Effects analysis completed by end November, early December. FEIS release mid-late March. Will get a new schedule once direction from WO comes out.

Next Week

- Will have another 2 hour call next week and may have a webinar to go through various items and new direction.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

December 11, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Don Kemner; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; Karen Porter; Dustin Miller; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.

Meeting Minutes

Washington Office Updates

- No guidance has been provided yet on the outstanding issues. Told that we would receive direction today.
- BLM and USFWS still discussing adaptive management triggers across state lines.
- Data call last week to compare buffers developed in ADPP to USGS report.

Schedule

- No updated schedule.
- Idaho meeting scheduled for next week to discuss the project.

Buffers

- Informational meeting yesterday to review buffer table provided for buffer data call. Discussed inconsistencies between buffer table and USGS table. Did not decide anything, but wanted to start discussions.
- Noticed some of the buffers were below the USGS recommendations. Determined that, in combination with other management actions (e.g., disturbance criteria), the buffers are adequate.
- Had further conversations regarding unleased fluid minerals and transmission lines.
- RDF table and buffer table don't always match. Would like buffers and RDFs in one location. Some RDFs would be required all the time, other would be required when/where appropriate. Told that we could not have BMPs. Need to cross reference RDFs with NTT RDFs. Major difference between original RDFs are the West Nile virus changes.
- Want to make sure the RDFs aren't conflicting with the disturbance criteria.
- Suggest keeping BMPs in the buffers table instead of pulling into RDFs table.
- Diane has been making maps showing different buffers around the leks.

Other

- Brent is almost done with ADPP. Need to pull in adaptive management flow chart and describe implementation team. Will be done by tomorrow.

- Responding to SOL about mapping adjustments. Description of management areas and how they changed between draft and final to ensure they are within the range of alternatives. Will be included in FEIS as an appendix.
- Cooperators – No call today and put team on hold until we get direction. Hoping to have a call in January once information is available. Can send notes from the Next Step conference.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

December 18, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Jon Beck; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Natalie Cooper; Don Kemner; Trisha Cracraft; Johanna Munson; Kelly Bockting; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Jesse Rawson; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- Combined buffer table
- RDF table

Action Items

- None.

Meeting Minutes

Update from the Washington Office

- No call next week. Next call on Jan 8th.
- Expect to get direction from WO on a number of issues soon, possibly today. Issues we are expecting guidance on include: highly important landscapes; mitigation; mapping direction (UT and NV only); disturbance language; vegetation objectives; grazing modifications; salable minerals; major pipelines/ROW/corridors; fluid minerals; and NSO and exception/modification language.
- Still outstanding – buffers and adaptive management (tripping triggers for populations that cross state lines).
- NOC waiting for data to start on CEA.
- No schedule yet.

Review of RDF Table

- Worked to consolidate buffer table and remove duplicates with RDF table. Want the tables to be useable by the managers/field. Reviewed buffer table and cross-checked with ADPP and RDF. Moved buffers into a stand-alone table.
- Review of RDFs table and concerns.
- Questions about column headers. If not appropriate, why would the RDF be applied? Should we delete the 2nd column? Text prior to the table explains the columns. Consider changing column 2 header to “RDF when appropriate to meet GRSG habitat objectives”
- #2: Concerns about specifying 10 dbA. Specify that disturbance would be from mechanized equipment and permitted commercial activity. Check national guidance from Lauren.
- #31: Delete.
- #138: Jon will check against national direction.

Review of Buffer Table

- Roads – maintenance levels specified in Appendix G.
- No buffer for locatables and leasables because these are included in the RDF table.
- Keep wind energy management as it is unless we hear otherwise from WO. Change RDF from “avoid” to “discourage” new development in nesting/winter habitat.

Other

- Should practice implementing buffers and ADPP on a sample project.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

January 8, 2015 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Jon Beck; Paul Makela; Bruce Schoeberl; Ethan Ellsworth; Karen Porter; Josh Uriarte; Dustin Miller; Trisha Cracroft; Sandy Leach; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Have been waiting for guidance from the Washington Office (Department of Interior level). Most issues they were working on have been finalized. Direction expected Jan 15/16 and they will have a webinar to roll out the direction. Jon will send webinar details to the team when he receives them.
- Still waiting on decision regarding how to use buffers.
- Expect another webinar on January 20th with the NOC to kickoff the data call for the cumulative effects analysis.
- There are also questions that arose from the Federal family meeting last year that have yet to be resolved. We are waiting on further direction on these.
- No schedule has been delivered yet.
- Team had questions regarding “SuperPAC”s. We are unsure of how these will be applied, but this was one of the issues that they have been working on. Expect direction on January 15/16.
- Intend to have weekly calls at this time.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

January 22, 2015 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees (incomplete list): Brent Ralston; Jon Beck; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Ethan Ellsworth; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.
- None.

Meeting Minutes

Brief Project Update

- We are still waiting for direction on the unresolved items from the WO. Meetings and briefings have been ongoing this week and we anticipate having the final resolution tomorrow. Jon will send the final direction once it is received.
- Timeline – Will be submitting data for the Tier II CEA to regional PMs by 2/17. Jon will schedule a webinar for next week to review the allocations prior to submittal to ensure the data are correct. Once submitted, the data will not be changed.
- While not formal schedule has been received from the WO, anticipate a WO review draft in May.
- Forest Service has a separate plan that will be included in the EIS. Some of the allocations may be different and will need to be submitted with the BLM allocations for the CEA analysis.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

October 23, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Karen Porter; Natalie Cooper; John Beck; Ethan Ellsworth; Vince Guyer; Jesse German (or another Jesse in Shoshone) [Brent – I came on a minute late and may be missing a few individuals]

Meeting Minutes

News on Management Transition

- Brent will be transitioning to a new opportunity and John Beck will be taking over Brent's role as the Sage-Grouse planning lead.
- Brent will stay involved to complete the proposed plan (goal is to complete this over the next 2 weeks) and John will step in to work on the effects analysis. John will be working with EMPSi and the ID Team to review and revise sections.

Five Major Concerns about the Proposed Plan that need to be addressed

- FWS expressed concerns about mitigation. They'd like to see a commitment in the plan regarding the timeline for the implementation of mitigation measures. This information already exists but it is in an appendix. Brent will pull this information out of the appendix and put it in the plan.
- FWS also had questions about adaptive management- "untriggering." What does BLM plan to do if an adaptive management trigger is tripped, but then the habitat/population recovers? Is there a reversal of triggers set up?
 - Brent will set up a call for early next week to discuss this.
- FWS also is concerned about how triggers and adaptive management will work for populations that cross the border.
- FWS would like to see more specifics on how BLM plans to work with other players like the state implementation team, adaptive planning team, etc. on implementation. The plan needs to discuss the details of this.
- The Solicitors want to understand where IDMT stands regarding disturbance.

Update on RMP/EIS Efforts

- There have been several meetings recently between state directors and the states, and each state is being met with one-on-one to discuss the specific state plans and how that integrates with the federal plan. Idaho's was last week and went well.
- This week state directors got together to talk about consistency. Until we see what they discussed, it doesn't make sense to talk about and make decisions on adaptive management.

Proposed Plan

- Any comments/questions/concerns about the Proposed Plan are due to Brent by COB tomorrow, Friday, 10/24.
- We'll make the changes we can based on comments and if there are things that can't change due to direction from higher up, we'll note that in the record and move on.
- Have PAC boundaries changed? At this point the boundaries are the same- no one has yet mentioned changing them. The FIAT identifies "focus" and "emphasis" areas and it would be highly problematic if the FIAT recognized a high priority focus or emphasis area that is outside of priority habitat. To address this concern, the BLM will be including language about how habitat maps can be re-evaluated if FIAT identifies focus/emphasis areas that are in general habitat areas.
- EMPSi has created a new template for us to use.

Next Steps

- Once the Proposed Plan is done, it should be complete other than format tweaking. There will be no more discussion or revisions after that. After that we'll need to get GIS, numbers, tables and maps done. Then GIS will be completely done. There may be a little GIS/map clean-up work after this point, but that's it. The next big piece will be the effects analysis. We have about 6 weeks from today to get that done- aiming to finish that by the end of November. After that we can disband the sub-regional ID Team.
- After that point we'll just be stepping forward with the decision. During the 1st or 2nd week of December we should be pulling together the final EIS so we can send it to DC around the first of the year.
- The next three pieces are the Proposed Plan, the comment report, and the effects analysis.
- We currently have all the sections for Chapter 4. John will be looking at them and sitting down with each of the teams to address comments/concerns.
- There will likely be one more version of the effects analysis sent out for review, and then after that, the final version will be the last version.
- When the final comes out there will be a protest period and governor's review, and then the ROD, which says whether we are deciding to go forward with the Proposed Plan.
- There will be one major work effort between the Final and the ROD. We're going to have to step through the Proposed Plan and all our old plans and look at all management actions in existing plans to determine which management actions are being replaced by the Proposed Plan. That way we can include in the ROD which decisions in existing plans are no longer applicable due to the Proposed Plan. The time frame for this will be sometime between February and April.
- This effort will require some IDT folks, but the push may be more at the district/field manager level.

- When we're comparing the Proposed Plan to existing plans to see if we need to replace any management actions, will we have the ability to tweak language? Or will we need to take actions 100% as they are?
 - We will need to take actions as they are- no tweaking.
- Will there be meetings when the FEIS is on the street?
 - There will be implementation meetings which will involve all program leads. Protest response may require some district and field office help, but may be an effort that focuses primarily on the program leads in the state office.
- Brent hasn't made many changes to Chapter 1 since April. Plans to make a few changes and then will send to EMPSi. For Chapter 2- the Proposed Plan is in the works and Meredith is working on the rest of Chapter 2. Brent will send to that to EMPSi who will put it in the new format. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4- these are the pieces that we're working on now with the effects analysis. We will need to deal with similar sections in both these chapters at the same time.
- We will not putting the text of the document into ePlanning. We'll pdf all chapters and upload those to ePlanning so people can download them.

Other

- There will be a call next Thursday. Plan on an hour-long Thursday call every week from now until we're done with the effects analysis. Next Thursday's meeting may be in a webinar format and may be a little longer than an hour.

Tanya
Jesse 2 Copies to Kelly

Elena 1 MT - Help priority to General
Jim FS/FWP FS acres - General or Not
Mike MT - Hwy Mobility Map

Gloria

Kelly 2 North Snake

Pat Core BLM wants to make Priority areas in
North Side Big Desert, Nimitz

Canby

3 South Side
Leave AS general

4 South side Snake
General Habitat in NITE North of Cattrell - last potential link
for SG North/South
Help Jim Sage & Cattrell in priority
Add Goose Creek, FS on Cynlow

5 Bear Lake
Core

Art

Get USFWS contact

Rick

Catherine

No Grazing - Perception of Local operators

John

what has already been shared

John Carlson

section in document decisions not ripe for review

Kelly

Big Horn Basin RMP - SG mapping change

Gregory Fragg

Dave Myers

3% is an objective in one alternative but pulled from other alternatives

Perry

3% of all areas within a polygon or only habitat?

Pat Fosse

Rob Michelson

pull out 3% from Subregional only display in NTJ

Carolina Wilson

Jeff Bergland ^{USFWS}

other state agencies to coordinate with in Montana

Bruce Esmail ^{USFWS}

Name	Agency	e-mail
Robert Mickelsen	USFS	rmickelsen@fs.fed.us
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Pat Fosse	BLM	pfosse@blm.gov

Dillon Sage Grouse RMP Amendment Coordination Meeting
February 07, 2013

GOAL: ensure that all parties involved are familiar with the work that has been completed to date and the deadlines that are approaching, also to reach a consensus on alternatives and future involvement.

Location: Dillon Field Office Conf. Room

Time: 1:00-5:00pm

Key Invited Participants:

- Idaho/SW MT EIS Team Lead (Brent Ralston)
- BLM Dillon Field Office (Kelly Bockting, Pat Fosse, Cornelia Hudson)
- BLM Montana State Office (Theresa Hanley, Sandy Brooks, John Carlson, John Thompson)
- BLM Western Montana District Office (Rick Hoteling)
- Montana FWP (Catherine Wightman, Craig Fager)
- US FWS (Jeff Berglund, Brent Esmoil)
- FS Sub-regional Coordinator (Rob Mickelson)
- FS Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest (Dave Myers, Chuck Mark, Peri Suenram, Art Rohrbacher)

Agenda:

Facilitator: Pat Fosse

1:00-1:20 Project Status and Timeline (Brent Ralston)

1:20- 2:20 How the alternatives relate to the current Dillon RMP/ Dillon RMP decisions in need of Amendment (Brent Ralston/Kelly Bockting)

2:20 - 3:20 How the alternatives relate/will be adapted to the Beaverhead/Deerlodge Forest Plan (Rob Mickelson)

BREAK – 10 minutes

3:30 - 4:00 NTT compliance meeting the 3% disturbance threshold and BMP's, discussion on how to maintain consistency with other MT RMP revisions. (John Carlson, Brent Ralston, Kelly Bockting)

4:00 – 4:15 Resource Specialist needs from B-D and DFO for Chapter 4 impact analysis review. (Brent Ralston, Rob Mickelson)

4:15- 4:30 Regional Management Team and National Policy Team Reviews and the involvement of local FWS and MT FWP personnel. Governor's consistency review/ Decisions signed by MSO/FS. (John Thompson)

4:30 - 5:00 Questions, other topics open for discussion.



**National Greater Sage-Grouse
Idaho & Southwestern Montana Sub Region
Summary of Alternatives To Be Analyzed in Detail**



1. **Alternative A – No Action**
 - a. Idaho BLM & FS - Continuation of present management
 - b. Montana BLM & FS – Continuation of present management
2. **Alternative B – National Technical Team Report**
 - a. Idaho & Montana BLM & FS – Management action and guidance described in the National Technical Team Report. Occupied habitat is prioritized into Priority (preliminary priority habitat or PPH) and General (preliminary general habitat or PGH) areas with associated goals, objectives and management actions
3. **Alternative C – Citizen Proposed Conservation Recovery within Occupied Habitat (PPH & PGH) including No Grazing**
 - a. This alternative would follow direction submitted to BLM during scoping, primarily from Western Watersheds Project. It includes nomination of ACECs and removing grazing (potentially allocation decision) from occupied habitat (PPH and PGH) public lands, to assess the impact to sage-grouse habitat of removing livestock. All occupied habitat (PPH and PGH) is addressed with the same priority.
4. **Alternative D – ID/swMT Sub Regional Agency Alternative**
 - a. Idaho BLM & FS and Montana FS – Management actions addressing threats by BLM programs area. Occupied habitat (PPH and PGH) is prioritized into Core, Important and General areas, similar to the State approach, although the spatial size and location of these areas differs. Each area has specific goals, objectives and management actions identified.
 - b. Montana BLM – Continuation of present management with additional direction from specific components of the Idaho BLM & FS sub regional approach.
 - i. The Dillon RMP is a recently completed plan that considered the relevant science and direction delineated in the NTT Report. Dillon has completed and evaluation of the existing RMP guidance and found it to be largely consistent with the NTT Report.
5. **Alternative E – Governor’s Task Force Approach/State Alternative**
 - a. Idaho BLM & FS – Management actions addressing primary threats: wildfire, invasive species, and infrastructure; and to a lesser extent, addressing secondary threats: recreation and livestock grazing. Occupied habitat (PPH & PGH) is prioritized into Core, Important and General areas with associated goals, objectives and management actions identified.
 - b. Montana BLM & FS – Continuation of present management with additional direction from specific components of the Idaho BLM & FS sub regional approach. The State government worked with the BLM in developing the existing management.
 - c. Utah FS – Management actions provided from Utah Governor.
6. **Alternative F – Publically Proposed Conservation/Recovery**
 - a. Idaho and Montana BLM & FS - Management actions designed to promote recovery of habitat and sage-grouse described in a detailed proposal submitted through the scoping process. Occupied habitat is delineated into Priority, General and Restoration areas (PPH & PGH) with associated management direction for each area.

Karen Rice	fire
Gloria	Priorities
Jason Wright	
Michael Kupper	
Nurse Adams	Habitat Restoration
Jesse Lawson	Livestock as a managed tool
Jon Beck	Continuity/consistency between kids / range / way
Meredith	
Don Kumar	Limits & reality
Rob Michelsen	ROW exclusion / avoidance & spatial context
Jason Pagon	
Kelly Becking	
Catherine Johnson	Minerals
K/m Donly	meeting next week with Mark
	Range / Wild Horses
	Livestock as a managed tool - authorized use vs specific work (veg)
	Recreation
	Valid Existing Rights
	Nesting cover - Rob
	Compile new

SD & state coordination

No net conservation loss

Virgil - Idaho - state and private would await federal approach
have now begun to move forward

1. Key elements of state plan are the things integrated into BLM ADPP
will use those components as state addresses state & private lands

CoT Threats - some yeses should be depicted as smaller or more limited
threats

Dustin - stay focused on RMP process for work on federal properties
strong working relationship with state/BLM/USFWS
looking at complementary approaches on non federal properties.

2. Discuss approach with state lands department

3. mitigation, monitoring & AM - 3 tiered habitat approach which supports the adaptive
management and mitigation. Approach

4. USFWS supports 3-tiered approach

Gilly - RFPAs - impact on major threat - wildfire, funding from legislature for monitoring

Virgil - USFWS supports - still developing mitigation, USFWS supports the entire approach
described in BLM ADPP for Idaho. Great support for 3-tier

Neil Horne - USFWS support of Idaho 3-tier? ^{USFWS} But have not made a final determination on
anyones plans.

Further formal USFWS feedback? No clear answer.

9/23/19

Friday SD meeting Friday 12 PST 1:00

→ No NO Unmitigated Loss - Europe to use
LH Buffers - VSGS to solidity process, Solicitor looking at list for FACA
October 6 Team recommendations to BLN

Cumulative Effects Analysis

Important zones to how to handle - lump with General for CEA

October 22 Data to NOC

Nomenclature EMA/GMA PHMA, HMA

Habitat management Areas

Two Webinar - Roddy + Grand Basin

SD responsibility

SD 30 R-S Eastern on Tuesday State Webinar

Meetings - 1 large WO, NPI Briefing

Wings & Roots

Doug McConaghey	Tribe has a cultural resource protection plan
Jim Fincher	MAKE sure Tribal comment is noted on agenda
Ted Howard	
Buster	Ted did see ADGIS
Gary	
Tom Murphy	Follow up with Jim to get on agenda for September
Terry Humphrey	
Kirk Halford	
Kurt Wickman	
Tricia Roller	
Jon Sullivan	
Amee Bitts	
Katie Wood	
Michelle	
Mike	
Lance Okison	

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, July 24, 2014 3:07 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: IDT call notes
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-07-24.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from this morning's meeting.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

July 24, 2014 10:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Rod Collins; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Karen Porter; Natalie Cooper; Bruce Schoeberl; Kathleen Hendrick; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- BLM IDT will review comment report and send revisions to EMPSi.
- EMPSi will send the latest comment report.
- EMPSi ID team will send their current drafts of the proposed plan impacts analysis to their BLM counterparts.

Meeting Minutes

Project Status Update

- Administrative draft proposed plan went out to internal team and cooperators. Comments due tomorrow. Brent will be making changes in response to comments.
- Forest Service proposed plan has been in development for a while. Forest Service developed a template that would apply to all subregions. Rob has been customizing it for the subregion, incorporating the adaptive management strategy and biologically significant unit for the disturbance calculation. Intent is that the approach and scale is the same as BLM, just needs to be put into FS direction. Some questions remain on MT management.
- Next week – review of Forest Service proposed plan by all forests in ID and make necessary revisions. Final FS plan is due to FS management August 1.
- Comment report – EMPSi will send a new report by early next week. BLM IDT to review responses.
- Montana – working to determine their adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance management. Anticipate that anthropogenic disturbance will be consistent with WY direction. Still unsure of the adaptive management strategy.

Schedule

- Short-term goal is to finish proposed plan, including Forest Service and BLM components.
- Hope to get GIS completed in the next few weeks to finish impacts analysis.
- EMPSi keeping a list of changes for the other alternatives, but this is not the focus right now.
- NOC is nearly done with their calculations for the roll up and cumulative effects analysis.

- Another federal family meeting in August for BLM, FS, USFWS to discuss proposed plans, mapping across state boundaries. Unsure whether there will be state involvement.
- Compare proposed plan and comments from USFWS. How they were addressed.
- After federal family meeting, FEIS will be prepared within 2 weeks to share with National Policy Team and cooperators, then go to print in the fall.
- ROD – unsure whether there will be one ROD for the western US or for the Great Basin Region, with sub-decisions for each sub-region.

ESA Consultation and Biological Assessment

- Scott Hoefer is the local contact. Agreement was that Forest Service would write the BAs and do most of the consultation since a lot of the species are on Forest land. However, in Idaho, have slickspot peppergrass – concerns that there will be impacts on this species from GRSG management. BLM may need to help prepare the BA for this species.
- Would like to incorporate the conservation measures in the latest conservation agreement. Meeting tomorrow morning to review and agree on the 2014 version of the conservation agreement.
- USFWS indicates that BLM will need formal consultation for this species. Want to ensure that consultation for the LUPA will be sufficient when site-specific consultation is needed.
- Make sure the team is in contact with Level I team for Boise (Brandon) and Twin Falls (Kate Forster) districts, as this might help streamline the process.
- Chris Colt (Forest Service) updated the group on the status of the BA. The consultation group (BLM, USFWS, FS) has been meeting and reviewing the list of species. Main species at issue is the slickspot peppergrass. Have been tailoring the BA template to the ID/MT subregion. Completed GIS overlay (acres and maps) of GRSG habitat on the different critical habitats.

New and Ongoing Components

- Received final FIAT report. Wildfire and invasive species assessments will be included as part of the plan and appendices. There will be an associated IM which is supposed to be out by the end of this week. Will be identifying members of teams by field office that will be conducting the assessments. Will likely start assessments prior to the final. Timeframes are uncertain.
- Monitoring framework plan will be incorporated.
- Still working to define the biologically significant units (BSUs) to calculate the adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance. Hoping to finalize this with Forest Service and USFWS today.

Document Status

- Chapter 1 – Brent is making some changes
- Chapter 2 – Meredith has been making changes
- Chapter 3 – making a few GIS changes.

- Chapter 4 – teams have met, reviewed assumptions, GIS requests, and proposed plan. Assumptions almost complete – need to finish up minerals.
- EMPSi will send the current versions of their impact analysis to their BLM counterparts and will CC Brent.

Agenda

1. Coordination
 - a. Social and Economic Workshop
 - i. Thanks to all participants
 - ii. Several attendees in person and via web-ex
 - b. Cooperating Agencies
 - i. Finalizing MOUs
 1. Cassia, Power, Jefferson, Owyhee, Lemhi and Twin Falls.
 - ii. Work on INL, ID OSC and MT FWP
 - iii. Next Call July 5th 10-12
 - c. Tribal Coordination
 - i. Meeting with Wings and Roots after this call
2. Alternative Development – ID/swMT Alt
 - a. Process
 - i. Final Product – a comprehensive approach addressing all PPH/PGH in ID/swMT. Organized into a hierarchical structure with specific goals and objectives related to sage-grouse, accompanied by management actions to support those goals and objectives.
 - b. Components
 - i. ACECs
 1. Relevance and Importance evaluation is 90% complete – need to finish Idaho Falls, Dillon, MT and Forest Service.
 2. Preliminary Report to be share with managers for final approval – likely in August.
 3. Preliminary findings that areas within PPH meet relevance and importance values. Some nominations overlap and in many cases the different boundaries proposed do not inform or reflect specific conditions within the nomination.
 4. All PPH nominations will be carried forward in Conservative (Recovery) alternative. Internal proposals will be displayed in ID/swMT Specific Alt. Others will be displayed where appropriate.
 - c. Valid Existing Rights/Authorizations/Uses
 - i. Discussed mapping and display concern. Approach will be to describe groupings of existing developments, rights, etc. that have similar effects to sage-grouse and associated specific conservation measures/management actions that would be applicable and appropriate to apply in those areas when appropriate to help reduce impacts to sage-grouse or their habitat.
 - ii. Some Districts have provided an initial list, need to compile a comprehensive list across the sub region. Initial list will be utilized with additions – will finalize this in the Fall.
 - d. PPH/PGH Adjustment – areas missed by models/ground truth.
 - e. ID/swMT Alt
 - i. Stratification – Meeting in Pocatello next week to look at the state from the birds view and delineate some organizational structure through which to define goals, objectives and management actions.
 - ii. Goals, Objectives and Management Actions – each resource use identified in NTT to review NTT, other alternative approaches, no action description,

scoping alternative suggestions to develop goals and objectives (caveat) and management actions to support those goals and objectives.

- iii. Work Assignments
 1. Team assignments
 2. Expectations - GOAs
3. Administrative Record
4. Existing Condition Write-ups
5. Anything else that we have time for
6. Summary
 - a. Today – assign teams, post on Sharepoint applicable useful documents
 - b. Monday – PPH Stratification
 - c. Next Week
 - i. Develop stratification map and share with team
 - ii. Each Team to work on developing applicable area delineations and goals, objectives and management actions within those areas
 - d. July 13th – Each team to submit rough area descriptions with map if possible and associated goals, objectives and management actions
 - e. July 16-20th – SO to review these descriptions and guidance; develop mapps for discussion
 - f. July 24th – All Sub Regional ID Team Meeting – Alternatives Development Workshop in Boise, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
 - g. July 25th – August 3rd – Teams for finalize descriptions and goals, objectives and management actions
 - h. August 6th – Teams submit final versions to SO
 - i. Follow-up as necessary.

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

IDAHO SAGE-GROUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MAY 28 AND 29, 2014



LOCATION: Idaho Department of Fish and Game Headquarters
600 S. Walnut, Boise, Idaho

Attendance

The following individuals attended all or part of the May 28 and 29, 2014 Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting:

John Beals (OSC)	Stephen Goddard (IWF)	Katie Powell (USFWS)
Donna Bennett (Owyhee LWG)	Wendy Green (West Central LWG)	Wendy Pratt (East Idaho Uplands LWG)
Jared Brackett (Jarbidge LWG)	Vince Guyer (Challis LWG)	Brent Ralston (BLM)
Lynn Burtenshaw (Upper Snake LWG)	Don Kemner (IDFG)	John Robison (ICL)
Sam Chandler (Big Desert LWG)	Karen Launchbaugh (Univ. of Idaho)	Kabel Satterwhite (Shoshone LWG)
Courtney Conway (Univ. of Idaho)	Paul Makela (BLM)	Megan Satterwhite (Shoshone LWG)
Jack Depperschmidt (DOE)	Dustin Miller (OSC)	Richard Savage (ICA)
Brett Dumas (Idaho Power)	Ann Moser (IDFG)	Scott Scroggie (PF)
Dave Ellis (Challis LWG)	Dallan Nalder (Curlew LWG)	Alison Squier (Facilitator)
Diane French (IDL)	Rochelle Oxarango (IWG)	Will Whelan (TNC)
Chris Gaughan (IDFG)	John Peavey (North Magic Valley LWG)	

MEETING OBJECTIVES: Support restoration and recovery of sage-grouse and their habitats
Provide venue for information sharing and discussion

Wednesday May 28, 2014

1. Welcome, introductions and review agenda

Don Kemner with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Alison Squier, the facilitator reviewed the agenda and asked if there were any suggested changes or additions; there were none.

2. Update on BLM/FS Sage-grouse EIS Process

Brent Ralston (BLM) provided an update on the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-grouse Draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

He explained that they are currently in the step between the Draft and Final EIS and reviewed the schedule for the next steps:

- November 2013 – Release Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- November 2013 to January 2014 – Public Comment Period

- January 2014 – Public Comment Meetings
- February to June 2014 – Analyze Public Comments and Response
- March to June 2014 – Develop Administrative Draft Proposed Plan
- July to September 2014 – Internal Review
- September to December 2014 – Release Final Environmental Impact Statement

Over 15,000 individual comments were received on the draft EIS. Those 15,000 comments included form letters from four different groups. There were approximately 300 unique and substantive submissions. Multiple comments were categorized into 33 separate categories. Sub-regional interdisciplinary teams have developed initial responses. Regional teams are currently reviewing and refining those for consistency.

Brent said that at this time he couldn't go into detail regarding the plan right now because it is not releasable to the public. But he did review the basic plan components, which include:

- Delineation of Sage-Grouse Conservation Areas and Management Zones
- Incorporation of Sage-Grouse Vegetation/Habitat Objectives
- Required Design Features
- Seasonal and Timing Restrictions and Buffers
- Adaptive Management Strategy and Anthropogenic Disturbance Cap
- Mitigation Board and Strategy
- Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments by Field Office
- Program Direction
- Monitoring

The EIS includes conservation areas and management zones. The conservation areas include definition of the scope and scale for adaptive management and disturbance measurements. Three management zones are identified: core, important and general. Management zones identify areas of application for program management actions.

Best management practices are required not optional and are now called required design features. These are common and consistent among all alternatives. All projects conducted in sage-grouse management zones would incorporate: habitat (vegetation) management objectives, have required design features, incorporate seasonal and timing restrictions, and include appropriate lek buffers.

The proposed plan will incorporate an Adaptive Management Strategy with specific habitat and population triggers. The proposed plan will include an anthropogenic disturbance cap to inform development activities and function as an adaptive management trigger. Both are applied and measured within a conservation area – not the whole state. The Adaptive Management Strategy says that if you lose some habitat or birds in core areas, what we want to do is further protect those by making management action more restrictive.

Mitigation for projects would be required in all sage-grouse habitat. The mitigation hierarchy is to 1) avoid, 2) minimize, and 3) compensate. The proposed plan will include delineation of a State Interagency Mitigation Board. The Board's first task will be to develop a mitigation strategy for the WAFWA region.

The details for the wildfire and invasive species assessments are still under development by the fire and invasives assessment team. After the ROD each field office will develop a wildfire and invasive species assessment. The Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas/treatment

opportunities for fuels management, fire management, and restoration. These assessments identify priority areas and describe strategies for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities. This brings it down to the ground level.

The proposed plan will include a monitoring strategy that incorporates indicators and approaches to inform broad, mid and fine scale assessment.

Questions and Discussion:

- Dave E. – One of the concerns from our area where we have a lot of high quality sage-grouse habitat, and there may be higher restrictions, is are we going to end up in situation where resource users in those core areas would be so highly restricted that we're almost being penalized for actions we've taken in the past to manage that habitat and take care of it?
 - Brent R. – I've heard that concern that we've got good habitat in our area and we've taken care of it, we don't want impacts from what's happened in other areas to affect us. That's why we've got the conservation area approach so that we can localize responses as appropriate, so that if something happens in the south, that doesn't affect folks in the north.
- Dave E. – Yes, that was part of the concern. But it is more the concern that we've got so much high quality habitat up there; so are we going to be held to such high standards that we can't operate at all. We want to acknowledge that we've taken good care of our habitat and not be punished for that.
 - Brent R. – The delineation of management zones will mean that if you're in a core area the bar will be higher. It's through that approach of managing that core area that we keep the bird off the list. But when we start looking at activities, there are some narrow exemptions. That's where some of the other management applications dovetail to give you some flexibility.
- Wendy P. – Can you clarify the level at which 3% disturbance applies? Is that a management zone or conservation area?
 - Brent R. – It would be within the conservation area, but would focus more within the habitat. It wouldn't be the general areas.
- Steve G. – When I read the plan and am looking at the difference of size of the 3 different areas I see that there was tremendous variation of the size depending on which alternative you looked at. Not only is there a huge difference in size, but also a drastic difference between restrictions that apply in those different areas. What's been done to deal with those conflicts?
 - Brent R. – When you're doing an interdisciplinary team process with biologists, etc. we're always taught there's one answer. But as a planner to go through process you have to consider multiple answers. I made the case across the great basin sub-region that we need to look at variations of what that map really is. When you look at our draft, we have a very broad range of mapping allocations among the alternatives. We wanted to describe that there are differences of effects depending on where you draw the lines regardless of the management applications. Also, we've developed a range within the map too. We've had lots of discussions about what's in and what's out, and why, on the final map. The map that we have has been vetted a lot more than it would have other ways. We have the rationale in the record for why what is there is there.

- Steve G. – You didn't address why there are different management applications and different triggers. What's been done with review to resolve those differences?
 - Brent R. – It is a similar answer to the map, I have to be a little vague at this point because we can't release it to the public yet. We've had a lot of robust discussions around the adaptive management strategy. The adaptive management strategy and map are part and parcel of the decision. We've talked a lot about what are the triggers, what are the triggers based on, and what is the rationale for those triggers.
- John P. – What happens to designation of core, general etc. when a fire comes and burns through a designated area?
 - Brent R. – We've wrestled with that question. You are all familiar with the key habitat map. The key habitat map is where we track all that information about fire, etc. We tried to marry those up with the core habitat map. We want to be able to adjust that annually, but once we do that it becomes a plan amendment decision to change that map. That's kicks you into a two-year process. That's not where we want to be. So what we did is set up the core management zones as fixed map for 5 years, then every 5 years we would look at the key habitat map and link them up. The key habitat map will still be updated annually, which provides directions for fuels treatments, etc. We set up process where we have management application areas, e.g., core, etc. But within the core are we have a key habitat map that's behind that. So when you decide you're going to do a fuel treatment in a core area, you would go to the key habitat map. That will help guide where you go to maximize you funds application. We'll change the map if there are enough changes in five years on the key habitat map.
- Lynn B. – A concern I have is that we're seeing leks depredated by wolves. You said you have biologists sitting in the room talking about what would happen, but you didn't have ranchers in same room talking about what they see happening, and also talking about economics. I'm concerned about that. Now we've got a voracious predator like the wolf on top of the raven. Is there going to be any mitigation for the new super predator that's been introduced? How do you address that in this framework? Will there be someone on the mitigation board that represents ranchers?
 - Brent R. – That's a good question for the mitigation board to think about how that plays into the strategy and framework. I don't have a good answer to that that right now. That's something that will be looked at by the mitigation boards.
- Lynn B. – You talked about lek buffers, on one ranch we have IDFG put a two-mile buffer zone around known leks, so I couldn't use my ranch at all. Then they overlaid the brood area and I couldn't use my ranch during that season. I've never seen leks there. I'm concerned about leks and lek buffers. You could end up having a situation where you never see birds.
 - Brent R. – The lek buffers we've looked at are trying to tease out anthropogenic effects e.g., wind farm, power lines, etc.
- Jared B. – With fire being #1 threat I'm glad to see fuel treatments identified, but I have questions about what fuel treatments include. In our area we've seen a lot of improper livestock grazing e.g., 5 to 10% grazing instead of 20% or more to do fuel reduction. It a knee jerk reaction to just restrict grazing altogether not taking into account that it is one of our best protections against fire. If we continue the cycle of restrictions instead of proper management, and we have nothing left to protect for our livelihoods, there's no reason for us to stay out

there. I'm using the term proper livestock grazing intentionally. If you don't graze that fuel it builds up and builds up. That's the concern I have with core habitat and disturbance levels. It isn't just one thing that's going to save the birds; it is many things.

- Brent R. – We've kept grazing as a tool in the toolbox.

3. Livestock Grazing and Sage-grouse

Karen Launchbaugh (University of Idaho) gave an update on research being conducted to look at potential influences of livestock grazing on sage-grouse populations.

Karen noted that grazing is really interesting because it is tied to so many things. She provided a handout titled, *Livestock Grazing and Sage-grouse Habitat: Impacts and Opportunities*, from the *Journal of Rangeland Applications* (Volume 1, 2014; authors Chad S. Boyd, Jeffery L. Beck, and John A. Tanaka). (See Attachment A for abstract.)

She talked about the fact that historically grazing has always been part of sagebrush ecosystems, including buffalo 10,000 years BP, deer, elk, antelope, jackrabbits, etcetera, and cattle in the last 200 years or so. It is a natural thing in these ecosystems; it is a natural disturbance. In the last 200 years we added a different critters – cattle and sheep. In this presentation and in the study they are mostly looking at cattle since they are the most abundant livestock animals in Idaho.

In the modern grazing regime there are two types of livestock grazing. Beginning in the early 1900s there was heavy unregulated livestock grazing. The modern regime has the potential for more extensive management.

Modern grazing is managed and controlled. It incorporates grazing systems, deferment and rest, reduced stocking rates, and ways to assess grazing effects. Today the rangeland is in better condition than it was 50 or 100 years ago as a result of modern grazing practices. We are generally making progress except for invasive plants.

Karen explained that both the article she distributed and the research efforts they are doing look at both direct and indirect effects of livestock, but the primary focus is on indirect effects. Direct effects can include trampling of nests and eggs, or nest disturbance. Cows are big and they might cause birds to flush, although this generally isn't a big problem unless maybe there's a raven there at the time. The four major indirect effects are reduction of hiding cover, changes to vegetation mix, reduction of fuels, and alteration of the insect community.

Reduction of Hiding Cover

Perennial grass provides both cover and forage. It also provides fuel for fires. Looking at high, amount and where that grass is. To look at this the approach often is to throw down hoops and measure the grass, but that doesn't include looking at where that grass is. In this study they are looking at that question more directly. Cows eat grass in open areas before they eat grass that is under cover. What they see is that it levels off at about 90% before you start to see use of perennial grass under shrubs. Many times livestock would be moved as part of a rotation plan before or at that point. In the study they wanted to specifically see how those levels play out in Idaho and how that might affect management.

Change in Vegetation Mix

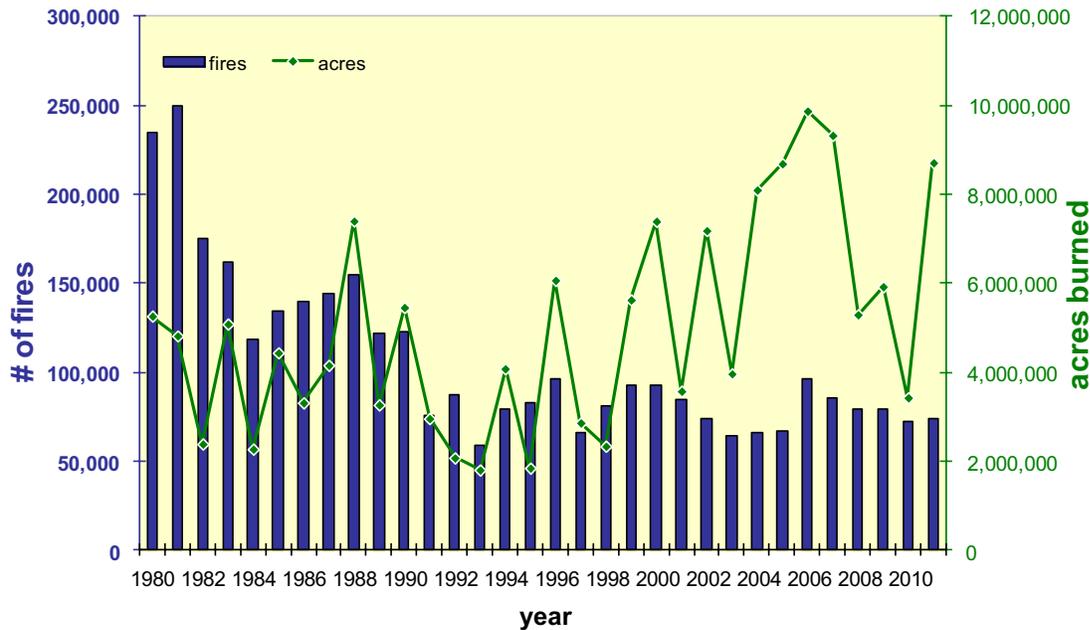
Cows can increase or decrease grass, shrubs or forbs. The only way to increase grass is to decrease shrubs or forbs. There's only so much nitrogen or water in the system. If you need to reduce shrubs, sheep and goats are good at that. Forbs are really important to sage-grouse. And forbs really are more

abundant in grazed systems. Most of the competition in a healthy sagebrush shrub is grasses. The problem is all of these things are pieces in the puzzle; we need to know how this plays out at a landscape scale. So towards that end the question is, does everyday grazing reduce forbs or grass?

Fuel Reduction

We know grazing has an affect in fuel reduction. We see it often, but not always. The question is, can we use grazing to reduce fuels? Managed grazing can change the perimeter or extent of fuels, or change the intensity, patchiness and flame length. Karen said she had also heard of another study that said grazed pastures have a shorter fire season. There are a lot of other effects of grazing and fuels that haven't been identified yet. They are proposing another study to be funded with NRCS Sage-grouse Initiative funds looking at use of grazing to reduce fuels.

Karen noted that if we stopped fire altogether on the Idaho landscape, no one would want to live there because it would be a moonscape. But we can manage the length and intensity of fire (see graph below from the National Interagency Fire Center data).



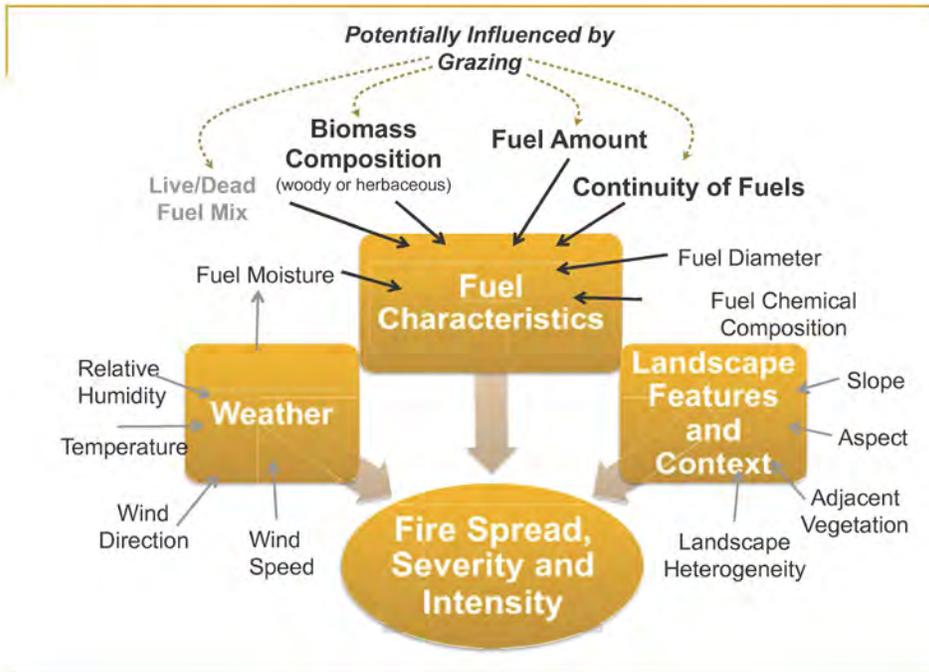
Historical Patterns

Karen noted that we have less cows on the landscape than we did historically. However, cheatgrass and other annual grasses are increasing. Human development is increasing and there are also more human caused fires. In addition, we are having longer, hotter drier summers and longer fire seasons. So, where does grazing fit in? They are looking at grazing on fuels with Ava Strand. She's looking at how grazing patterns are influencing fuels and how annual grazing influences annual grasses.

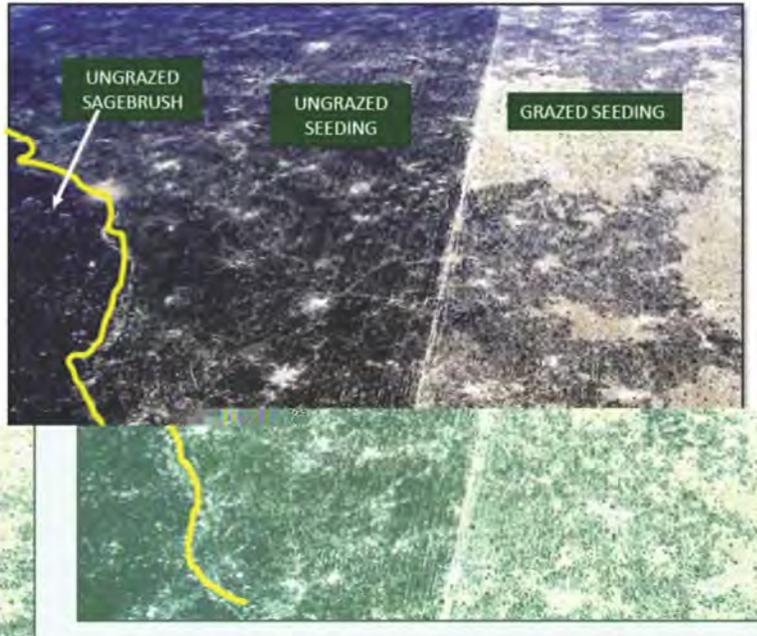
Where Does Grazing Fit In?

There are lots of factors that influence fire. Only a few of those can be addressed with grazing. Characteristics that could be potentially influenced by grazing include the live/dead fuel mix, biomass composition (e.g., woody or herbaceous), fuel amount, and continuity of fuels (see first image next

page). Everyone has historically been fixated on the amount of fuel, but continuity of fuel is really important too. Grazing can also affect fuel loads (see second below).



Grazing affects Fuel Loads



Annual grasses including cheatgrass, medusahead and red brome, were introduced in the 1800s. They are fine-textured and easy to ignite. Because they are early maturing they extend the fire year. They also increase the ignition risk and decrease the fire return interval, which affects sagebrush survival and recovery.

An 8-year grazing study in northern Arizona (Loeser et al. 2007) showed that areas with moderate grazing had less cheatgrass than areas with no grazing, areas with moderate grazing also had less cheatgrass than areas with heavy high impact grazing, and areas with high impact grazing caused a great increase in cheatgrass after a drought year. Karen said that study is needed to see what it looks like here in Idaho.

The key is to figure out how do we turn that crank to get less cheatgrass. It is not IF to graze; it is HOW to graze. Based on studies to date, in the absence of livestock grazing, cheatgrass will likely increase to its ecological potential for the site. Early spring grazing can suppress cheatgrass and promote perennial grasses. If grazing occurs as perennial grasses begin to flower, cheatgrass will likely increase. Grazing during the dormant season does not affect cover of perennial grass but can reduce fuel loads and the density of cheatgrass. New studies looking at winter grazing on cheatgrass suggest that when grazing occurs in the winter it removes dead biomass, which makes it harder to new seedlings to establish.

Fuels and biomass interact with each other. Without grazing there is an accumulation of biomass and litter including a distribution of litter around perennial grass crowns. In a study by Davies et al. (2009) they looked at four treatments: 1) ungrazed unburned, 2) ungrazed burned, 3) grazed unburned, and 4) grazed burned. The site had been grazed at moderate levels (approximately 30-40% utilization) since 1936. Litter and biomass was almost two-fold higher in the exclosures, which wasn't a big surprise. What was surprising was that when fire went through the ungrazed areas in the exclosure, the amount of cheatgrass skyrocketed after the fire. The explanation is that the fire burned hotter through the ungrazed areas killing off the perennial grasses. Conventional wisdom is that if you didn't graze the perennial grasses they would be stronger and healthier; however, that's not what happened.

Other indirect effects from grazing include changes in the insect community. Primary insects that are fed upon by sage-grouse include ants, June/dung beetles, and darkling beetles. Grazing could change the type of insects, distribution and abundance. Grazing effects on insects are not well understood. We do know that insects are important to sage-grouse in their diets. It may be that some day we have a grazing system where the goal is to modify insect communities.

Grazing also comes with ranching and there are a lot of other things that come with ranching that may have impacts to sage-grouse including fences, water tanks, roads, fragmentation and general activity.

4. Effects of Spring Livestock Grazing on Sage-grouse Demographic Traits

Courtney Conway (University of Idaho) gave a presentation on the study to look at the effects of spring grazing on sage-grouse demographic traits. He said that Karen talked about how grazing can influence vegetation, and also commented that there's been research showing how vegetation effects sage-grouse. But there have not really been any well-designed studies done looking at direct or indirect effects of grazing on sage-grouse parameters. There have been some studies done, but any one of those studies can be criticized. He explained that the team that is working on this study wanted to fill that void by implementing an independent, replicated study on direct effects of spring grazing on sage-grouse demographic traits.

This will include looking at: nesting propensity (i.e., the probability that a female will initiate a nest), nest initiation date, clutch size, daily nest survival (i.e., the probability that a nest survives), re-nesting rate

(i.e., the probability that if nest fails the hen will reinitiate another nest), brood size (i.e., number of chicks), brood survival, post-fledging movements (i.e., how far they have to go to find brood habitat), natal recruitment (i.e., probability the a chick will return to that site as to nest), hen survival, inter-annual nest-site fidelity, and site occupancy (i.e., where females nest relative to grazing activities).

Study Design

The study design is a 10-year replicated study. They will put radio transmitters on female sage-grouse at nine study plots in Idaho. At each of the nine study sites, they will set up three grazing treatments per plot. They will be able to see where the sage-grouse place their nest. They will base the location of the study sites based on where females go. There will be three pairs of grazing intensities at each site. The study area will include areas with greater than 40% grazing, 20-40% grazing, and no use. They plan to work with local permittees to change grazing intensities.

Study Areas

They identified a list of criteria to decide where to place the study sites. They will be using primarily BLM managed areas and focusing on spring grazing, since that's one of the most contentious areas. They also need to have known sage-grouse nesting at the study sites. They set an arbitrary threshold that the site has to have at least 1 lek with 25 or more males. They selected the arbitrary number of males so that they would have enough females to collar. In addition, the sites have to have at least 15% sagebrush cover, and specifically, Wyoming big sagebrush. They also want sites that have had predominantly native understory. Sites selected will be at 1,300 to 2,300 meters in elevation. They also wanted at least 1 or 2 cooperative permittees who would be willing to work with them over a one-year period. Additionally, they will need to be able to get vehicles to the sites as early as late February so they have to have road access in the spring. Finally, they also wanted sites with limited amounts of infrastructure and for the sites to be pretty consistent with each other in the amount of existing infrastructure.

They reviewed a map of sage-grouse leks that are potentially suitable and to date have identified four sites; they still need to get five more lined up. The four selected sites include Browns Bench, one at Jim Sage, Table Butte, and Sheep's Creek.

This year will be the first year of work on the ground. They began collaring sage-grouse on March 1. So far they have put out 49 transmitters at Browns Bench (29 nests) and 51 transmitters at Jim Sage (19 nests). They hoped to put out transmitters at all four sites this spring but had setbacks. They will get the rest out in the spring of 2015. They will be following the females to their nest and, depending on where they nest, they will manipulate grazing per the study design. They will measure vegetation, insect abundance, and forage quality. At each site they will be monitoring parameters for two years before they begin changing the grazing intensity.

A multi-disciplinary planning team has been working for two-years to get the study up and running and work through the details. The team meets regularly approximately every two weeks for about an hour. Team members include: Jack Connelly and Don Kemner with IDFG; Paul Makela with BLM; Courtney Conway, Karen Launchbaugh, Eva Strand and Dave Gotsch with University of Idaho; Jericho Whiting with Gonzales-Stoller-INL; John Robison with Idaho Conservation League; Chris Black a livestock operator and member of the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission; and Wendy Pratt with Pratt Livestock an the East Idaho Grazing Association.

Questions and Discussion:

- Lynn B. – What are you using for transmitters?

- Courtney C. – We’re using regular VHF transmitters that require antenna. We’re also putting out a view satellite and transmitter and GPS transmitter. The satellite transmitters cost about \$4,000 each and you can’t walk out to find individual nests. The satellite data will allow us to find clusters. We’re also experimenting with GPS transmitters, which give you locations via cell towers. They are heavier and require that the birds are periodically close enough to a cell tower to download the data. Most of the transmitters are VHS transmitters.
- Dave E. – You said you’re gathering data for the first two years. When you get to the grazing treatments, do you have any idea of how long those grazing periods will be to get that type of utilization? How many days? Two months or a week?
 - Karen L. – For research it would be best to do it in short period of time, but it will probably be two to two and a half months.
- Dave E. – It would be great if you could get BLM to throw open the door and see what would happen in a really short time.
 - Karen L. – We have to work within BLM permits.
 - Courtney C. – There are so many variable that we could assess. We have always viewed this as potentially being able to add more treatments and nuances. We want to evaluate one set of affects really well and then depending on that, we hope people will keep coming to the table to allow us to look at other sites if they realize that we’re impartial and are doing this in a transparent way.
- Brent D. – It seems like some variables might be quick to respond while others might take a long time.
 - Courtney C. – We just don’t know. We have an ambitious study plan that we keep revising. From the outset we have to work with INL and other areas that haven’t had cattle grazing for a long time so that we can have a bit of a baseline. That will allow us to compare an area that’s resting to an area that’s never been grazed. We’re currently at about 40-50% of desired funding level to implement the whole study plan. INL is on the team from the outset because we want to add that non-grazed area. We wrestled with how many years to rest. How many years are we going to keep this experimental grazing system in place? From a scientific study perspective the more the better, but we don’t want to drive people away either. We’ve asked for at least three years.

5. Update on Sagebrush Nutrition Research

Jennifer Forbey (Boise State University) gave an update on nutrition research that she is working on. The work was initially funded by the SAC and was then expanded to include a National Science Foundation Grant. Jennifer is working with a graduate student, Marcella Fremgen as well as Jack Connelly with IDFG and Gail Patricelli at UC Davis.

Jennifer explained that not all food is created equal and animals very selective in what they consume. Wild animals are trying to get as much protein as possible and avoid toxins. Sage-grouse are no different and not all sagebrush is created equal. One hundred percent of the food that sage-grouse consume in winter and spring is sagebrush. Not all sagebrush is tasty and palatable to sage-grouse. Selection of sagebrush occurs at a variety of spatial scales and is driven by the amount of toxins in the

sagebrush. There are 30 or more volatile compounds found in sagebrush. Both sage-grouse and pygmy rabbits care a lot about the compounds that are found in sagebrush.

Study Objectives and Predictions

Objective 1 deals with selective foraging. The prediction is that grouse will select for high protein content, low toxin content and moderate canopy cover and height.

Objective 2 deals with diet quality impacts to movement. The prediction is that sage-grouse will move farther away from leks to find higher quality food.

Objective 3 addresses diet quality impacts to reproductive effort. The prediction is that males foraging at the highest quality patches will have the highest display effort. Basically both objective 2 and 3 are about – if you eat better, you can reproduce and do things better.

Jennifer reviewed the previous and new research focus and sites, which include: within a site within winter at Browns Bench (previous), between sites within winter at Raft River versus Craters (new), within a site among seasons at Raft River (new), and between sites within spring at Raft River and a Wyoming site (new).

What is new in this study is that they will compare across a season, they will look at selection within diverse patches, and selection within three-tip sagebrush. In the past they looked at Browns Bench, now they will be looking at a site with multiple types of sagebrush. Also, Jennifer noted that she has been told anecdotally that sage-grouse don't eat three-tip sagebrush, but they are seeing lots of birds eating three-tip. For field methods they will look for pellets, if there's snow on the ground they will look for tracks, and they will look for bite marks on the plants. Jennifer said that relative to random sites, they have seen sage-grouse using black sagebrush more, and not using Wyoming sagebrush sites for foraging. The proposed explanation is that Wyoming sagebrush has fewer monoterpenes.

Field Methods (Selective Foraging)

Field methods consist of: approaching and flushing sage-grouse or using GPS data to find foraging sites, sampling browsed and un-browsed plants, measuring structural characteristics of the site, and sampling randomly selected points.

Sage-grouse avoid toxins at multiple spatial scales. To study this they used hierarchical information – theoretical approach to model selection (Burnham & Anderson 2002, Doherty et al. 2008). They completed two 30-meter perpendicular transects centered on the estimated center of the used (or random) patch. The center was estimated on the basis of browsed plant distribution at used sites and on the randomly generated coordinates at random sites. They were randomly oriented transects. They used a plumb bob along a taut string to identify where any branches/foilage intercepted the transect, then they subtracted gaps in the "continuous" foliage of five centimeters or greater.

At the habitat scale, sage-grouse selected habitats with black sagebrush to avoid toxins. There is evidence for selective foraging by sage-grouse at Browns Bench in winter. Sage-grouse select plants with both higher crude protein and lower concentrations of toxins.

They have a backpack style tag on the sage-grouse. Information gets uploaded to receivers at the lek. They can differentiate between flying, running, walking and pecking with the tags.

Raft River Results

At Raft River they observed a diversity of morphotypes (i.e., large *A. t. wyomingensis*, medium *A. arbuscula* and *A. t. wyomingensis*, and small *A. arbuscula*). Patch selection was influenced by species and patch diversity. Patch use depended on the presence of *A. arbuscula* (50 of 50 used patches had *A.*

arbuscula; 25 or 49 available patches had *A. arbuscula*). Every time they found small *arbuscula* they were the thing being browsed. Path use depends on morphotype diversity within the patch (44 of 50 used patches had more than one morphotype; 25 or 49 available patches had more than one morphotype). They probably used sites with more diversity because you have good cover there plus other types that were good eating.

They also wanted to measure how far they are going for food. Sagebrush responds to browsing by inducing its chemical defenses. So the more sage-grouse browse on sagebrush, the more toxic it becomes and the farther they have to go from the lek. The birds seem to be spreading out; they don't go to the same places every day. At most of the roost sites they couldn't find browsed plants. They measured diet quality close to and far from the lek. And they measured diet quality at foraging sites and reproductive efforts and success, and body condition. They found that males foraging at the highest quality patches had the highest display effort.

Sage-grouse have an energetically expensive breeding season immediately following winter, when they consume a diet of 100% sagebrush. The energy used to display is up to four times greater than the basal metabolic rate. Therefore, grouse must obtain highly nutritious food before and during the display season in order to maintain body condition. Additionally, grouse are ideal to study both forage and reproduction because their foraging is evident on sagebrush leaves (making their plant selection obvious), and their reproductive displays are easily viewed because of their leking habits. Males gather on open grounds to display for females, who select the best male based on his display effort and quality. This is partly why they will be examining male reproductive effort rather than female reproductive effort. Additionally, female reproductive effort is related to spring diet (with more forbs) rather than winter diet only. They will also evaluate male reproductive effort using display effort (time spent on lek, strut rate, copulations) rather than fitness because fitness is difficult to measure in long-lived, free-ranging species. It is important to understand what makes males successful on the lek because only a small number of males actually breed, so knowing what makes those individuals successful is important for management.

To look a reproductive effort they began in mid-March and observed collared males attending the lek. They conducted a time budget analysis, which looked at the time spent on the lek, copulations, and display (strut) rate. They also followed the birds to off-lek foraging sites and collected plant samples there. Birds usually flush naturally within an hour after sunrise and move to daily off-lek foraging sites.

Next Steps

The next steps are to process the samples they have collected to date and begin the chemical analysis of those samples (monoterpenes, coumarins, protein); conduct habitat transects; analyze behavioral videos from the leks; and begin the data analysis.

Management Implications

Jennifer identified a number of management implications. She noted that winter habitat is limited and there are high energetic costs during the winter. In thinking about diet, what is good for the cock is good for the hen in terms of diet quality and success. The information generated through the study will help to assess the impacts of habitat management and climate change (juniper removal, mowing, fire and drought). Additionally, this research will help managers to identify the most palatable plants for conservation and restoration.

Questions and Discussion:

- Dave E. – What were the nutritional differences between Wyoming sagebrush and three-tip?

- Jennifer F. – We haven't analyzed that yet. We'll also look at biomass effect.
- Brent D. – Have you looked at how individual plants vary from year to year? Is it genetic quality, age, or other?
 - Jennifer F. – We have three years of data at a pygmy rabbit site. There's more between

The result was a new Salmon regional seasonal use area map with 6,000 data points (see below).

The LWG decided to just start with a clean slate and add data as they collected it. If you have a map of a soil unit, you are able to pretty well represent vegetation on the ground. They had an order three soil survey to start from.

In the last couple years they are really starting to see the connectivity in

Next steps include: an on-going radio-collaring project with BLM and USFS, monitoring historical leks for renewed activity (Badger and Park Creek), and searching for new leks (IR flights). Management applications include providing information to inform the key habitat map, information for NEPA required for grazing allotments, and project prioritization.

Questions and Discussion:

- Paul M. – So this is probably a pretty conservative estimate of nesting habitat since you don't have a radio on every bird? Are you accounting for potential nesting habitat?
 - Vince G. – Yes, this is conservative. There's this and the other areas that we've identified as potential nesting areas. The LWG wanted this to be areas that we know are actual nesting habitat. That was a key distinction. Any observation data that people bring that we can confirm goes into this; it isn't just telemetry data. We recognize that there are other areas that potentially have sage-grouse use.
- John R. – Have you located any key areas where all the birds congregate, like the Freeman Airport that turned out to be really important for a short period of time e.g., hot spots?
 - Vince G. – There are some, but most of them we already knew about. For instance, there's an area right below Lemhi. That's our biggest wintering area.

7. Update on Raven Management Activities in Idaho

Ann Moser (IDFG) gave an update on raven management activities in Idaho. She explained that the State Legislature directed the Department of Agriculture and IDFG to conduct a study and associated monitoring. Specifically, the language regarding the intent of the legislation read:

It is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Agriculture work together with the Department of Fish and Game to fund up to \$100,000 for a project to evaluate and monitor the impacts of raven control on sage grouse survival.

The rationale was that sage-grouse are a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), with a final decision expect in September 2014. Sage-grouse populations have declined for a number of reasons including infrastructure development, fire, habitat loss and fragmentation, etcetera. The USFWS has also noted a lack of regulatory mechanisms.

Breeding bird survey data indicate that raven numbers in Idaho have increased 3.4% per year since 1966. Raven numbers have also increased throughout the west. Ravens have increased because of a variety of subsidies e.g., landfills, road kill, power lines that give them places to nest where they didn't have places to nest before, water sources, etcetera.

There is direct evidence that ravens predate on sage-grouse eggs. For an example, Ann showed a video of nest predation taken by Zack Lockyear.

In terms of indirect evidence, IDFG has wing data going back to 1961. This is probably better data than lek data because it has a really good sample size. Looking at the number of juveniles per hen there is a clear decline over time. This indicates a problem with productivity, not adult birds. The three worst years in terms of productivity were 2007, 2012 and 2013. It is not clear what the cause of this decline is.

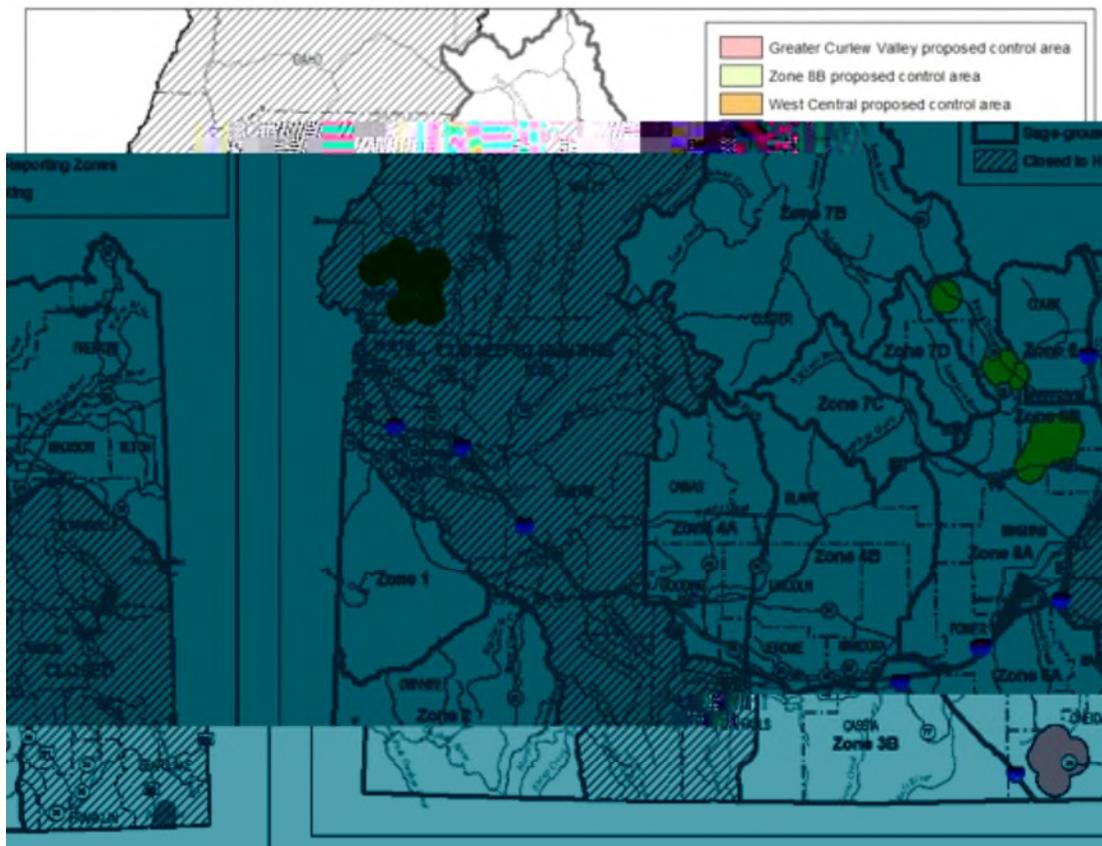
Raven Control

Ravens are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In order to take ravens in Idaho a permit is required. When they first received this direction from the Legislature, IDFG asked Wildlife Services to

help. Wildlife Services thought they could take ravens under their current permit with USFWS, which is primarily designed to benefit livestock operations. However, the USFWS said that was not acceptable and that IDFG needed to be the permit holder. Therefore, IDFG had to apply for a scientific collecting permit to do the study. While IDFG can apply for and hold the permit, Wildlife Services is the only entity in the U.S. that can use the chemical that would be used to kill the ravens. To do that, Wildlife Services had to complete a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) to the current EA they are working under.

Ann noted an additional challenge associated with the Legislature’s direction to fund up to \$100,000 to evaluate and monitor the impacts of raven control. It will cost approximately \$50,000 to pay for the poison and for Wildlife Services work. The remaining \$50,000 is not sufficient to conduct monitoring that would be able to provide an informative answer regarding the impacts of raven control. So a challenge is figuring out what can actually be accomplished with that amount of funding that would have informative value. Additionally, just so everyone understands, the \$100,000 is not funding that was added to IDFG’s budget, it is funding that will come out of the existing IDFG funding and would have otherwise been directed to other activities.

Given the limited funding, they are trying to figure out how to most effectively achieve the Legislature’s intent. They looked at raven populations around the state and at congruent sage-grouse populations. They are proposing to do raven control in a very small area. A few years ago the SAC agreed to fund a project in the Curlew LWG looking at raven densities and the relationship to resources. That is one possible site. Five other possible study areas were identified. INL has the highest raven density, and the Curlew LWG area is the third highest.



Ann noted that we know that when a predator is removed from an occupied area, other predators will move in. So in order to have an impact the number of ravens removed is going to have to be high. To determine an estimated number of ravens to remove for the study they looked at raven densities in the Curlew (0.70 ravens/km²), INL (0.85 ravens/km²), and West Central (no date so they used an average). They extrapolated those numbers out to get an estimated number of ravens to remove.

Given the limited budget for monitoring they have determined that what they can do is continue to monitor lek route trends statewide, conduct raven surveys statewide, and record anthropogenic subsidies. In the past on almost all of the lek routes throughout the state they did the lek routes, and after that on the way home they did raven surveys. That is providing IDFG with some baseline data statewide. In addition, on the data sheet the people doing the surveys are recording what's on the landscape (e.g., landfill, power lines, etcetera).

Status Update

IDFG received the scientific collecting permit to take 1,750 adult ravens and 250 eggs each year for two years. Under that permit ravens may be shot or poisoned with DRC-1339. Wildlife Serviced did not complete the Supplemental EA. IDFG Conservation Officers are assisting with the raven removal to the extent possible. So far, 11 adult ravens have been killed, 15 nests were removed and 59 eggs destroyed in the Curlew LWG area. The permit expires on June 1, 2014 so at that point actions will end. Almost all the ravens were shot off nests; none were shot off bait. They didn't find any nests in INL or West Central. In the Curlew the nests were mostly in Russian olive trees. The Conservation Officers have found that it is very, very difficult to kill ravens.

Ann posed the question to the SAC, what can we do to help with this issue? How can we manage ravens in the future?

Questions and Discussion:

- Richard S. – I suggest in the Upper Snake area you need to move east to the Interstate 15 area where the road kill is. If you're going to kill them the fall might be the best time when they start flocking up. We also notice that there's a raven's nest on all the water tanks. Our group thought there might be value in helping educate ranchers to eliminate places for ravens to nest near water tanks. For instance, the old 10,000-gallon tanks – maybe putting something on them to prevent them nesting.
- John R. – You're instructed to monitor impacts of raven control on sage-grouse survival – subsidies for ravens, infrastructure, perching areas are a legitimate threat. You can get credit from USFWS for doing something that addresses a threat. Instead of looking at individual critters, look at the underlying subsidies. Look at ways to address subsidies that have broader support from everyone. For instance targeting Phase 1 and Phase 2 junipers is a pretty good way to address this. Subsidized water, better ways to manage road kills, siting power lines so they're not going through sage-grouse habitat. Clean things up. Removing junipers are a way of raven control that is arguably more effective in the long-term. Is there a way to redirect this towards other projects that have a lot of momentum? Maybe other ways that are more efficient than targeting one raven at a time.
- Lynn B. – I used to run cattle in Wyoming. The Game and Fish officers in Wyoming said all they use is poisoned eggs and they do it all the time. Wondering if there's a way to not reinvent that wheel and as a state have that going on. If you treat one area, it is like a vacuum and they're just going to drop back into that area. I understand that they are doing that in Montana as well.

- Ann – We haven't quite figured out all the rules that APHIS Wildlife Services operates under. They have difivet opernidits diAnn n ynielpngeypGe pehapndAnn nepGeepveyypehapdehapAr

- Jared B. – I see a lot of ravens. Every spring they show up at the sage-grouse lek. I don't think killing ravens is going to solve all our problems. We need to get rid of subsidies. We need to bury dead piles, educate the public, and we have to continuously do things. Poisoning ravens will save 20 sage-grouse over the years and that adds up. My wife has turkeys; it took three ravens a day and a half to kill all of those baby turkeys. They are incredibly smart birds. As far as the livestock carcasses, that's a drop in the bucket compared to the gut piles that are left after every hunting season. Road kill is a huge one too. If we're looking big picture, lets go true big picture.
 - Ann M. – On a related note, our Conservation Officers have recently observed that there is less road kill out there after the road kill salvage law passed.
- Paul M. – So did APHIS just table that Supplemental EA?
 - Ann M. – They're still working on it.
- Lynn B. – For our local landfill it cost \$25 million to line the landfill. Fortunately we had clay that we could line it with. In Mud Lake you bury the trash every day. One thing IDFG could do is find out which landfills can't bury their trash and maybe target ravens in those areas.

In conclusion Don Kemner noted that some of the things that LWGs could do to help are to identify subsidies, use local knowledge to identify other subsidies, have them help map these things so that IDFG could knit that together.

8. 2014 Lek Counts

Ann Moser (IDFG) explained that the 2014 surveys are done but the data is not all entered into the database yet; IDFG staff is working on that. They have until June 1 to get it done and then Ann has about a week to get the summaries of the data pulled together and out to everyone.

There are 78 normal lek routes that are counted every year. This year they got a little extra money through OSC to visit more leks. Using that they visited leks that hadn't been visited in more than five years; leks that were determined to be unoccupied at some point. Also, they incorporated some of the management triggers that Brent Ralston described in the morning presentation. One of those is how the lek count is changing year to year. So they wanted to make sure that any leks that were visited last year were visited again this year so that they could see the change from one year to the next. Ann said they probably got maybe an extra thousand leks that were visited this year. They had some leks in the Sand Creek desert that hadn't been visited since the late 1980s. Some of those were still active and were pretty big (i.e., 50-60 birds).

Anecdotally, people are saying that lek numbers appear to be the same or maybe a little better this year. Ann thought this was a little surprising given the earlier discussion about declining productivity trends. A presentation a few years ago at WAFWA that suggested that more males show up to the lek when productivity is lower. It is kind of like when a bunch of coyotes are killed, they will subsequently put more energy into reproducing.

Don Kemner (IDFG) added that in terms of doing the extra lek counts; OSC made a supplemental funding request for fiscal year 2014 and received an additional 50,000 to do the additional counts. Also in fiscal year 2015 an additional request was made for up to \$75,000 to do more lek counts. IDFG will be working with the regional offices to determine if it would be possible to actually get out and count leks if there was some additional funding. They are getting to the point in Salmon where they've counted all the leks that they can from the ground and now have to check from the air.

9. Hunting Season Setting

Ann Moser (IDFG) reminded the group that the Local Working Groups have been following a process to make recommendations for the upcoming hunting season every year since 2008. The process follows the framework and guidelines that were included in the 2006 state plan.

When regional staff gets lek data entered, Ann sends that information to the regional biologist. The IDFG representatives then compare the current data (the three year running average) to the hunting season and bag limit guidelines in the state plan to make an initial recommendation. The LWG members also review this recommendation and factor in additional local considerations. This process also allows for input at the local level. Even if the trend graphs show that we still have a huntable population, there might be things on the ground that you want to make sure are considered such as fire or other conditions. Or for another example, West Nile Virus doesn't usually hit until July or August; if people were to start seeing dead birds in that time frame we need to make sure the IDFG regional biologists know so that they could close the season. The IDFG regions make recommendations to the Wildlife Bureau the first week of July. These recommendations incorporate input from the LWG members. Once the regional recommendations are in, Ann M. and Don K. brief the IDFG Commission and put the recommendation on the IDFG web site as a proposal. At that point public comments are also taken. The public comment period usually extends through the end of July. Then IDFG staff develops the final recommendations for the Commissioners for their August meeting. The Commission sets the hunting season at their August meeting.

Questions and Discussion:

- Lynn B. – Eventually the bird either will or won't be listed. I keep thinking we're dropping the ball because we haven't set a population guideline for each of those areas that we determine is a healthy population. So that when the Service decides whether or not to list they can take that into consideration.
 - Don K. – As far as the sage-grouse hunting season setting guidelines, the USFWS has indicated that they're good with the guidelines we're using. But in terms of the point you're making, there is work being done in Colorado trying to develop the techniques that would potentially allow for doing surveys that would give you a population estimate rather than doing a lek trend count. In the future there may be a methodology that could be applied that would come up with population estimates for sage-grouse. As far as hunting seasons, a couple years ago when we were developing the habitat and population triggers for the Governor's alternative we sketched out if that actually did get adapted and implemented in the land use plans how could we use that same protocol in determining hunting seasons. It ties how we set hunting seasons into the same way of determining other multiple uses of the land.
- Brent D. – I took the annual report that Ann sent out with the numbers and looked at where we're at with the Governor's plan. Right now the Upper Snake, Magic Valley, Curlew, etc. have already hit the trigger. Looking at this regulatory environment we're in, we're harvesting a lot of birds. Is this really worth it where we're at right now that we're going to continue hunting birds and we have a listing decision coming up? Hitting these triggers is going to impact our industry, the livestock industry and our state. I think from a SAC perspective maybe there's something we can do.

- Don K. – I think that is a decision for the LWGs not the SAC. In the past the SAC has always wanted to let the LWGs take the lead in their own areas and not dictate decisions at a statewide scale.
- Sam C. – We’ve talked about this before and a number of people on the SAC have said no to hunting.
- Rochelle O. – Right now in most of the LWGs, the members are mostly agency people. It may be important for the SAC to have more of a voice in this.
- Don K. – We’ve closed seasons in some areas in the past and we’ve kept seasons really low too.
- Steve G. – Would like Ann to let us know if areas with closed seasons have experienced a jump in the leks?
 - Ann M. – West Central has conflicting conditions. Jarbidge closed due to fire but has stabilized with maybe some increase. The Curlew closed for many years and then reopened because numbers improved. East Idaho Uplands is closed.

Alison S. noted that the issue of whether to close hunting altogether in Idaho has come up multiple times over the years in the SAC and that there are a range of views on the topic. She noted that the SAC membership has changed a great deal over the last three years and asked the SAC members if they would like to just record everyone’s current thinking on the matter, given the current composition of the SAC. Alison suggested it might be valuable for IDFG to hear the current SAC participant’s thoughts on the issue and participants agreed that they would like to have a chance to state each of their views at this time.

Following are the results of the poll of current member’s and SAC technical advisor’s views of the hunting issue. This was not a vote or a change in current policy, but was intended to record member’s current thinking on the hunting issue:

- Jared B. (Jarbidge) – Jarbidge elected to close their local season. I support closing more
- John P. (North Magic Valley) – We have a LWG that’s pretty well agency dominated. Last year we had a real fight in the committee about whether to close the season because of fire. We got our lek counts last night, the lek counts look pretty good in the North Magic Valley. We started with the 2005 peak, then the West Nile Virus hit. But every lek but one is showing an increase. We voted last night to support a one bird two-bag limit. But I hadn’t seen Ann’s productivity information at that point.
- Rochelle O. (IWG) – Personally, have hard time getting my head around hunting not affecting population levels. I don’t understand that argument. With a listing decision coming out I think we should close hunting statewide.
- Sam C. (Big Desert). I think it is at the point of being listed, I think you should close it until after the listing decision. Big Desert is one of the better areas in the state right now. We could go to a longer season, but I think we need to close it.
- Diane F. (IDL) – On personal level I agree with Rochelle. I’m a hunter but this close to a possible listing, I’m not sure that hunting makes sense.
- Paul M. – Think the low productivity figures that we’re seeing are disconcerting. It is hard to pass the red face test to defend hunting but then we take all these other measures. I get that

the wing data gives us our productivity data. Without that it's hard to get that data. But I keep coming back to that red face test.

- Kabel S. (Shoshone Basin). – Our group is agency dominated right now, but I'd like to see the season closed.
- Wendy P. (East Idaho Uplands) – East Idaho Uplands is closed. I would like to see it kept on a case-by-case LWG decision. If it is a way to get producers there to make that decision, that would be good. It is hard to for agency folks to run over ranchers.
- Dallan N. (Curlew) – The Curlew closed for a few years and recently opened on a restricted basis. If you don't have enough birds that they should be listed is one argument, but you need to know how many birds you have. You're kind of behind a rock and a hard place. I don't think they're getting enough wings out of the wing barrels.
- Dave E. (Challis) – This information that Ann just showed us about productivity isn't new. When we ask the IDFG about how to go about this differently they says that we need this data that comes from hunters. But the red face test is more of an issue. We're hitting the trigger in the Challis. I think it is time to find some other way to gather this information. Don't know if we're even getting enough anymore. I personally think we're going to get a listing anyway.
 - Ann M. – At the statewide level its okay, at the local level it is not enough.
- Richard S. (ICA) – It's a hard discussion. Politically the pressure is there to have a season. People have talked about the reason why that's necessary. But at the same time, we've had regulatory triggers in place for quite a while. It seems like there was some wisdom when that mechanism to guide the decision was put in the state plan. There may be wisdom in continuing that system. But as Brent pointed out its pretty limited where that hunt is justified at this point.
- Lynn B. (Upper Snake) – Would like to see it closed. Think we've got an adequate population to justify having a hunting season, but I don't know what the Service thinks. I'd like to be able to say, if the Service says list it, to be able to say we have this much population. But this close to a listing, I don't think we should have hunting.
- Wendy G. (West Central) – West Central hasn't had a season in 25 years, and it hasn't saved our population. But we have had this discussion. A lot of the landowners and producers in our LWG ask why am I putting all this time and energy into protecting the bird when they're hunted somewhere else in the state. But I think there would be reluctance to dictate what other LWGs will do.
- John R. (ICL) – There's no one thing that's gotten us into this and no one thing that will get us out. This should be on the table. It does confound judgment to have a hunting season on the table in the face of listing. Everyone has given something else up.
- Steve G. (IWF, Mountain Home) – I feel very strongly, and think Service has spoken, that listing will not be based on whether or not the bird is hunted. The Service has already said that hunting as currently regulated does not pose a threat. People talked about the lack of productivity but I don't think that's related to hunting. That's related to the quality of the habitat, the environmental situation we face at a time the chicks are most vulnerable. Drought has a bigger effect. Look at the list of threats. Hunting is listed as number 14 as a factor. We have data on the number of birds lost to fence strikes. We said we'd follow the state plan, it hasn't been amended, and to this point we've consistently gone with what the plan says. My

position would drastically change if there were anything that said hunting was having a significant impact and that banning hunting would cause the population to increase.

- Don K. (IDFG) – The Department’s position is to follow the plan. Also, LWG input and local knowledge and recommendations are taken into account. We’ve gone outside of the guidelines at times based on local input. From my perspective we should continue following the plan. This group developed it. The Service has said that from their perspective this operates as a regulatory mechanism. Our neighbor, Montana is going to propose closing the season statewide. That will be a big topic at the grouse workshop in a couple weeks.
- Brent D. (Idaho Power) – I want to say I agree with everything Steve said. The thing that scares me is the trigger mechanism. We’ve established a trigger mechanism that we’re close to hitting in some areas. In a triage situation, hunting is something that we should seriously consider.
 - Don K. – We did talk about if this whole trigger mechanism does get incorporated into the land use plans we’re looking at considering if we need to change the hunting season guidelines to incorporate other changes.
- Kathleen H. (USFWS) – It wasn't identified as a primary threat range wide in some local areas. Thinking about the Montana decision, hunting is a cultural tradition. Hunting is an important outreach tool. I am also concerned about some trigger that might have been tripped. But from the Service’s perspective there are very strong regulatory mechanisms there right now. From a listing perspective if hunting was taken away that wouldn’t affect the listing decision.
- Dustin M. (OSC) – It's a double-edged sword. If you’re doing all this great work for grouse on the ground it makes you ask why are we doing this great work and hunting the bird. But like Kathleen said, are we going to alienate the hunter and sportsman? When will you be able to open up areas again, once you shut them down?

10. Local Working Group and Agency Updates

Local Working Group members and other SAC participants gave the following updates:

- Kathleen H. (USFWS) – We continue to work with the state, BLM and Forest Service to put forth a plan. The biggest hurdle is to sell it to headquarters. We have to sell that it is consistent across the range of the species. We’re letting them know the plan is good, and in some cases exceeds it, we’re far ahead of the other states. Also, USFWS just hired nine new people to get out on the ground and start working with landowners. Kate just took on new position doing that. We’ve learned a lot of lessons through the West Central CCAA and are looking to try to use this tool throughout the state. We are trying to get out to the LWGs.
 - Don K. – We can let the LWG’s know about opportunity and for those that are meeting.
 - Brent D. – Is there enough time to get a CCAA in place?
 - Kathleen H. – There’s a template that’s been developed if the species were proposed for listing in the next year. Carney County, OR just signed a CCAA last week. For those landowners who wish to sign up, they would sign up with a letter of intent, which would put them in the cue. Then the Service will prioritize those by core habitat, etc. If you’ve signed a letter of intent you’d still get assurances. But you’ll have to have a site-specific agreement on your lands.

- Brent D. (Idaho Power) – A couple projects of interest, we have a new line going up in the Wood River Valley. We're working on the EA right now. The Hailey/Ketchum area only has two lines going into it and we are proposing to build new line structure by structure. The other project is Gateway West. The majority of that line has been approved and the sage-grouse mitigation plan is still being finalized. The Gateway West decision through the Birds of Prey land is an ongoing discussion.
- Jack D. (DOE) – No new projects to report on. Within next month or so we will sign a CCA. That agreement basically includes conservation measures, triggers, etc. similar to what is in the EIS. We modified the CCA pretty extensively to be more consistent with how everyone else is going to manage the species.
- Dustin M. (OSC) – OSC and IDFG have been at the table for the last few months as cooperators hammering out the proposed final EIS. We're in a unique situation having the state alternative as a co-preferred alternative. A lot of that is to the credit of the Sage-grouse Task Force, LWG members, etc. USFWS has been providing feedback to us all along. We're getting close to meshing the alternatives together. Higher-level Federal bureaucrats are calling for consistency across the range now. A document came down from DC that's intended to provide guidance across the range. If we can show that our plan is consistent with the objectives, etc. we should be able to deviate from the national guidance. We'll be meeting soon to advocate for our state effort. Up until this national guidance came out, we've been moving cohesively with the state and Federal effort.
- Scott S. (NRCS) – Our farm bill passed which is good news. It includes a lot of new programs but follows the same lines of the old programs. The old programs are wrapped into one act. The payment limitation has been increased. For all of the producers that may have been capped under the 2008 farm bill, they can now get up to \$450,000 under the new bill. I am located in the Burley office and will be presenting on a project tomorrow.
- Sam C. (Big Desert) – The Big Desert LWG hasn't met this year. We had a tour last year to look at the range and reseeded from 10-15 years ago. They're starting to really see some of the fire strips now. Our leks are a little better than last year.
- Rochelle O. (IWG) – *[Alison was interrupted during Rochelle's update and wasn't able to get notes.]*
- John P. (North Magic Valley) – We met last night. There has been a lot of fence marking going on in our LWG. People are feeling pretty good about things.
- Jared B. (Jarbidge) – Jarbidge LWG is struggling a little with lack of funding for things to do. Our idea is to try to review and submit meaningful comments on the annual grazing permits for BLM. We have most of the fence marking done. We had a good tour with Shoshone Basin.
- Ann M. (Mountain Home, IDFG) – We were going along pretty well until the Pony Complex Fire burned up most of our sage-grouse habitat. Within our planning area only about one quarter to one third had sage-grouse, and most of that burnt last year. We only have four active leks, and two of those burned. Our group kind of stalled on that emotionally, it affected the grazers, permittees, and everyone.
- Don K. (IDFG) – Dustin summed up things in terms of the EIS. The grazing study is another big piece of IDFG's direction on sage-grouse. Jared mentioned a lack of funding. I'd like everyone to think about if you had funding what kind of habitat projects could you do right now and bring

that to the table tomorrow. Jack Connolly and Ann Moser were very involved in developing task for recommendations, etc. Also, regarding possible additional project funding. Like happened last year, we're coming to end of fiscal year and there is possibly a little pot of money that we might be able to get out on the ground quickly. Last year we got some funds out for cheatgrass control. Right now I don't know for sure if there's money left. But if we had some ideas in hand we might be able to access it if there is money there.

- Steve G. (IWF) – The Mountain Home group is trying to collar more birds. We found they do move quite a bit. One lek is lot bigger than last year.
- John R. – Kudos to Don and Dustin and BLM, and Service on working together on the RMP revision process. It is a really a good effort.
- Wendy G. (West Central) – West Central hasn't met since last summer. A few landowners will be very encouraged to hear that the CCAA process is alive. The lek counts in West Central are discouraging. What is encouraging has been working with Jason Pyron on field trips with school kids and fence marking. Also, landowners continuing to do projects through the NRCS funds.
- Lynn B. (Upper Snake) – Not much to report on in the Upper Snake. They got together in January but I wasn't able to be there. They are getting pretty much finished up on the fence marking. They will want to have a meeting on the hunting season. It is tough to meet and do reporting and then meet and do the hunting. Terry has been really good.
- Richard S. (ICA) – Our group believes that we're going to have regulation; it's a matter of who is going to do it. The closer to the ground that occurs the better off we'll be. We continue to engage with OSC, the Governor's office, and IDFG to develop a management plan that sees the need of the bird is met and meets the multiple use mandates that we have on public lands. We continue to work hard on that. Also, in 2012 ICA recognized that some decisions coming from agencies weren't science based. We've been working in the appeals process to make sure the best thing on the ground happens.
- Dave E. (Challis) – The Challis LWG met in January, Dave didn't attend but got an update from Vince Guyer. We have the LWG plan done and want to make sure that it gets implemented wherever it can. We want to keep things are local as we can. We plan to update the seasonal map every year and use that to update our plan. We think the more good information we have about where the birds are, that will give us more leverage. We hardly have anyone show up to the meetings any more.
- Dallan N. (Curlew) – We met during the winter. There were three or four of us. Not much going on in the Curlew. We're starting to see a bug invading, the black grass bug. Maybe someone should start looking at it, it could have an effect on habitat.
- Wendy P. (East Idaho Uplands) – You do the plan, you make these goals, and then nothing happens. Now we're just focusing on what do we know about the bird. There's just a little bit of life in the group. We had a tour of brush control projects that a few ranchers attended. Jack Connolly still does the survey with his hunting dog. It is basically IDFG, Wendy and one or two other agency people who come to the meetings. We need more communication between the state, IDFG, Governor's Task Force, etc. I feel like we were left out of the Governor's plan in terms of mapping.
- Kabel S. (Shoshone Basin) – Our group hasn't met this year. Agency folks are working on nesting habitat.

- Paul M. – We’ve spent the last several months working closely with the state, Forest Service, and IDFG on the final proposed plan. That’s taken a lot of time. We’re all pretty much on the same page now. Back in December we visited at the field office with folks to talk about edge boundaries. We are trying to tie features on the land to boundaries. We’re going to continue that work over the next few months. This past winter we completed an update to the key habitat map. That’s been posted on the Inside Idaho website and is available to the public. That's the vegetation side of the sage-grouse habitat map. It reflects fires, and other things too. For the last few weeks I’ve been working on fire organization for the Sage-grouse Fire Resource Advisors resource tool kit. Basically it is a set of geo-spatial tools that is available to the fire resource advisors. It allows them to bring up lek data, winter habitat data and other layer available when they are making fire fighting decisions in the field.
- Diane F. (IDL) – IDL continues to work with lessees and private landowner through the NRCS program. That includes the Owyhee juniper project and fence marking. We are also working with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and IDFG on some rehabilitation and juniper removal

Sheep ranchers and farmers moved in. Ketchum was once the busiest sheep shipping train port in the US and the second largest in world (the largest was in Sidney, Australia). Sun Valley Resort was established in 1936 and set the stage for the recreation economy in the Wood River Valley. The area to the east centered around Carey maintained more of its agricultural heritage. The area also features one of the most intact long-distance migratory sheep ranching cultures in the West.

Environment

Elevations range from 4,000 to 12,000 feet and precipitation is about 15 inches a year. The area hosts a number of species including sage-grouse, pronghorn, mule deer and elk. There is a 150-mile pronghorn migration route through the pioneers. The topographical diversity supports seasonal migrations of both wildlife and livestock.

The agricultural and ranching community and culture are pretty much intact in the area. But with the greater Sun Valley metro-recreational area just over the hill, it is not hard to imagine a future of subdivision and development. Because of the elevations the area is a little bit cooler, a little bit wetter, and a little bit higher than a lot of sagebrush country. Therefore it is somewhat less vulnerable to cheatgrass and less vulnerable to fire. The great recession also helped keep Sun Valley expansion in control for a little while, it bought some time.

Bas reviewed a map showing the lek locations where one or more males were observed. It is hard to monitor in the area because of the winter conditions. From 2002-2007 there were just 11 leks documented north of Highway 20 but local knew that there were more birds there. After increasing the number of surveys, partners have documented 28 leks north of the Highway. Many of them are on private lands protected through the Sage-grouse Initiative and Pioneer Alliance.

Ingredients of Success

The project happened in a very short period of time but built on longer-term relationships within the community. Leadership from NRCS, local leaders and landowners was critical. There was also continuity in terms of the source of funding. The partnership got started in response to the proposed transmission line going through area. They got the route of the line changed.

The values for the Pioneers-Craters landscape that were embraced by the alliance include: working farms and ranches, wildlife habitat, water resources, recreational values and cultural heritage.

Next Steps

Next steps include continuing to protect critical lands, addressing resource concerns including water resources (Fish Creek, Little Wood River), fence modifications for pronghorn, the Craters Resource Management Plan amendment, and recreational opportunities.

A major challenge is continuing to find non-federal match money. Under the old Farm Bill the project was possible because under the grassland reserve program there wasn't a match requirement. Under new farm bill there's a one-to-one match requirement. It is hard to get to the scale of the investment that the NRCS is required to make.

Questions and Discussion:

- Don K. – Does that have to be a cash match? Are there in-kind opportunities?
 - Bas H. – For the Agricultural Lands Easement program, it is more like old program with 50% non-federal, up to 25% cash and up to 25% land.
- Wendy P. – Is the grassland reserve is a permanent easement?

- Bas H. – Yes.
- John P. – We had a ranch that was heavily indebted, there's no debt now. There are problems working in Blaine County related to a non-lethal requirement that one of the commissioners wants to attach. This is perpetual and stuff like that shouldn't appear in a conservation agreement, it should be in a management plan that is revisited every 5 years or 10 years.
 - Don K. – I want to clarify that this business on the non-lethal control is because Blaine County has put some money into this. That isn't something related to NRCS or TNC.
- Donna B. – What other restrictions are there?
 - John P. – There are some oversight management regulations that you have to accept. It's been a great relationship with TNC.
 - Bas H. – Different land trusts or entities differ on the philosophy on the easements. We like to make the easements less prescription but ask for a management plans so there's flexibility to deal with a changing environment.
- Sam C. – On the easements, don't you sign away your water rights to the government?
 - Bas H. – No. The wetland reserve program is different, because they don't consider it a working lands program. With the new agricultural lands easement program you can by and large keep doing what you've been doing. The main thing is keeping these places from being subdivided. It's a big commitment.
 - Brent D. – We have a wetland reserve easement on some of our lands and haven't had to give up water rights.
- Jared B. – Did you say 78,000 acres is what you've reserved? With the increased conservation, what have you seen as an increase of sage-grouse in those areas?
 - Bas H. – It is too short a time to say. We've found more grouse because we're looked harder.
- Rochelle O. – I saw you had a fence modification for pronghorn, what does that involve? Who pays for it?
 - Bas H. – NRCS has a standard program.
- Dave E. – These are really good programs. It is nice to see it's got this far. They can be hard to get into sometimes. In our area we're trying to do some conservation work and we've explored everything we can. Maybe under this new farm bill we can figure something out. The grassland stuff hasn't fit in the Lemhi area. This easement thing is a good tool. You have to have some responsibility going in to it. You have to take responsibility as a landowner for how you want it to play out.
 - Bas H. – This was special case because NRCS identified this as a priority. But I think there will be more opportunities under new farm bill because the Columbia River Basin is critical habitat.
 - Don K. – When you say the NRCS decided to focus in this area, besides the SGI, wasn't one of the other important reasons the landowner interest?

- Bas H. – There was support from the chief of the NRCS on down. He was enthusiastic about the project but because the Pioneer Alliance was in place he was able to make the investment in this.
- John P. – We run sheep and cattle and the three-wire fence isn't going to turn sheep. If we want to put a net wire fence up what happens?
 - Scott S. – We can't do that with a wildlife friendly fence.
- Jared B. – Think there's a lot of potential here. From a ranching standpoint as a private landowner if we do a conservation easement that's only part of the picture. For this to work good on a landscape scale you have to find a way to tie the conservation easement to BLM or Forest Service lands. You'll need to have assurances about future grazing. If that happens you'll have considerable buy in from ranchers.
- John P. – That was one of the draws from our side. TNC was on our side if we get sued. That's why I emphasize the importance of those federal lands and being able to work into more fall and winter grazing and put infrastructure in place like pipelines and troughs, etc. There's a lot of stuff that needs to happen. We were confident that TNC would be with us supporting good conservation and well managed rest rotations.
 - Bas H. – Getting buy-off from federal agencies is a long-term project.
- Jared B. – If we're serious about conservation that should be written into the conservation agreement. If you've got 5,000 AUMs on your permit it needs to be written in there that those AUMs will be maintained, or you release what you've tied up on the private lands.
- Lynn B. – What has to happen is you have to rebuild the trust. Most of the ranchers in our area had agreements in place. In our case agreement was with the Forest Service and BLM and we put these water troughs in place. We got one year into a seven-year project and they backed out. My concern is the ability to make the Federal agencies stand by our agreements.
- Dave E. – Jared needed to be here about four or five years ago. We had the same conversation about the CCAAs. The failing was that they would not tie federal lands to those entities. That is critical that this group can have some input to that. It is critical to tie those together.
- Bas H. – From a TNC perspective we're happy to work with you. But we also don't have control over what the feds do.
- Donna B. – Coming from a rancher's perspective, we've been there on the land sometimes for many generations. The Federal and state people are in there until they retire or move somewhere else. We have to have more than someone signing on the dotted line. That's the trust we've talking.

12. Update on Range-wide Local Working Group Conference, November 2014

Don Kemner (IDFG) said that Dr. Terry Mesmer at Utah State University is pulling together a conference in November that they are calling a LWG conference. There was one similar to this in Nevada in the mid 2000s. It was an invitation to representatives from all LWG across the range of sage-grouse to come together. Don wanted to make sure folks are aware of that conference. They have a committee that's working on putting together the conference agenda.

Don extended an invitation to anyone here who would like to join that planning committee. If you want to be on this committee there would be a couple of meetings. They are going to have some kind of stipend that would help offset the cost of LWG representatives attending the conference. The conference will be in Utah on

Having a definite goal helped a lot. They will complete as much work as possible before 2015. Partnerships are key to strengthen the success and effectiveness of the project. Everyone needs to be on board with the project for success.

This is a model for western land management. More areas at a landscape level are getting treated. We have to work at a local level, but at the same time the bird is across 11 states. All 11 are meeting and discussing ways of getting work done on the ground. Without those coordinated efforts our work wouldn't go as far.

Scott said that he just found out that NRCS has about \$1 million left for sage-grouse work. If you're a permittee holder or private landowner and have ideas please let NRCS know as soon as possible. Just get in and fill in an application, it is on a rolling basis and that will get things started.

Questions and Discussion:

- Dallan N. – You said it burned, but you didn't treat it? Is there part of the program to remove the dead trees?
 - Scott S. – Yes, we're trying to work on that this fall. We're working on doing multiple treatments on that private space. On private land it's a little different. With BLM your grazing plan is already determined. On private land we require a grazing plan, we just want to see improvement.
- Diane F. – There are three people with NRCS who are in the position that Scott is in.
 - Scott S. – Josh White was out of Mountain Home, Ed has taken over his portion. He covered Elmore and Owyhee. Scott covers Cassia, Minidoka and _____. Laura who is in Rexburg covers the Big Desert. NRCS is working with TNC to try to understand the new easement programs. NRCS gets this sage-grouse money and then finds out it needs to be spent in a really short time. So, don't wait until the money is there to sign up for an application; even if it's on BLM land or Forest Service land and you have to wait for an EA – you should still sign up if you're interested.
- Donna B. – Juniper eradication has been the main focal point for our LWG. Art Talsma with TNC has been really helping us. Yesterday was the third tour we've had. It is amazing the difference once you get rid of those trees in terms of what's coming back. We treated some trees around the reservoir. Art flushed so many sage-grouse there that he had to hold his horse down from bucking. Also the water comes back once you take the trees off. The only problem is that we're about 50 years too late.
- Scott S. – That's what we're hoping to show the Service; that some of these treatments like juniper, can make results overnight. But the NRCS has also been working with the Service this whole time to let them know that what we're doing may not yield immediate results.
- Dave E. – You said Pheasants Forever contracted for that work. Were you able to find enough local contractors to do that work?
 - Scott S. – Pheasants Forever puts out a bid process, their national office is in Minnesota. The contractors came out of Oregon. If there are people who are interested in that I can direct you're to my boss.
- Dave E. – We have fir encroachment. That specialized training sometimes limits our ability to find people. BLM has fire crews but that money is being spent chasing fires, etc.

- Scott S. – This approach has worked out great, it has freed up a lot of BLMs time. When we certify those treatments, they have to meet BLM and NRCS specs. The BLM fuels crew was drastically reduced in our area. We'll do cut and pile and the fuels crew will come back and do those piles.
- Lynn B. – Do they grind the stumps too?
 - Scott S. – Yes, right down to the ground. You can come out and visit in September; we'll have people out there.
 - Donna B. – Our guy has two different kinds. One is on a skid and the other spins.
- Jared B. – What' cost per acre?
 - Scott S. – It varies, mastication varies from \$400 to \$600. It's tricky because the cost share varies.
- Wendy G. – We need to get ahead of the game because the cost later on has to be massive. We need to be able to go in where there are just a few.
 - Scott S. – Phase 1 is that very scattered tree here or there situation. Phase 2 is thicker but your understory is still intact. In Phase 3 the understory is really depleted so you have thick trees and have to go back in and reseed. We're pushing to do every acre with the Phase 1 encroachment.
- Donna B. – We were amazed at how fast the understory comes back, it holds the moisture in there so new plants can get started. Even a Phase 3 comes back.

14. Update on Sage-grouse Funding

Jon Beals (OSC) said he works for Dustin M. at OSC as is the project manager for the sage-grouse funding. The initial sage-grouse funds that the SAC had historically allocated for projects came from a \$1 million congressional earmark. Jon provided a spreadsheet summarizing the allocation of those funds (see Attachment B).

Dustin Miller noted that the state legislature provided some additional funding last year, a total of \$50,000 for additional lek monitoring. The legislature is keying in on this now and recognizes that there may be more opportunity for OSC to work in the future for funding for this group.

Don K. explained that there is approximately \$35,000 that is still unassigned. Dustin Miller also indicated that there might be some additional unassigned funds that were in the OSC pool that could supplement the \$35,000, maybe as much as \$50,000 total for the combined money. March 2015 is deadline to finish it out; but it is possible to extend that. Don recommended that later in the meeting SAC members make a recommendation regarding what to do with those funds.

15. Potential Projects for Funding if Funds Come Available

On the first day of the SAC meeting Don K. asked for ideas for projects if there was funding available. SAC meeting participants suggested the following:

- Jared B. – Dixie Harrowing sections. If we had funding there's probably at least two or three sections that we could get permittees to sign up for in short order. The LWG owns part of a Dixie Harrow so we'd just need money for a seed source. They'd provide the tractor and Dixie

Harrow. It works well to break up dead brush, then put seeds in. When you break open the canopy in areas that are 40% canopy the seeds really take off the following year. You can vary how much manipulation you do. Seeding happens as harrow goes.

- Jared B. – Another project is that there are always people who want to do pipeline spring developments. Those are harder because it will take a BLM permit because you'll need an easement or an EA to do some of that. You'll have to go across BLM land. They're in the permit renewal process in the Jarbidge so they could maybe do this while they're in the renewal process.
- Sam C. – BLM has been cutting the Big Desert up into little parcels for fire. They've been rotovating along the roads. That's an ongoing project with the BLM and something we could do. They already have the assessments done.
- Richard S. – Thinking about what Brent brought up about Upper Snake. If you're familiar with the Upper Snake, Kilgore and the Red Road area is very productive sage-grouse country. I went up there on the Sage-grouse Days tour recently and that sage canopy has gotten up to about 40%. The shepherd is saying that they move in and get disoriented. If the Idaho plan was in place and being used right now, that trigger would be tripped and we'd be forced to do something to manage that level of sagebrush. That might be an example of where we actually have too much sagebrush. Think the resources would be there if managers would come together.
- Ann M. – BLM has funding to start a sage-grouse telemetry project in that area. BLM has a good history of where they've done brush treatments in the past. We could really see with telemetry on those birds at what age are they coming back to that area or are stopping using the area because it is too thick.
- Dave E. – I'd have to talk to others in the Challis group for ideas, but right now, Scott's presentation gives me some ideas about fir encroachment. But we would need an EA. Another potential project is an allotment in the northern part of the valley with lots of birds. We are already in the process of partnering with the National Riparian Team to look at different management. It is a small allotment, about 15,000 acres with 15 permittees. It would be hard to get everyone together but there are some different outcomes that are necessary. There is an opportunity to change management there.
- Dave E. – Another idea, BLM pamphlets include nothing about ongoing efforts or potential efforts to change actual land use practices to benefit sage-grouse. We could put together something that informs people that could be put out in the public areas.
- Lynn B. – One of biggest losses in our area is the Birch Creek range. They diverted Birch Creek and put it into a pipeline and with that 15-20 miles of habitat was lost. If they would go down the old creek beds, run pipeline down, and put bubblers every 0.5 and 0.25 miles up there that would make a big difference. Think the IDFG and BLM could get together on putting a pipeline down through there. Don't think the people who own the water would object to a 2-inch line diverting the water. When I was a kid that's where you'd find the birds along the creek there. You'll never be able to recruit until there's water there. Another area is up by Howe where there's a lot of Phase 1 juniper encroachment going on.
- Donna B. – For us our goals are juniper treatments and more of that berm work. Also there's lots of state land that we could do work on.

- Diane F. – We’ve got Annie Valley in the works with TNC. We’re trying to work closely with BLM as they finish the EA on the allotment up there. On the juniper biomass tour we were trying to figure out a project with private landowner, BLM allotment, and state land. We have grant funding that we could use. Finding the right property and partnerships is what we’re looking for.

16. Future of the SAC, What’s Next?

Don Kemner asked the SAC to consider what they would like to see happen next in terms of the SAC. Alison reviewed the notes and recommendations from the previous SAC meeting (see December 2012 meeting summary). The major near-term recommendation was to have a meeting in 2013 (it shifted to 2014) to review progress on the EIS and share information.

He suggested that there’s a lot of value that comes from getting together and it is a good opportunity for discussion and information exchange. Don is still trying to figure out how to best get information out to the LWGs, that’s why we’re videotaping some of the presentations. Other options include video conferencing from the regional offices, teleconferences or webinars. He asked if the SAC members wanted to get together again in 2014 or 2015 and how, or other?

Alison noted that another topic that has come up repeatedly is how (or if) to get more interest going in the LWGs. Some of the topics that have been discussed in the past include: the need for funds to do something on the ground as a way to engage LWG members, the need for professional facilitation, general apathy, questions about the appropriate role of the LWGs now that the Task Force has provided their recommendations.

Alison noted that one of the challenges of the ESA is the single species focus of the Act. As such it tends to not support larger scale ecosystem thinking about how to recovery and conserve species. She noted that there may be

Discussion:

- Wendy P. – What happened with implementation plan?
 - Don K. – People were working on the implementation plan, then the 2010 decision happened and all efforts got diverted to assisting with the Governor’s Task Force. That took over everything for the last two or three years.
- Wendy P. – Does that process include the state plan and implementation plan?
 - Don K. – Yes, the 2006 plan was used as a foundation to build on. There’s lots of new information since 2006 that was not in state plan that was also taken into consideration in development of the state’s alternative.
 - Paul M. – A lot of it was rolled into the sub regional Alternative D.
- Dustin M. – Keep in mind that the EIS process and the state having a seat at the table was an effort to address the regulatory processes on federal lands.
- Don K. – The concern with 2006 plan was that it did not have a regulatory mechanism. We’re in waiting mode to see what the outcome of the Federal land management agency EIS will be. Waiting to see if the Idaho EIS is something that the state ends up supporting or if it is changed to the degree that we can’t support it.

- John R. – Suggest that the LWGs get together once a year and the SAC gets together once a year. This is a great mechanism for learning.
- Brent D. – Going back a long way the split between the LWGs and agencies, state, etc. was so far apart that everything had to happen in the LWGs. Through time the SAC has been the mechanism to bridge that gap. Whatever the decision, there will be some type of group needed to bridge on the ground stuff with these big landscape plans. This group could help suggest agendas for LWG meetings, e.g., here are things you could meet on, here are materials we could provide. We can help do that. I think a minimum meeting frequency for the SAC is once a year.
- John R. – LWG and SAC communication needs to go both ways. It is really important for information to flow in two directions. I like the idea of having presentations available online.
- Donna B. – When we started IDFG, BLM and others didn't know what each other was doing. It has gotten a lot better.
- Steve G. – Agree with people that these meetings are essential, the membership has changed and a lot of the new members need to come up to speed. That's a big plus. We do now know a lot. It is important to develop mechanisms to talk around the state and talk to LWGs. If you don't have information sharing you don't know how you're going to maintain momentum.
- Sam C. – Most of the non-agency LWG members that are active; those people are here at this meeting. Most of the LWGs are primarily agency people.
- Rochelle O. – Don't know how you deal with the apathy.
- Lynn B. – I would like if it is possible, to meet when the lek counts are done.
- Donna B. – We may need a meeting after the EIS is complete.
- Dave E. – Think these meetings are important. It is one of the things I get most out. If we continue following this path of all these regulatory mechanisms, every time we do that we go this single species path and then something else comes along that doesn't work. This group is where I get ideas for how we can do things across the board. We're not going to get more participation in the LWG groups.
- Paul M. – I second what Donna said about the value of rallying around a common cause. In the Mountain Home group, it didn't come together until we started doing things on the ground.
- Wendy P. – Is there any more talk about a LWG facilitator? The IDFG guys they don't even do introductions. Would like money just to hire Wendy back.
- Brent D. – Maybe we also need to look at expanding the SAC to think more broadly. How can we go out to weed meetings? My staff goes to Washington County every month; they don't talk about sage grouse. We could at least expose them to what's going on.
- Wendy G. – The Washington County WMA is a great example. Washington County has a banquet every year. Key partners engaged in CMA are also in the sage-grouse group. But people get burned out on just planning they need to do something. In the West Central it is harder to find a single issues.
- Brent D. – We could figure out a way to leverage what is going on in Washington County. Rather than thinking about our own project, what can we do to help them too? What they all have in common is the RACs. Maybe there's an opportunity to parlay that into something.

- John P. – That’s an opportunity to address other broad scale problems. Last night Jeff Sidoway was in the restaurant and we chatted. The Forest Service is going to come up Tuesday and tell the leadership of the woolgrowers that they are going to eliminate 60% of the grazing allotments in southern Idaho. We need the right people to tell the stories and also the right people to implement them.
- Dave E. – As a way to end this meeting and give us something to do I would like to take home this message of more inclusion. It would be good to have some presentations or ideas that we could share with people.
- Don K. – If you’re in an area with fire you might want to create a fire organization. You could promote that to whomever you need to. It would also be good to identify agenda items that we could provide to LWGs.
- Wendy – How many LWGs submitted and annual report?
 - Ann M. – All 11 did. Most of what was reported on was reported by BLM, NRCS, and IDFG staff.
- Brent D. – If OSC and other believe that LWGs are the key ingredient to making this work, we need to do something different. In that case someone needs to be out there building LWGs.

The group brainstormed the following list of potential LWG and/or other groups to share information with:

- Groups to share information with or coordinate with
 - Rangeland Fire Protection Associations
 - Weed Management Areas
 - Grazing Associations
 - University of Idaho Extension
 - Washington County CMA
- Agenda topics/presentations for LWGs and/or other groups
 - Update on the EIS status and what’s next.
 - Sage-grouse Initiative funding opportunities. Note have web site that connects all 11 states and projects that they are working on www.sagegrouseinitiative.com
 - Presentations around getting CCAAs going. USFWS has staffed up to help with this. Possible presentation on how the Harney County CCAA works and is able to cross private and federal borders.

SAC recommendation on next SAC meeting:

- Participants recommended that the next SAC meeting in 2014 or 2015 after the EIS is done, or if there is some other major trigger. Depending on the need for the meeting a teleconference followed by a meeting at a latter point would also be acceptable.

17. Funding Recommendations

Don Kemner requested at the end of the meeting that the SAC members return to the topic of what to do with the funds that are left unspent and unassigned at this time.

The group discussed the possibility of doing another solicitation and agreed that that didn't make sense given the small amount of funding. After brief discussion the SAC members agreed that the grazing research project should be funded with the unassigned funds.

Don also asked the group what to do if additional IDFG funds did come available, e.g., how to select projects. Participants recommended that Don let everyone know and make a recommendation for how those funds should be spent based on the amount of funds and discussion with potential sponsors to determine what is ready to go.

SAC Agreements

- SAC members present unanimously recommended providing the remaining unassigned sage-grouse (OSC funds) to the grazing research project (Karen Launchbaugh and Cortney Conway, etc.)
- SAC members agreed that if additional IDFG funds become available, Don will suggest what to fund from the list of potential projects (based on amount of funds, and ease of getting project going) and send an email to the SAC members requesting that they let him know if anyone has any objections. If there are objections an "emergency SAC teleconference will be convened."

Attachment A

Livestock Grazing and Sage-Grouse Habitat: Impacts and Opportunities

Chad S. Boyd, Jeffrey L. Beck, and John A. Tanaka

Journal of Rangeland Applications

Volume 1, 2014 pp. 58-77, ISSN: 2331-5512

Abstract

Sage-grouse obtain resources for breeding, summer, and winter life stages from sagebrush communities. Grazing can change the productivity, composition, and structure of herbaceous plants in sagebrush communities, thus directly influencing the productivity of nesting and early brood-rearing habitat. Indirect influences of livestock grazing and ranching on sage-grouse habitat include fencing, watering facilities, treatments to increase livestock forage, and targeted grazing to reduce fine fuels. To illustrate the relative value of sagebrush habitats to sage-grouse on year-round and seasonal bases, we developed state and transition models to conceptualize the interactions between wildfire and grazing in mountain and Wyoming big sagebrush communities. In some sage-grouse habitats, targeted livestock grazing may be useful for reducing fine fuels produced by annual grasses. We provide economic scenarios for ranches that delay spring turnout on public lands to increase herbaceous cover for nesting sage-grouse. Proper rangeland management is critical to reduce potential negative effects of livestock grazing to sage-grouse habitats.

Attachment B

State of Idaho Office of Species Conservation Sage Grouse Grant Balance

Title	Amount	Start	End	Grant#	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	Total	Balance

Title	Amount	Start	End	Project #	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	Total	Balance
TOTALS	\$1,000,000.00				\$490,275.24	\$227,262.33	\$125,642.42	\$30,753.62	\$873,933.61	\$126,066.39

Brent Ralston

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 12:10 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: a topic I may have omitted in earlier response for meeting on sage-grouse next week is ACEC designation

Brent - most likely I will be heading back to Boise on Tuesday, so we can still plan on having this meeting. I know, you are thinking "darn"..... I will check with Sylvia to get a room for the meeting. Thanks.

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Katie Fite** <katie@westernwatersheds.org>
Date: Sat, Aug 2, 2014 at 9:11 PM
Subject: a topic I may have omitted in earlier response for meeting on sage-grouse next week is ACEC designation
To: Kurt Wiedenmann <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>

hi Kurt,

Please add ACEC designation to the sage-grouse meeting topics.

Thanks,
Katie Fite
WWP

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2014 2:10 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Upcoming Sub Regional Call - Thursday Aug 7
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-08-07.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from last week's IDT call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
26 O'Farrell Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 06, 2014 11:30 AM
To: Brent Esmoil; Cally Younger; Catherine Wightman; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; eugene.schock@id.usda.gov; Fletcher, Tammy; Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brooks, Sandra S; Burkhardt, Glen H; Carlson, John C; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; German, Jesse S; Halford, Fredrick K; Jirik, Steven J; Jonathan Norred; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Porter, Karen F; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Tanya Thrift; Wiedenmann, Kurt R; Jeff Bergland; jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov; Jon Beals; Katie Powell; Mike McDonald; Pyron, Jason; Rapley, Kathleen; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov; Arnold, Jenifer L; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Brown, William B; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Kershaw, Kathi G; Knapton, Brandon L; Kuyper, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Prestwich, Kasey C; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tolness, Denise R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S
Cc: Joshua Sidon; Scott Hoefler
Subject: Upcoming Sub Regional Call - Thursday Aug 7

We will have our regularly scheduled call tomorrow – our topic of conversation being the proposed plan contained in this email. There are still several pieces needing some additional attention that we will assign tomorrow.

As a reminder please review the Comment Response Report and send me any comments you have.

Also be reviewing the initial draft of the Alt G effects analysis and get those comments back to your EMPSi team lead with a cc to me.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 7, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Mike McDonald; Dustin Miller; Jason Pyron; Josh Sidon; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- ID swMT ADPP BLM Decisions 080614 Working

Action Items

- Send comments/revisions to the comment response report to Brent by Friday, 8/8/14
- Send comments/revisions on the first draft of the proposed plan impact analysis to EMPSi counterparts and CC Brent by Friday, 8/8/14

Meeting Minutes

Forest Service Plan Update

- Rob still working on the FS plan. Addressing comments from Forest Service management and making sure it's consistent with FS direction. Comparison table shows that the Forest Service plan is very consistent with the BLM plan, but is more specific and does not include as many management actions. Some of the language is specific to Idaho, and Rob is explaining this to Forest Service management. Hoping to finalize tomorrow.
- Working on habitat desired conditions table.
- Will the two plans require separate impact analysis? Will keep plans separate in Chapter 2. Intend to do the effects analysis for the planning area without breaking out Forest Service and BLM in the discussion of effects.

Reminder for Work Assignments

- Send comments/revisions to the comment response report to Brent by Friday, 8/8/14.
- Send comments/revisions on the first draft of the proposed plan impact analysis to EMPSi counterparts and CC Brent by Friday, 8/8/14.

Review of Comments on the Proposed Plan

- Ongoing discussions about whether adaptive management measures would apply to all Core/Important or all nesting/wintering habitats within Core/Important.
- Coordination of mitigation with state effort – not sure how much detail will go in EIS. Have talked about an implementation plan, can maybe fill some of the details in.
- Meeting next week with USFWS and the state to resolve some questions and inconsistencies.
- Rob working on VDDT modeling for acres of treatment. Should have treatment acres and projected habitat conditions in the next 1-2 weeks.

- Seasonal habitat desired conditions – Jesse will work with others to resolve questions. FS changed “perennial grass height” to adequate nest cover, not 7 inches.
- Proximity of trees – Jesse, Rob, and Nika will work to review comments on this table.
- Mapping –if there is habitat outside of core/important/general during project level activities, should this area be managed as general habitat? A team will review this idea and how we would incorporate this.
- MA-4: A lot of discussion about no net unmitigated loss of GRSG habitat. Other subregions have no net loss in all GRSG management areas. However, this would affect mitigation opportunities. It would be best to do mitigation in core/important that needs restoration, but no net unmitigated loss would not allow for this. Instead, could state no net loss of key habitat within core/important – use key habitat map to delineate where there is effective habitat and restoration opportunities. Added language in MA-4 for this. Would provide a net conservation benefit to GRSG. Applies to both on- and off-site mitigation.
- Why mitigate for disturbance in non-habitat? Needs further discussion.
- MA-6: Pull key habitat in as a more functional piece. Included to help update the map.
- Adaptive management and anthropogenic disturbance – comments to help strengthen the administrative record. Would like to have a discussion with biologists on these questions.
- RDFs – they are required. Added that they would be COAs in any post-lease activities. And they would be included as BMPs for locatables to the extent allowable. In RDF appendix – deleted BMP column and moved to column with BMPs that are required when conditions occur.
- Clarifications added to mitigation actions.
- FLM-7 added for consistency with Great Basin Region.
- Several comments for Nika that Brent will pass on.
- RM-1: Forest Service makes decisions about changes in management for grazing allotment at the site-scale, not plan-scale. Put in triggers/guidelines for grazing that will be applied for annual adjustments if necessary.
- Travel – need to include administrative use text. Clarification added for subsequent travel management planning.
- Appendices – baseline map – need to include description
 - Need to identify areas no longer identified for disposal for each plan.
 - Functioning of Boards – needs a description developed.

Other

- GIS team is providing revisions to the NOC for some rollup questions.
- COT objectives – how alternatives do/do not meet these objectives. Would like to see this more clearly specified in Chapter 4. Use the stop light table.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 10:53 AM
To: 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov)
Subject: IDT meeting notes and follow up
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-08-14.docx

Hi Brent,

Attached are notes from this morning's meeting, also on the Sharepoint site.

Regarding Alternative F for lands and realty, the WEG proposal stated: Occupied sage-grouse habitat areas shall be exclusion areas for new ROWs permits. So that sounds like PPMA and PGMA.

About accessing the files on the Q drive, I think I am just not doing it correctly. I'm accessing it through a VPN connection from my BLM computer and tried using these links:

\\ILMIDSO3DS2\id\loc\GIS\projects\wildlife\sage_grouse\Greater_Sage_Grouse_Initiative\FINAL_EIS\Tables

Q:\loc\GIS\projects\wildlife\sage_grouse\Greater_Sage_Grouse_Initiative\FINAL_EIS\Tables

But I'm wondering if maybe I'm just not using the right link?

Thanks,
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 14, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Katie Powell; Kelly Bocking; Robin Fehlau; Mike Kuyper; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- EMPSi incorporate GIS and revisions into proposed plan analysis.
- EMPSi and BLM GRSG team to meet and review proposed plan analysis.
- EMPSi compile proposed plan analysis into one document and send to Brent by Wednesday, August 27.
- EMPSi incorporate changes to the comment response report.

Meeting Minutes

Project Updates

- Team has reviewed the comment response report and Brent has sent comments to EMPSi. They will make changes and provide another version.
- EMPSi has sent a first draft of effects analysis, BLM/FS provided comments. EMPSi incorporating those revisions. Since the GIS is mostly done, EMPSi will incorporate the numbers and the GRSG team will have another conference call to ensure that expectations are met, including USFWS. EMPSi will then compile the sections into one document and send to BLM.
- Most of the EIS will be the same, but we'll be changing Chapter 2 to incorporate the proposed plan.
- Had a meeting with the state to review and address their comments on the proposed plan. Two main topics were discussed:
 - BSUs: Will have 10 BSUs within the subregion for anthropogenic disturbance and adaptive management calculations. One is SW MT, one is UT Sawtooth, then 2 units per Conservation Area in Idaho – one for Core and one for important. Includes nesting and wintering habitat in these areas. Further work needs to be done by Rob, Brent, and Kelly for the UT and sw MT areas.
 - What happens if you have reached the 3% disturbance threshold in a BSU? Then, no further development in that BSU. Core and Important are calculated separately and the base map based on 2011 lek and habitat data. BSUs will be updated every 5 years.
- Changes to the key habitat map will be made annually based on restoration effort, fires, etc. to determine new acres of key habitat.

- The ability to change things is limited now, due to concerns about consistency between subregions at a higher level.
- Brent will be finishing the proposed plan. Rob is working on the proposed plan and will be final by the end of this week.
- Vegetation modeling – working with Don Major to take the NOC data for LANDFIRE and separate it by land ownership. They created one dataset across the Great Basin. At the end of the re-run, will have outputs for projected conditions for 10/50 years; also, the amount of acres estimated for treatment that would be needed to restore habitat up to 70%. Will have numbers for BLM and FS ownership. Should be available in the next two weeks.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 10:53 AM
To: 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov)
Subject: IDT meeting notes and follow up
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-08-14.docx

Hi Brent,

Attached are notes from this morning's meeting, also on the Sharepoint site.

Regarding Alternative F for lands and realty, the WEG proposal stated: Occupied sage-grouse habitat areas shall be exclusion areas for new ROWs permits. So that sounds like PPMA and PGMA.

About accessing the files on the Q drive, I think I am just not doing it correctly. I'm accessing it through a VPN connection from my BLM computer and tried using these links:

\\ILMIDSO3DS2\id\loc\GIS\projects\wildlife\sage_grouse\Greater_Sage_Grouse_Initiative\FINAL_EIS\Tables

Q:\loc\GIS\projects\wildlife\sage_grouse\Greater_Sage_Grouse_Initiative\FINAL_EIS\Tables

But I'm wondering if maybe I'm just not using the right link?

Thanks,
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
26 O'Farrell Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
www.EMPSi.com Twitter: EMPSInc Facebook: EMPSi

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Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2014 10:24 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: GRSG SR ID Call - 8/28 notes
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-08-28.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from this morning's call (and also on the Sharepoint site).
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
26 O'Farrell Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2014 11:43 AM
To: Arnold, Jenifer L; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Brown, William B; German, Jesse S; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Kershaw, Kathi G; Knapton, Brandon L; Kuyper, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Prestwich, Kasey C; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tolness, Denise R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S; Brent Esmoil; Cally Younger; Catherine Wightman; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; eugene.schock@id.usda.gov; Fletcher, Tammy; Jeff Bergland; jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov; Jon Beals; Katie Powell; Mike McDonald; Pyron, Jason; Rapley, Kathleen; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov; Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brooks, Sandra S; Burkhardt, Glen H; Carlson, John C; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; Halford, Fredrick K; Jirik, Steven J; Jonathan Norred; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Porter, Karen F; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Tanya Thrift; Wiedenmann, Kurt R
Subject: GRSG SR ID Call

Call-In Information for Thursday's Calls

877-324-1605

97575#

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

August 28, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Natalie Cooper; Don Kemner; Mike McDonald; Bruce Schoeberl; Katie Powell; Kasey Prestwich; Karen Porter; Gloria Jakovac; Rob Mickelsen; Chris Colt; Jesse Rawson

Meeting Minutes

Section 7 Consultation Update

- Working closely with Boise and MT FWS offices. Finishing the northwest CO biological assessment this week and will use that as a template for the ID/MT biological assessment. Most significant issues is slickspot peppergrass, but will also consider impacts to grizzly bear, wolf and lynx. Will prepare a preliminary draft over the next three weeks for USFWS review. Afterwards, will determine the need for formal consultation.

Federal Family Meeting

- Meeting in Portland last week. Met with all state directors and staff from the Department. Meeting looked at whether management direction for each GRSG population was consistent with National Policy Team guidance. A lot of discussions over the week and items identified that need resolution. Some of the topics got pushed off until after the Rocky Mountain Region federal family meeting in two weeks.
- For ID/MT plan, concerns raised, but no major changes made at the meeting. Issues included fluid minerals management; solar/wind energy and difference between avoidance/exclusion in Important areas; disturbance threshold is now a “disturbance cap”; buffers.
- WO working on buffers. ID/MT did a good job citing references and including rationale, but other subregions need better rationale/citations.
- Waivers language for fluid minerals: In the current plan, Core is closed in low/no potential areas; NSO and waiver in moderate/high potential areas (e.g., Bear Lake). Waiver tied to anthropogenic disturbance criteria. This will be changed to state that the NSO can be waived if you’re developing in non-habitat areas as determined by an interagency group of biologists.
- Fluid mineral allocations: will change our allocations so that Core and Important will be NSO with no waivers, exemptions, and modifications except for the one waiver above.
- Not much discussion about transmission lines, roads, etc.
- Disturbance cap – Frank Quamen from the NOC described the formulas for calculating disturbance. Some confusion about how the three percent cap will be calculated. Final decision was to send it back to the disturbance and monitoring subteam which will meet today. WO will finish their white paper on disturbance but will not release until after the Rocky Mountain federal family meeting.

Next Steps

- Larger schedule is that final decisions and adjustments from the Department should come in mid-October after the Great Basin, Rocky Mountain, and state meetings are completed.
- Brent will be working to finish proposed plan by the end of next week. Will then update the GIS and effects analysis and hope to have a working draft by the end of September.
- Not a lot of work for the team until the proposed plan is final.
- Next week, will review the Forest Service plan and GIS/maps.

Anticipated Development

- Call today to discuss the description of potential impacts and likely development in the planning area in the foreseeable future. Unsure of the scale of the effort at this point, but more details likely forthcoming on the call.

Other

- Treatment objectives for VDDT should be distributed by the end of next week. BLM acres will be presented by population area, Forest Service acres by Forest.

Brent Ralston

From: Paul Makela
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2014 11:08 AM
To: Collins, Rodney
Cc: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Important Meeting Reminder: Disturbance and Monitoring Team

Your office is fine.

Paul Makela
Wildlife Program Lead
Idaho BLM State Office
Office: 208.373.3809
Email: pmakela@blm.gov

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 27, 2014, at 11:00 AM, "Collins, Rodney" <rcollins@blm.gov> wrote:

I plan to be on it, you are welcome to join me in my office or I can try to book a meeting room.

Rod

Rod Collins
State GIS Manager & Data Administrator
DOI - Bureau of Land Management - Idaho
Office: 208.373.3998
Mobile: 208.371.5831
rcollins@blm.gov

On Wed, Aug 27, 2014 at 10:41 AM, Paul Makela <pmakela@blm.gov> wrote:
Should we 3 plan to be on this call tomorrow?

Paul Makela
Wildlife Program Lead
Idaho BLM State Office
Office: 208.373.3809
Email: pmakela@blm.gov

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Toevs, Gordon" <gtoevs@blm.gov>
Date: August 26, 2014 at 3:41:02 PM MDT

To: Pat Deibert <pat_deibert@fws.gov>, Anthony Titolo <atitolo@blm.gov>, Christopher Knauf <cknauf@blm.gov>, Douglas Havlina <dhavlina@blm.gov>, Emily Kachergis <ekachergis@blm.gov>, Frank Quamen <fquamen@blm.gov>, Glenn Frederick <gfrederick@blm.gov>, Jennifer Morton <j75morto@blm.gov>, Jesse Rawson <jmrawson@blm.gov>, John Carlson <jccarlso@blm.gov>, Lara Juliusson <lara_juliusson@fws.gov>, Lief Wiechman <lief_wiechman@fws.gov>, Paul Makela <pmakela@blm.gov>, Renee Chi <rchi@blm.gov>, Robert -FS Mickelsen <rmickelsen@fs.fed.us>, Robin Sell <rsell@blm.gov>, Sandra Brewer <sbrewer@blm.gov>, Vicki Herren <vherren@blm.gov>, "ddamm@fs.fed.us" <ddamm@fs.fed.us>

Subject: Important Meeting Reminder: Disturbance and Monitoring Team

Disturbance and Monitoring Subteam:

The recent Great Basin federal family meeting identified a number of inconsistencies. One of those was the various approaches to dealing with disturbance. We (this team) are tasked to have a proposal to resolve this issue BEFORE the Rocky Mountain federal family meeting in two weeks. It is extremely critical that you participate in the call on Thursday and the subsequent follow-up calls next week. Please make sure your supervisor knows the importance of these meetings and allocates the needed time to participate. If you or your supervisor have any questions, please give me a call.

Background: This team presented a number of options in the GRSG Monitoring Framework for calculating the amount of disturbance on the landscape in both the sagebrush availability measures and the habitat degradation measures. However, for the purpose of managing disturbance under a cap, having multiple ways to calculate disturbance is confusing and does not lend itself to the assurance we hope to provide to the FWS during their status determination next year.

Therefore, this team needs to clarify and define the relationships of the following:

- * What are the management decisions the disturbance calculations will inform (cap for authorizing disturbance vs Adaptive Management triggers)
- * How does the analysis area used in the calculation relate to the management decisions (population, BSU and/or project)
- * Why is the BSU scale necessary
- * What is the analysis area for calculating disturbance (PAC/PH or habitat)
- * What data are used in the calculations (national, or national and local combined)
- * How is fire included in the calculations.

We will be using the Webex to display this relationship in a table, so please log in prior to the start of the call so we can start as quickly as possible.

If we have time on Thursday we would also like to start the discussion on the formulas to determine the amount of disturbance as it relates to the disturbance cap.

Last Thursday, several of use started an inventory of the disturbance inventories going on in the state and, while this is still really important, it is somewhat on hold because this is a higher priority.

Thank you,
Gordon

.

--

Gordon Toevs
PhD Soil Science
Desk--202-912-7202
Cell--202-567-1589 cell

Brent Ralston

From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Tuesday, August 05, 2014 7:33 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Bridget Clayton; David Batts <david.batts@emp.si.com>; Erin Jones; Glen -FS Stein; Joan Suther; Johanna Munson; Jon Raby; Joseph Stout; Kathryn Stangl; Lauren Mermejo; Madelyn -FS Dillon; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Pamela Murdock; Quincy Bahr; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Ron Rodriguez; kkralich@fs.fed.us; Bode, Pam -FS; rsharp@fs.fed.us
Subject: Materials for 10am EST/8am MST Meeting
Attachments: Proposal as to how to Incorporate Forest Service ADPPs_8_5_14.docx

Good morning everyone,

Attached is a proposal as to how we plan to incorporate the Forest Service ADPPs into the existing BLM ADPPs. This document will be discussed on this morning's call.

Thanks,

--

Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

Proposal as to how to Incorporate Forest Service ADPPs

Chapter 2

2.X Introduction

2.X.1 Public Input that resulted in new alternative (proposed plan).

2.X.2: Crosswalks between BLM and FS planning language (**Template will be provided**).

2.X Proposed Plans

2.X.1 BLM's Proposed Plan (Organized by Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions/Allowable Uses)

2.X.2 FS's Proposed Plan (Organized by Desired Conditions, Objectives, Standards, and Guidelines)

2.X.3 Alternatives Analyzed in Detail (Table)

Chapter 4

4.X Impacts from Resource X

4.X.1 Impacts from BLM and FS Proposed Plan

If variations between BLM and FS Proposed Plans exist, state the following:

Same as BLM, except: (e.g.)

- *Variations in allocations (managing general differently)*
- *Vegetation*
- *Livestock Grazing*

4.X.2 Impacts from Alternative A ...

Appendix

Internal Working Document – Not for Distribution

- Crosswalk table comparing FS proposed plan to the BLM proposed plan. Provide citations where current management does not match BLM management direction **(Template will be provided)**.

DRAFT

Brent Ralston

From: Holly Prohaska
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 5:26 PM
To: Bahr, Quincy
Cc: Meredith Zaccherio; David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); gstein@fs.fed.us; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov); Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); dhavlina@blm.gov
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Yes, sorry Quincy, my mind is on end of the day burnout, Holly

Holly Prohaska

EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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From: Bahr, Quincy [mailto:qfbahr@blm.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 4:25 PM
To: Holly Prohaska
Cc: Meredith Zaccherio; David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); gstein@fs.fed.us; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov); Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); dhavlina@blm.gov
Subject: Re: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Is this in relation to consistency with state and local plans?

Q

On Mon, Aug 4, 2014 at 5:22 PM, Holly Prohaska <holly.prohaska@empsi.com> wrote:

Regarding #9: Other Topics:

The following text was added to each of the Sub regional public comment response reports:

[NOTE TO BLM from SOL: need to review all of the noted plans/policies for consistency. Update Proposed LUPA/FEIS to include statement (paragraph) to confirm that there are no inconsistencies. Or if there are inconsistencies, how BLM has chosen to resolve them. Include rationale for why or why not inconsistencies were corrected.

In response, include direction to the reader where they can find the new/updated information in the FEIS. E.g., "See Section XXX in the Proposed LUPA/FEIS for additional details."]

NVCA would like to discuss a consistent approach to addressing this response.

Thanks, Holly

Holly Prohaska

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From: Meredith Zaccherio

Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 4:06 PM

To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov)'; Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'

Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fqumen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'

Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213

participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates – Matt/Kathy
2. Fire Update – Doug Havlina
3. Roll up and Tier II/CEA Update – Frank/Drew
4. Subregional updates – Project Leads
5. Process/format for incorporating Forest Service analysis of proposed plan – meeting last week
6. Outstanding issues?
7. Schedule
8. Action Items from past calls – see below
9. Other topics?

Action Items from past calls:

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- WO to share disturbance white paper after review with Ed.

Meredith Zaccherio

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--

Quincy Bahr
Project Manager – Greater Sage-Grouse LUP Amendments, Utah Sub-Region
Planning and Environmental Coordinator – BLM, Utah State Office
440 West 200 South, Suite 500
Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1345
801-539-4122 (office)
801-518-1479 (cell)
qfbahr@blm.gov

Brent Ralston

From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2014 6:08 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharpay@att.net' (sharpay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
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Action Items from past calls:

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Joan: Send out revised adaptive management responses for Oregon.

NOC

- Vicki: Work with Frank and the disturbance and monitoring subteam to finalize site-scale disturbance metrics and descriptions.

EMPSi

- Draft alternate response to county plan consistency comment and will send to Carol-Anne and the National Comment Response Team.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2014 1:53 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-08-11.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from our call this morning.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2014 5:08 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; mlanglasward@blm.gov; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

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Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- Joan: Send out revised adaptive management responses for Oregon.

NOC

- Vicki: Work with Frank and the disturbance and monitoring subteam to finalize site-scale disturbance metrics and descriptions.

EMPSi

- Draft alternate response to county plan consistency comment and will send to Carol-Anne and the National Comment Response Team.

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

August 11, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Brent Ralston, ID; Joan Suther, OR; Frank Quamen, NOC; Kathy Stangl, WO; Matt Magaletti, WO; Vicki Herren, NOC

USFS: Glen Stein; Randy Sharp; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- None.

Meeting Minutes

Federal Family Meeting

- Meeting materials should arrive by Wed or Thursday as hard copies. PMs should discuss the proposed plan with their state directors who have to give a 5 minute talk about the subregional plan.
- Recommend putting the subregional effort in context of the rangewide effort for the 5 minute briefing. State what percent of the population and habitat is within the subregion. Highlight the major threats in your state, and efforts with relationships (how USFWS has been involved locally). Also mention unique aspects about your effort (e.g., moratorium on planning in western UT).
- Matt will send the powerpoint with the regional context for each subregion.
- There will be a session on adaptive management, mitigation, monitoring and coordination with the states. Would like input from the state directors on how we will move forward with states collectively. There will be a regional meeting with the states after the federal family meeting. The Department, solicitors, Forest Service, and USFWS will also be there.
- Disturbance white paper will be released after the federal family meeting.

Outcomes from Last Week's Meeting

- Anticipate having one ROD for the Great Basin plans. May be signed by the Secretary. As a result, the proposed plans need to have a consistent format across the GBR and RMR. Proposed plans will be discussed separately in Chapter 2. There will be a consistent format that everyone must follow with consistent headings. Will require re-working and formatting. Template has yet to be determined.

- Ensure that all BMPs and RDFs from NTT are in the proposed plans. Matt will send a table tracking how RDFs are included. It is an internal check, but PMs should wait to fill it out until after the meeting next week. Not a problem if a subregion has added RDFs as long as they don't conflict with existing RDFs.
- Ongoing discussions on how to integrate Forest Service plan into Chapter 2. Will wait until after federal family meeting to talk about formatting.

Forest Service Plan Update

- Working to finish draft proposed planning language for ID/MT and UT. Working on NV/CA next.
- Reviewing the subregional revisions and comments and ensuring consistency across the region.

USFWS Data Call

- Data call letter from USFWS has been circulating. Data call for the conservation efforts database (CED) and threat information that will go to them. Steve Small and Vicki are working on the strategy for how BLM will respond. CED is in beta testing now. Would like to provide as much data as possible from national level datasets then determine what level of involvement will be needed from the field.
- Unsure how the threats data will be provided. Likely can be derived from the same data layers described in the monitoring framework for the broad and mid-scale.

Disturbance and Monitoring Team Update

- Working to develop consistency between local monitoring plans. Discussing what to include at fine/site-scale. Will be using same threats at broad/mid-scale in monitoring framework and additional threats to include at project level and biologically significant units. Taking a final vote on what to include on Thursday (e.g., underground pipelines, meteorological towers, hydropower plants, recreation areas). If PMs have concerns, talk to your disturbance and monitoring team liaisons.

Cumulative Effects Analysis

- Putting CEA on hold until after federal family meeting to ensure the data is ready, complete, and accurate. Moving forward with Buffalo CEA to use as a template. EMPSi will set up a workshop with PMs and lead biologists to review that plan so everyone can see what CEA includes/doesn't include and set expectations.

Other

- Joan sent out a paper regarding mitigation in Oregon and asked for feedback. Also sent revised adaptive management strategy.
- Randy will send out some of the materials they have worked on regarding mitigation.
- FIAT – hopefully the IM will be out this week.

Brent Ralston

From: Miller, Ruth
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014 8:42 AM
To: Brian Hockett; Adam Carr; Brent Ralston; Carmen Drieling; Carolyn Sherve-Bybee; Cornelia Hudson; Craig Drake; Diane Friez; Donato Judice; Frederick O'Ferrall; Gary Benes; Gary Smith; Geoff Beyersdorf; James Sparks; Jamie Connell; Jessica M Montag; John Carlson; Katherine Kitchell; Kelly Bockting; Linda Reder; Mark Albers; Mary Bloom; Melodie Lloyd; Michael Philbin; Mitchell K Iverson; Peter McFadden; Phillip Perlewitz; Richard Hotaling; Rick Rymerson; Samuel Herbert; Sandra Brooks; Stanley Jaynes; Susan Bassett; Timothy Zachmeier; Todd Yeager
Subject: Agenda for call tomorrow
Attachments: RMP_critical_path_agenda_08_26_2014.docx

Critical Path tomorrow will be primarily an update from John on the Great Basin Federal Family Meeting. Unless you have any additional topics, we're mostly down to sage-grouse items. Thanks. Ruth.

Ruth Miller
Planning and Environmental Specialist
Montana State Office
406.896.5023 (desk)
406.896.5293 (fax)

Agenda - State Director RMP Critical Path Briefing – August 26, 2014

Call-in number: 406.896.5345 and Passcode: 1014#

Field Office Issues and Updates

Miles City:

HiLine:

Billings/PPNM:

South Dakota:

North Dakota:

Lewistown:

Dillon:

Issues	Discussion/Updates	Decision/Follow-up
Sage-grouse Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from John on the Great Basin FFM... • John and Jamie will attend the Rocky Mountain FFM week of September 9th. • EMSPi is working on MZ cumulative and will send John a draft report. • A white paper from the WO on disturbance cap is being delayed until after the FFM. • John has PDF of the spatial data for our plans to review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize BMP appendix with mitigation document – for revisions. • Finalize Adaptive Management Plan. • Insert MZ cumulative when done. • Incorporate any changes from FFM in September.
	<p>WO will update schedule after FFM in September.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Karan documents when they go to WO. • Amendments still need MSO review.

Items decided/sent to FOs for incorporation into FEIS:

- Oil and Gas Stipulations
- Predators: John C. drafted a section to drop into chapter 3 regarding predators.
- COT report threats table: North Dakota and Colorado examples provided to add to Chapter 4 of each plan.
- Future PH/GH delineation changes. No need to add text to the RMP - minor boundary adjustments can be done with plan maintenance. Large boundary adjustments would probably need an amendment.
- EMPSi recommendations on similar comment responses sent to Team Leads to review/incorporate changes.
- Allocations confirmed by WO – solar changed on many plans.

Brent Ralston

From: Cally Younger
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2014 10:04 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Dustin T. Miller; Jeffery Foss
Subject: Re: Idaho GRSG Plan

Great. See you then.

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Sold! 1:30 it is.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Cally Younger [mailto:Cally.Younger@gov.idaho.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2014 9:29 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Dustin T. Miller; Cally Younger; Jeffery Foss
Subject: Re: Idaho GRSG Plan

Can we do 130?

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Dustin & Cally,

Will 1:00 work? If so I'll plan on coming down and meeting then.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

-----Original Message-----

From: Dustin T. Miller [mailto:Dustin.Miller@osc.idaho.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014 5:22 PM
To: Cally Younger; Brent Ralston
Cc: Jeffery L Foss
Subject: RE: Idaho GRSG Plan

Wednesday afternoon works best for me. Can meet here in the conference room.

Dustin

-----Original Message-----

From: Cally Younger
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014 5:20 PM
To: Brent Ralston; Dustin T. Miller
Cc: Jeffery L Foss
Subject: RE: Idaho GRSG Plan

I can meet anytime tomorrow and any time Wednesday afternoon.

-----Original Message-----

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014 4:18 PM
To: Dustin T. Miller; Cally Younger
Cc: Jeffery L Foss
Subject: Idaho GRSG Plan

Dustin and Cally,

Last week the Great Basin efforts met with the federal agencies (BLM, Forest Service, FWS and DOI) to discuss plans.

We fared good and I've got a couple things I'd like to share with you soon. Do you have some time Tuesday or Wednesday that I could come down and chat with you?

- Brent Ralston

Sent from my iPad

Brent Ralston

From: Dillon, Madelyn -FS
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 9:01 AM
To: Meredith Zaccherio
Cc: 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); Mickelsen, Robert -FS
Subject: RE: ID/MT Comment report, version 2.1

Thanks, Meredith. Brent did share this file last week. Because UT and NWCO are further along, and everyone has limited time, NeST has been asked to review the RTC reports for those sub regions first. Once those are done, we can jump onto ID and NV.

Thanks!

Madelyn Dillon
Forest Service National Greater Sage Grouse
Deputy Project Manager
2150A Centre Avenue Suite 300
Fort Collins, CO 80526
970-295-5734 (office)
970-619-0709 (cell)
970-295-5885 (fax)

Click on image to visit our greater sage-grouse intranet site.



From: Meredith Zaccherio [<mailto:meredith.zaccherio@empai.com>]
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 8:53 AM
To: Dillon, Madelyn -FS
Cc: 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); Mickelsen, Robert -FS
Subject: FW: ID/MT Comment report, version 2.1

Hi Madelyn,

Per the emails last week, here is the most recent ID/MT subregion comment response report for you to review. As an FYI to Brent and Rob, we thought it would be good to have Madelyn involved in these reviews since she has been looking at the reports from a national/consistency level with the FS perspective.

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
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www.EMPSi.com Twitter: EMPSInc Facebook: EMPSi

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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2014 11:24 AM

To: Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brooks, Sandra S; Burkhardt, Glen H; Carlson, John C; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; German, Jesse S; Halford, Fredrick K; Jirik, Steven J; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Porter, Karen F; Wiedenmann, Kurt R; Tanya Thrift

Subject: RE: Comment report, version 2.1

Well I shared the report but I didn't really communicate the assignment that goes along with it. So here goes...

Everyone needs to take a look at this again, particularly noting any highlighted areas, and make sure these responses are good to go. If there are some edits or adjustments to the response please make that in track changes and send back to me by August 8th. If there is additional insight you can provide in resolving any of the highlighted areas also include that in track changes.

I've reattached the report again in case you misplaced it!!

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

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Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 9:52 AM
To: Kurt Wiedenmann; Jeffery Foss
Subject: RE: Sage grouse

Jeff,

We are working to respond to the GIS needs and get those data sets to the NOC. We are having a little problem that we are trying to work through or around and have been trying to get in touch with someone at the NOC to resolve the issue. In a nutshell after we posted the data to the NOC server the NOC locked down the folder and the files so we cannot replace/delete/rename the files that are currently in the directory. We are trying to add new files (renamed) to that folder which may or may not work (it seems it is working for some files and not for others).

As for the call this afternoon – I will plan on sitting in on the call with you.

For Implementation we have been starting discussions on several topics that would be useful to discuss further. What we have discussed is starting to build and Implementation Guide (and we have included an action in the Proposed Plan to develop such a guide post-ROD which set FWS at ease about how we are moving forward) that would serve as a sort of handbook for implementation of the plan. There are several areas already identified that would need some further definition for implementation – our short list so far is:

1. Fire and Invasives Assessments – There is currently an IM on how to do these, and there could be more direction developed as to how to implement those and incorporate their findings into site specific projects.
2. Anthropogenic Disturbance – the NOC has described this process at the broad scale and there is a need to describe the specific process at the local scale – who (which office) is responsible for what component; who (which office) has the authority to evaluate and respond, etc.
3. Mitigation – the development of the strategy and the inter-workings of the coordinating body with federal and state partners.
4. Adaptive Management – similar to anthropogenic disturbance, with the additional coordination amongst stakeholders; what teams or boards do we need; who are the participants; how do they function – meeting, review, decision authority, etc.
5. Livestock Grazing permit renewals – describing how the decisions in the plan get translated down to the allotment level
6. Travel management planning – what is priority for completion in relation to other implementation efforts; how to step forward, etc.

There will undoubtedly be more but this is a beginning.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt [<mailto:kwiedenmann@blm.gov>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 7:41 AM
To: Jeffery Foss

Cc: Brent Ralston

Subject: Re: Sage grouse

I will let Brent respond to both of your questions. I know that GIS has been working this week to get the data corrected and off to the NOC.

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

On Fri, Aug 8, 2014 at 6:50 AM, Jeffery Foss <jfoss@blm.gov> wrote:
Where do we stand with getting GIS data to the NOC?

I am on a call at 1 today with other DSDs to brainstorm implementation ideas for the RMPs once amended. Any thoughts?

Thanks

Jeff

Sent from my iPhone

Brent Ralston

From: Seth Grigg
Sent: Tuesday, September 09, 2014 3:32 PM
To: Andy Brunelle; Ralston, Brent E; robyn_miller; bhiggins; Gordon Cruickshank; Commissioner Skipper Brandt; Don Ebert
Subject: Public Lands Committee Agenda
Attachments: PL Sept 2014 Meeting Packet.pdf

Thanks for agreeing to participate in the IAC Public Lands Committee meeting. Please find attached meeting materials for the meeting. As a reminder the meeting is scheduled for 3-5pm on Tuesday, September 16th at the University Inn in Moscow, ID. The meeting will take place in the Washington Room.

All the best,
Seth

--

Seth Grigg | Policy Analyst
208.345.9126 | 208.345.0379 Fax
sgrigg@idcounties.org | www.idcounties.org

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**IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
PUBLIC LANDS STEERING COMMITTEE**

Annual Conference ~ Moscow, ID
University Inn ~ Washington Room
September 16, 2014 ~ 3 pm to 5 pm

Tentative Agenda

- I. Call to Order: The Honorable Brenda Richards, Chair
 - A. Welcome and introduction of guests and committee members
 - B. Approval of February 2014 meeting minutes
- II. USFS Update: Andy Brunelle, USFS Capital City Coordinator
- III. Sage Grouse Management Plan Update: Brent Ralston, BLM Idaho
- IV. Congressional Update: Mike Hanna, Regional Director for Senator Jim Risch
- V. Clearwater Basin Collaborative Panel Discussion (why did the collaborative start, what are its current projects, why has it been successful, what can other counties do to adapt lessons learned to their communities): Don Ebert, Clearwater County Commissioner; Skip Brandt, Idaho County Commissioner; Robyn Miller, The Nature Conservancy; Bill Higgins, Idaho Forest Group
- VI. WIR/SRS/PILT Update: Gordon Cruickshank, Valley County Commissioner
- VII. Elko County Resolution on Sage Grouse/Grazing: Gordon Cruickshank, Valley Co Commissioner
- VIII. Discussion and Voting on Resolutions
 - A. IAC Resolution No. 2014-7: Designation of National Monuments - Gordon Cruickshank, Valley County Commissioner
- IX. Other business
- X. Adjourn

Committee Members:

Brenda Richards, Owyhee County Treasurer, Chair
John Allen, Clearwater County Commissioner, Vice Chair

Bill Brown, Adams Commissioner	Barbara Tierney, Custer Clerk
Mike Paradis, Adams Commissioner	Wes Wootan, Elmore Commissioner
Steve Hadley, Bannock Commissioner	LeRoy Miller, Fremont Commissioner
Jacob Greenberg, Blaine Commissioner	Jordan Stoddard, Fremont Commissioner
Angenie McCleary, Blaine Commissioner	Skip Brandt, Idaho Commissioner
Jamie Anderson, Boise Commissioner	Jim Chmelik, Idaho Commissioner
Dave Radford, Bonneville Commissioner	Jerald Raymond, Jefferson Commissioner
Dan Dinning Boundary Commissioner	Robert Cope, Lemhi Commissioner
Earl Somsen, Caribou Commissioner	Rick Snyder, Lemhi Commissioner
Dennis Crane, Cassia Commissioner	Doug Zenner, Nez Perce Commissioner
Bill Fredericksen, Clark Commissioner	Jerry Hoagland, Owyhee Commissioner
Greg Shenton, Clark Commissioner	Larry Church, Payette Commissioner
Tod Shenton, Clark Commissioner	Larry Yergler, Shoshone Commissioner
Don Ebert, Clearwater Commissioner	Gordon Cruickshank, Valley Commissioner
Wayne Butts, Custer Commissioner	Kirk Chandler, Washington Commissioner
Lin Hintze, Custer Commissioner	

IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE
IAC Midwinter Conference ~ Riverside Hotel ~ Boise, ID
February 4, 2014 ~ 1:15 Pm to 2:45 pm
MEETING MINUTES ~ DRAFT

ATTENDEES:

Brenda Richards, Owyhee County Treasurer, Chair
John Allen, Clearwater County Commissioner, Vice Chair

Committee Members:

Mike Paradis, Adams Commissioner
Jamie Anderson, Boise Commissioner
Dave Radford, Bonneville Commissioner
Dan Dinning Boundary Commissioner
Earl Somsen, Caribou Commissioner
Bill Fredericksen, Clark Commissioner
Greg Shenton, Clark Commissioner
Tod Shenton, Clark Commissioner
Don Ebert, Clearwater Commissioner
Wayne Butts, Custer Commissioner
Lin Hintze, Custer Commissioner
Barbara Tierney, Custer Clerk
Wes Wootan, Elmore Commissioner
LeRoy Miller, Fremont Commissioner
Skip Brandt, Idaho Commissioner
Jim Chmelik, Idaho Commissioner
Doug Zenner, Nez Perce Commissioner
Jerry Hoagland, Owyhee Commissioner
Larry Yergler, Shoshone Commissioner
Gordon Cruickshank, Valley Commissioner
Kirk Chandler, Washington Commissioner

IAC Members:

Stacy Dreyer, Adams Assessor
DeMar Romrell, Bear Lake Commissioner
Angenie McCleary, Blaine Commissioner
Daryl Wheeler, Bonner Commissioner
Seth Beal, Butte Commissioner
Bart May, Clark Sheriff
Doyle Lamb, Custer Commissioner
Deanna Hall, Idaho Treasurer

IAC Members (cont'd):

Lynn Bowerman, Lemhi Sheriff
Carroll Keith, Lewis Commissioner
Roy Hubert, Lincoln Commissioner
Ann Youts, Lincoln Treasurer
Kimber Ricks, Madison Commissioner
Kent McClellon, Minidoka Commissioner
Dale Tubbs, Oneida Commissioner
Kelly Aberasturi, Owyhee Commissioner
Joe Merrick, Owyhee Commissioner
Perry Grant, Owyhee Sheriff
Jerry White, Shoshone Assessor
Rod Plank, Shoshone Under Sheriff
Kelly Park, Teton Commissioner
Elt Hasbrouck, Valley Commissioner
Patti Bolen, Valley Sheriff

Guests:

Craig Glazier, USFS/IDL
Mike Roach, US Senator Risch
Jeff Foss, BLM
Brent Ralston, BLM
Kurt Wiederman, BLM
Layne Bangerter, US Senator Crapo
Mitch Silvers, US Senator Crapo
Jonathan Oppenheimer, ICL
Rob Mason, The Wilderness Society
Sam Eaton, OSC
David Thornton, Idaho Power

IAC Staff:

None

I. Call to Order and Introductions: Brenda Richards, Chair

Committee Chair Brenda Richards called the meeting to order and welcomed committee members and guests.

MOTION: Dave Radford, Bonneville County Commissioner moved to approve the September 2013 meeting minutes. Doug Zenner, Nez Perce County Commissioner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

II. BLM Sage Grouse Update: Brent Ralston, BLM

Brent Ralston updated the committee on the BLM's sage grouse resource management plan. The BLM has released its draft EIS with six alternatives. The BLM has identified two co-preferred alternatives, one developed by the BLM and one developed by the Governor's Sage Grouse Work Group. The 90 day public comment period ended in January and the BLM received over 15,000 individual comments. Many of the comments were form letters. Form letters came from five groups: Wild Earth Guardians (want strong protections), The American Bird Conservancy (want limited future development), Defenders of Wildlife (want wildlife preserves), the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign (focus on BLM's mandate to protect wild horses), and the Idaho Cattlemens Association (advocating for Governor Otter's recommendations). In addition, there are 200-300 individual comments from government agencies, counties (Owyhee, Custer, Washington, Power, Gooding, Jefferson, and Beaverhead, MT), and legislators. The BLM is compiling and analyzing comments to develop a final EIS and make a final decision by the end of September.

III. BLM Grazing Permit Renewal Update: Kurt Wiederman, BLM

Kurt Wiederman updated the committee on grazing permit renewals in Owyhee County. Litigation on renewals dates back to the late 1990s. Western Watersheds is the main driver behind the lawsuits. The BLM was ordered in 2000 by courts to redo NEPA on the 68 permit renewals in question. It did not complete renewals by the court ordered deadline in 2006 and went back to court. The BLM was placed under a new court order in 2008 to complete NEPA on the remaining permit renewals by December 2013. The BLM has issued 56 final decisions and met conditions of 2008 court order. The BLM found that resource conditions on the ground were not up to BLM standards which led to a change in grazing policies on the allotments. As a result, there will be a 41% reduction of grazing on the allotments. The BLM has received 80 appeals and expects to receive up to 100 by the end of the appeals process. The appellants are primarily from the permittees, Western Watersheds, various cattlemen associations, and the Farm Bureau. The appeals will likely take up to two years to process. The status quo will be maintained until the appeals are finalized. The BLM is under a second court order to update the resources management plan for allotments in the Jarbidge area. The Jarbidge effort will start up this year.

IV. Gateway West Update: Jeff Foss, Deputy State Director for Resources, BLM

Jeff Foss provided an update of the Gateway West Transmission project to the committee. The project is a 500kv line by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power from Wyoming to just outside of Boise. It crosses 47% BLM managed land, 44% private land, 7% state managed land, and 2% USFS managed land. The BLM published a final EIS in 2013 and a record of decision in December 2013. The decision applies to federally managed public lands only with the goal of mitigating the impacts of the project on federal land and recognizes that the authority is limited to federal jurisdiction and has no impact on county planning ordinances or the Idaho Public

Utilities Commission. Certain segments of the proposed corridor will undergo additional NEPA studies including in the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. The path forward on private land has also yet to be determined. A couple of alternatives include closer spacing and piggybacking off of existing transmission lines.

V. Western Cohesive Strategy Update: Craig Glazier, USFS/IDL

Craig Glazier updated the committee on the Western Cohesive Wildfire Strategy. The three main tenets of the strategy are: maintaining and restoring resilient landscapes, creating fire adaptive communities, and strengthening wildfire response. The strategy goals are: increase management of vegetation and fuels, protect homes and communities at risk, managing human caused ignitions, and effectively responding to wildfire. There needs to be better resource allocation from all levels to meet the goals. Idaho ranks high for vegetation and fuels management, community planning, and effectively responding to large scale wildfires. Idaho ranked low for human caused ignitions. Community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) will play a huge role in the implementation of the Western Cohesive Wildfire Strategy. Idaho's forest action plan will be greatly influenced by the cohesive strategy. Now is the time to provide feedback. Counties must make sure that their CWPPs are current. Counties without current CWPPs will not be eligible for grant funding. Counties will be better prepared to respond to wildfires if their plans are up to date.

VI. PILT/SRS/WIR Update: Gordon Cruickshank, Valley County Commissioner

Commissioner Cruickshank reported that the Farm Bill has passed the House and Senate and is on its way to the President Obama's desk for his signature. It contains a one year extension of full PILT funding. PILT payments for 2014 should be received in June 2014. Mr. Cruickshank also reported that SRS was reauthorized for one more year through the Helium ACT, payments should be released March 7th. The one year reauthorization expires on September 30th.

VII. Coordinating Natural Resource Litigation: Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner

Commissioner Dinning discussed with the committee how counties can better coordinate litigation efforts with IAC. IAC has a litigation fund that can assist counties with litigation that impacts all counties. The Natural Resources Litigation Fund Committee needs to know when a county is contemplating litigation to better coordinate efforts, remove duplication, and prevent bad litigation.

VIII. Adjourn

Committee Chair Brenda Richards adjourned the meeting at 2:50pm. The next committee meeting will be held in Moscow, ID at the University Inn as part of the IAC Annual Conference in September.

IAC RESOLUTION NO. 2014-07

Resolution to urge the President to solicit and follow the advice of local stakeholders before using the Antiquities Act of 1906 to designate national monuments, such as the Boulder White Clouds, in the State of Idaho.

Sponsor: IACC (Gordon Cruickshank, Valley Co Commissioner) – Amended 6/12/14

Idaho Statute(s): None

Impacted County Office(s): Commissioner

Policy Issue: Use of the Antiquities Act to designate the national monuments, such as Boulder-White Clouds, in the State of Idaho.

Proposed Policy: The Idaho Association of Counties strongly **urges opposes** the President ~~to refrain from~~ using his powers under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to establish national monuments, such as the Boulder White Clouds, in the State of Idaho without seriously considering broad, local stakeholder input. National monuments should be designated upon agreement of local stakeholders and working groups **that live, work and recreate in the areas under consideration.**

Background Information: Interest groups are proposing that the Boulder-White Cloud National Monument be established by presidential proclamation using the Antiquities Act of 1906. The proposal encompasses 592,000 acres of federally administered public land in central Idaho, including 312,000 acres east of the East Fork of the Salmon River and 280,000 acres west of the East Fork that is in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area.

Establishing a monument without the active involvement of stakeholders would disrupt their way of life and undermine the good relationship that has existed for many years among most area users. The process for establishing a presidentially-declared National Monument should include broad, local input from people who live, work and recreate in the areas under consideration and should have the opportunity to fully participate in a land-use decision of critical importance to them.

Rather than relying upon a single act of presidential power, national monuments should be designated based on input from local elected officials, local working groups, public land users, and other local stakeholders. Local stakeholders are best positioned to understand local economies, cultures, and resources. Local stakeholders and working groups have been able to find agreement in the past in the designation of wilderness and national recreation areas. Often time's controversy is removed when public land use decisions are made with the input and recommendation of local stakeholders.

Fiscal Impact:

Date Adopted:

BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy



BLM
Forest Service



Greater Sage-Grouse ESA Re-Cap

- 2005: FWS issued “not warranted” Finding
- 2007: District Court remanded 2005 Finding
- 2010: FWS issued “warranted but precluded” Finding
- Finding Identified Inadequate regulatory mechanisms as a major factor
- 2011: BLM initiated National Greater Sage Grouse Planning Strategy.
- FY 2015: GRSG final listing decision per settlement discussions



Purpose and Need

of all Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse EISs

Purpose

Identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures in LUPs to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat.

Need

Respond to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) March 2010 "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing petition decision, which identified inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms as a significant threat to GRSG.

The principal regulatory mechanism for BLM and FS is conservation measures in BLM's and FS's LUPs.



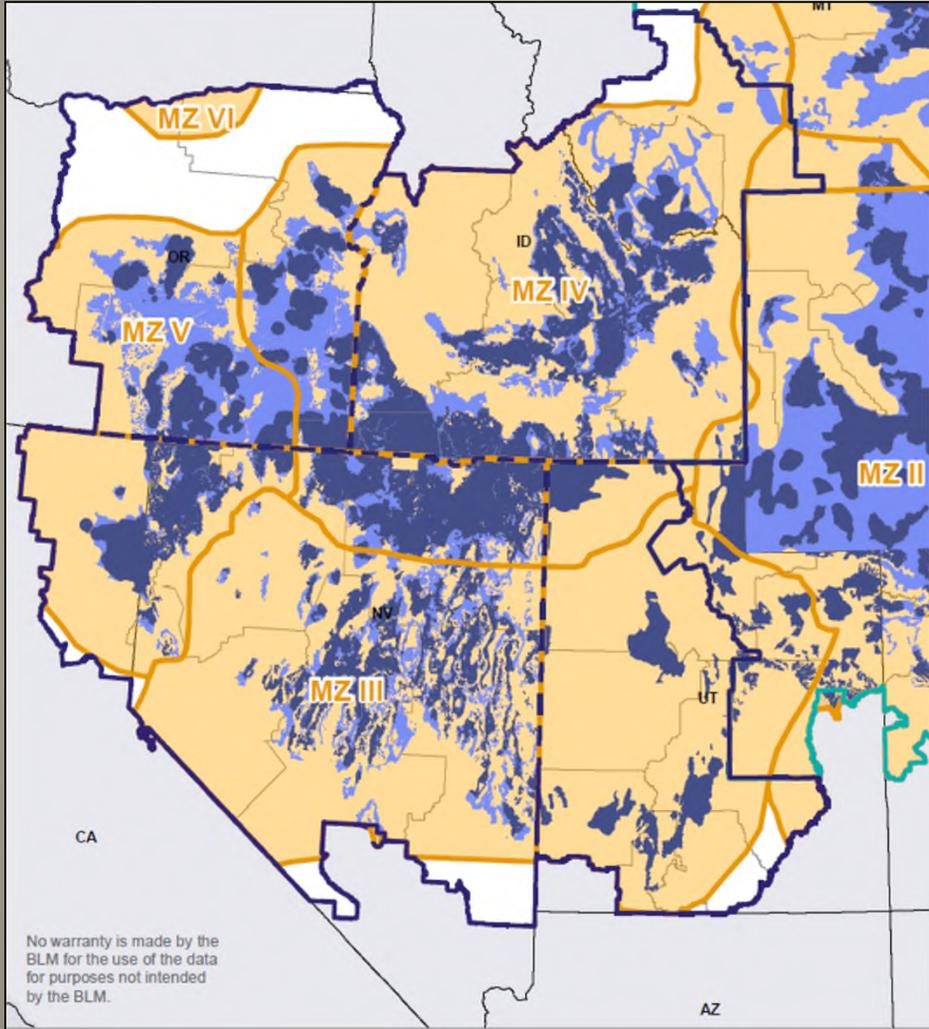
Major Threat – Great Basin Region



Major Threat – Rocky Mountain Region



Great Basin GRSB Habitat Overview



-  Great Basin
-  Rocky Mountain
-  Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Management Zone
-  Preliminary priority habitat
-  Preliminary general habitat



Great Basin GRSB Habitat Overview

- Total Great Basin Habitat Area: 61 million acres
- Subregions:
 - Idaho and southwestern Montana
 - Nevada and northeastern California
 - Oregon
 - Utah
- Land management:
 - BLM: 50% of habitat
 - FS: 7% of habitat
- Land Use Plan (LUP) Revisions:
 - 41 BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs)
 - 12 Forest Service Forest Plans



Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region

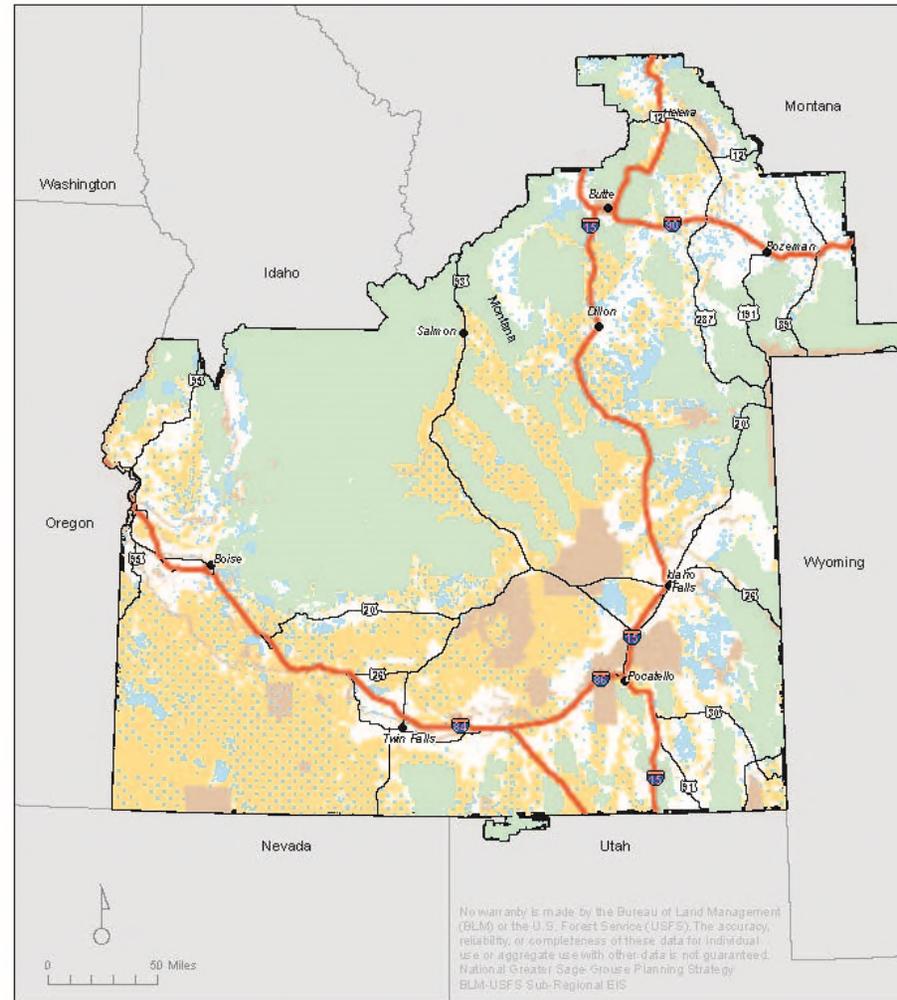
29 Plans Addressed:

Idaho – 20 BLM Resource Management Plans
 - 7 Forest Service Forest Plans

Montana – 1 BLM Resource Management Plan
 - 1 Forest Service Forest Plan

Subregion Includes
 18 million acres of habitat
 Addresses approximately
 11 million acres of habitat

Planning Area

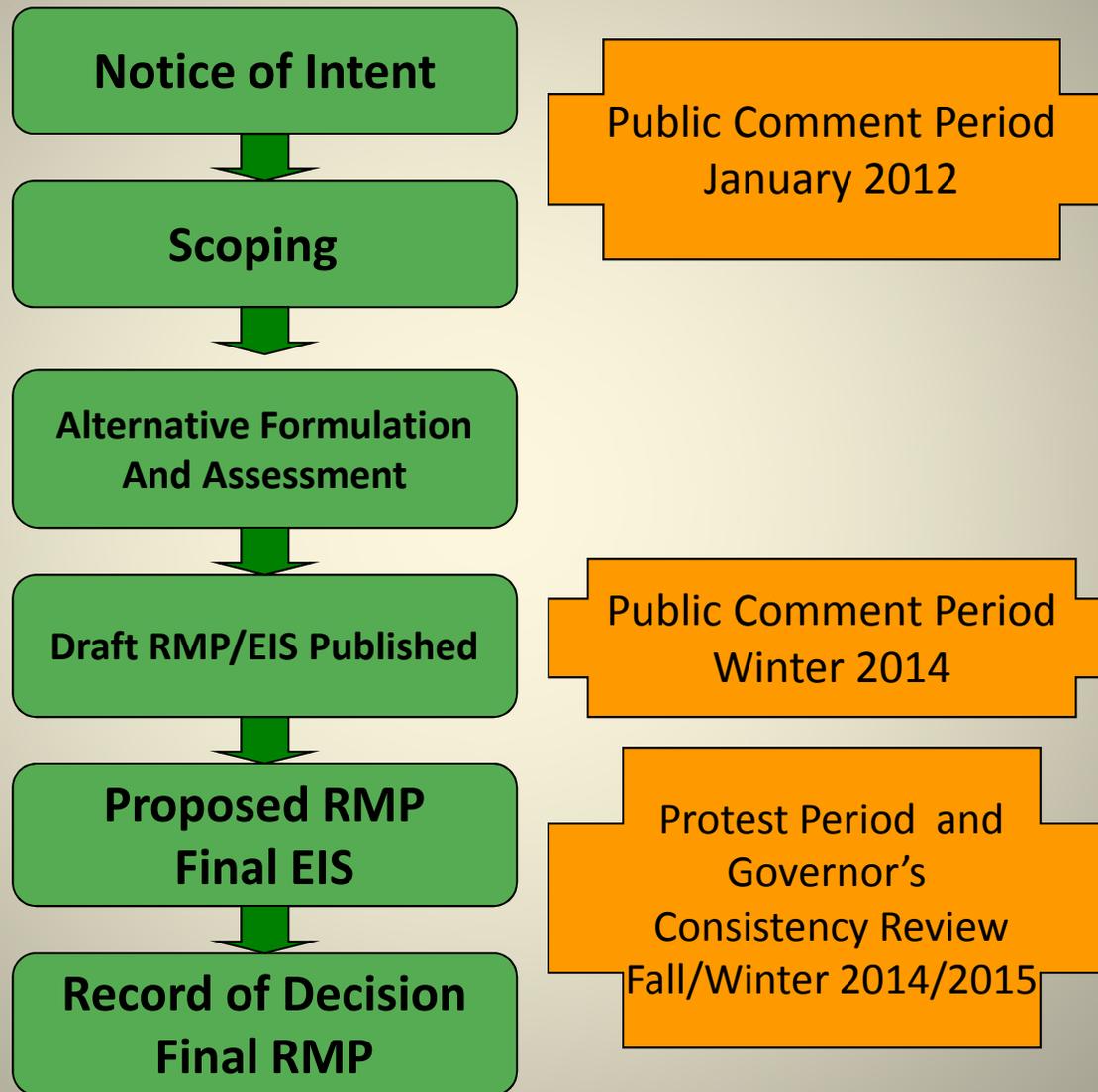


- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Analysis Boundary | Bureau of Land Management |
| Interstate highway | United States Forest Service |
| US highway | Private |
| Major Cities | State |
| | Other |

BLM
Forest Service



Key Milestones



Proposed Plan Components

- Management Zones
- Habitat Management Objectives
- Adaptive Management Strategy
- Anthropogenic Disturbance Cap
- Mitigation Board and Strategy
- Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments
- Program Direction
- Monitoring



Addressing the Wildfire Threat

- **Delineation of Management Zones to Prioritize Suppression and Restoration Activities to Protect the most Critical Areas**
- **Adaptive Management Strategy to Reduce Development Disturbances on Broader Areas and Prioritize Additional Acres for Suppression Activity if Habitat is Lost**
- **State Development and BLM/FS Support of Rural Fire Protection Associations to Increase Suppression Capacity**
- **Fuels Reduction Treatments Through Effective Measures**
- **Fuel Break Development to Compartmentalize Areas and Reduce Fire Spread**
- **Restoration and Rehabilitation of Sagebrush**
- **Development of Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments to Prioritize Suppression and Other Activities and Identify Beneficial Project Activities**



Questions?



Brent Ralston

From: Kurt Wiedenmann
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2014 11:13 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Peter Ditton; Anne Briggs; Anne Briggs
Subject: Re: Standards

I am good with the explanation.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 3, 2014, at 9:44 AM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Here is a quick one-pager on Standards as discussed on the call and how the amendments are applied. Hopefully this resolves any confusion. If you are good with this then we can share it with Tim for transmittal.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

<Jarbidge Standards and standards.docx>

On today's call we were discussing grazing in relation to the Jarbidge RMP and Greater Sage-Grouse Amendments, specifically in regards to the Forest Service approach and how they processes and implementation would play together.

BLM grazing activities are directed through federal rule by the state specific (Idaho in this case) Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. There are 8 Standards by which grazing activities are evaluated and adjustments made to ensure that conditions on the ground are meeting or are making progress toward meeting those Standards (capital S). The Forest Service does not have an analogous approach at this regulation or rule level.

At the land use planning level the GRSG Amendment is proposing the inclusion of vegetation management objectives into the development and implementation of project activities that would affect or impact vegetation – this includes grazing activities. Through the plan amendment BLM would incorporate these as objectives to screen potential activities to ensure that activities would result in meeting or making progress toward meeting these objectives. The Forest Service is proposing these be included in their plans as standards (lowercase s) that would be met before project activities could occur. The BLM objectives and Forest Service standards are very similar and in most cases are identical – they are based on the Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework and tie to the indices that we will be monitoring through that process that reflect the condition of Greater Sage-Grouse habitat.

For BLM the amendments will add consideration of Greater Sage-Grouse vegetation objectives into site specific project implementation activities, including grazing, that builds on the foundation of the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. The amendments are not proposing changes in the Standards (capital S) since that would require rulemaking. For Forest Service the amendments will incorporate land use plan standards (lowercase s) into the management and implementation of grazing activities on the Forest.

Brent Ralston

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 9:13 AM
To: Jeffery Foss; Brent Ralston
Cc: Cheryle Zwang; Timothy Murphy
Subject: Fwd: McClurePolicyForum_ConceptPaper_Aug20
Attachments: ATT00001.txt; McClurePolicyForum_ConceptPaper_Aug20.pdf

Attached is the concept paper for the September 19 Sage-grouse policy forum. We need to discuss if we want to be on the panel and who the lucky panelist would be (it is on a Friday night).

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wulfhorst, J. (jd@uidaho.edu)** <jd@uidaho.edu>
Date: Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:25 PM
Subject: McClurePolicyForum_ConceptPaper_Aug20
To: Kurt Wiedenmann <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>
Cc: "Wulfhorst, J. (jd@uidaho.edu)" <jd@uidaho.edu>, "Salant, Priscilla (psalant@uidaho.edu)" <psalant@uidaho.edu>

Hi Kurt, as per our meeting a couple weeks ago, I'm following up to send some additional detail on the Policy Forum we're planning for Sept 19th. See attached for additional details via the concept paper we discussed. Apologies this took a bit longer to get to you than I planned. Travel this week got things backed up.

After you have had a chance to review the document, let's touch base again soon. The panel and format are beginning to take shape and it would be good to connect again and discuss more.

Via this email, I'm also introducing you to Priscilla Salant, Director for the University of Idaho McClure Public Policy Center for Research, and lead organizer for the event.

Let me know if you have any immediate questions. Thanks again for your time and interest in this.

Building Trust in Science: Is Idaho Getting it Right with Sage-Grouse?

2014 McClure Forum on Science and Public Policy
Sponsored by the University of Idaho's
James A and Louise McClure Center and
National Science Foundation-IGERT¹ Project

September 19, 2014, 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Reception to Follow
Lincoln Auditorium, State Capitol
Boise, Idaho

The late Senator Jim McClure believed that sound policy depends on good science. He disparaged legislative bodies that made decisions on complicated issues without fully understanding the relevant science. Yet today's reality is that science is often used as ammunition to position interests rather than as objective analysis on which to base policy.

Many westerners today - Democrat and Republican, across a wide range of perspectives - see working collaboratively as the best hope for addressing tough issues related to rangeland and forest systems. Idaho's Owyhee Initiative and the Clearwater Basin Collaborative are two recent landscape-scale examples. In both cases, the participants are using science to help make decisions about managing resources - science about ecology, wildlife, and people who make their living on the land.

The 2014 McClure Forum on Science and Public Policy will explore the relationship between science and effective policy making through the lens of Idaho's sage-grouse conservation planning and a possible endangered species listing in 2015 by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The forum's goal is to examine the role of science in the mix of considerations guiding the development of the state's conservation plan. Based on personal experiences, a panel of Idahoans will discuss how science has helped and also challenged their thinking about the land, its wildlife and surrounding communities.

On March 23, 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) determined that the greater sage-grouse warrants an endangered species listing over all of its range, including Idaho, but is precluded by higher-priority listing actions. Thus the sage-grouse is currently considered a "candidate" species under the ESA. The U. S. District

¹ Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship, the National Science Foundation's flagship interdisciplinary training program, educating U.S. Ph.D. scientists and engineers by building on the foundations of their disciplinary knowledge with interdisciplinary training.

Court for the District of Idaho ruled that the FWS must re-evaluate the state of the species under the ESA by September 30, 2015.

A FWS decision to list the greater sage-grouse as endangered would likely have severe and widespread effects on energy, grazing and other land uses throughout Idaho and 10 other western states. To avoid a listing and its impacts, many of those western states have proactively developed voluntary conservation strategies. Idaho's response, technically referred to as the state's alternative for incorporation into the national planning strategy, is a promising example of how sound science grounded in local and state collaboration may inform policy making.

Format, panelists and working list of questions

After a brief update on Idaho's sage-grouse conservation plan, a moderator will facilitate discussion by a panel of people who have been involved in the planning process and/or scientific assessment. Time will be available at the end for audience discussion and for a reception where participants can continue their conversations.

Panelists will represent the wide range of stakeholders who have been involved in developing Idaho's plan from both local and state perspectives. We aim to have no more than six panelists, including:

- An elected representative (county commissioner and / or state legislator);
- A Local Working Group member;
- A rancher / landowner affected by the pending sage-grouse legislation;
- A staff person from an energy firm;
- A staff person from a conservation organization; and
- A scientist who has been involved with development of Idaho's alternative.

The overarching question to be addressed is whether Idaho has "gotten it right" in terms of using science in its response to the potential sage-grouse listing. Our working list of questions for the panelists includes:

- How has science informed planning in the case of the Idaho regulatory mechanism for sage-grouse management?
- What ecological, social, and economic science has been used successfully to help reach agreement on difficult issues and on the other hand, when has science made agreement hard to achieve?
- What have we learned and can we share with other states about the intersection of science and public policy?

Intended audiences for the forum

The intended audience includes several groups:

- Faculty and doctoral students attending the University of Idaho-CATIE NSF-IGERT meeting
- Appointed and elected policy makers and program managers involved in Idaho's proactive efforts to preclude the need to list the greater sage-grouse under the ESA
- Ranchers, energy stakeholders, conservationists, recreationists, sportsmen, and other groups who will be impacted by the expected decision in 2015 regarding an endangered species listing for the greater sage grouse
- Researchers from public agencies, private firms, and higher education whose analysis has the potential to impact policy
- Interested members of the public at large

National Science Foundation-IGERT Sagebrush Team

The 2014 McClure Forum is being held during the annual meeting of the University of Idaho-CATIE NSF-IGERT project. This IGERT meeting marks the culmination of a seven-year international project, Evaluating resilience of ecological and social systems in changing landscapes. The project has been conducted in partnership with CATIE (Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza) in Turrialba, Costa Rica. Roughly 40 faculty and graduate students from the U.S. and Central America are gathering September 18-23 for interdisciplinary presentations and field trips in Idaho.

One of the student teams presenting at the annual IGERT meeting has been deeply involved in rangelands research with implications for the pending sage-grouse listing. The "Sagebrush Team" is made up of four University of Idaho doctoral students working collaboratively on an interdisciplinary research project in southwestern Idaho. Their findings are adding to the growing body of respected research that is improving our understanding of the sage-grouse species as well as the social, economic and ecological complexity of related management activities.

Earlier this year, the Sagebrush Team held a series of workshops in conjunction with a BLM process aimed at improving sage-grouse habitat through juniper management in the Owyhee region. From these workshops, the Sagebrush Team developed a unique dataset that incorporates the social-ecological perspectives of public land users, conservationists and managers about juniper and sage-grouse. The students' experiences in organizing the workshop series have been central to thinking behind this year's McClure Forum on Science and Public Policy.

For more information

Priscilla Salant psalant@uidaho.edu and J.D. Wulforth jd@uidaho.edu
A Concept Paper for Discussion
August 20, 2014

Please contact Priscilla Salant at the McClure Center for Public Policy Research,
psalant@uidaho.edu or 208 364-4549.

Brent Ralston

From: Zwang, Cheryle
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2014 12:53 PM
To: Timothy M Murphy; Peter Ditton; Foss, Jeffery L; Jenifer Arnold; Kathy Mondor; Kris Long; Randy Eardley; Howard Hedrick; Ronald Dunton; Michael Morcom; Lance Okeson; Paul Krabacher; Andrew Delmas; James Fincher; Christopher Simonson; Brent Ralston; Christopher Garvin; Jan Peterson; Cheryle Zwang
Cc: John Fend; Deane Zeller; Anna Steele home
Subject: Final multi day agenda with RFPA panel agenda
Attachments: 9.5.14_PLF.WorkingAgenda.BLM.Fend.FINAL.docx; 9.5.14_RFPA Panel Discussion Outline.docx

Here is the final FINAL agenda for next week. I think we have it all lined out now. Thanks again all for everyone's help! Cheryle

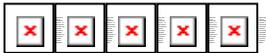
Cheryle Cobell Zwang

Idaho Bureau of Land Management

Deputy State Director, Communications

Ph: 208/373-4016/ Fax: 208-373-4019 / Email: czwang@blm.gov

Follow BLM Idaho on Social Media





**Public Lands Foundation
Annual Meeting
Boise, Idaho
Riverside Hotel
September 9-12, 2014**

Tuesday, September 9		
Time	Issue	Presenter
9:00 – 12:00	PLF Board of Directors Meeting	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch on Your Own	
12:30-1:00 1:00 – 2:15	Dir. Kornze informal visit PLF PLF Board of Directors w/ BLM Director Neil Kornze	
2:15 - 4:00	PLF Board of Directors Meeting (Cont)	
6:00 – 9:00	Social at Fends for BOD	Transportation by pvt vehicles

No IT support on the 9th.

Kris will take some photos during Director time with Board.



**Public Lands Foundation
Annual Meeting
Boise, Idaho
Riverside Hotel
September 9-12, 2014**

Wednesday, September 10		
Time	Topic	Presenter
7:00 – 7:45 (Foyer area)	Poster Session Set up	Cheryle Zwang - Coordinator
8:00 – 8:30	Poster Session - Foyer	Each BLM District/ISO division
8:30 – 8:35 8:35 - 9:00	Introduce Ted Howard, Tribal rep. Welcome and traditional blessing Idaho BLM-Tribal Partnerships	Tim Murphy, Acting Idaho SD Shoshone-Paiute Tribes Ted Howard, Cultural Resource Director
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome, Opening and Introduction	Ed Shepard, President PLF
9:30 – 10:15	NIFC National Perspective	Ron Dunton, Acting Director NIFC
10:15 – 10:30	Break – poster session	Poster presentations
10:30 – 10:40	Welcome to Idaho BLM – video	Tim Murphy, Acting Idaho SD
10:40 – 10:50	- Idaho Fire – What’s new?	- Mike Morcom, State FMO
10:50 – 11:10	- Shifting Paradigms in Fire Mgmt. Statewide to local: Paradigm, Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-brush Habitat, Tri-State projects & Partnerships	- Lance Okeson, BDO Fuels
11:10 – 11:20	- Seeds	- Paul Krabacher, WO, Seed Mgr.
11:20 – 11:35	- Rehab and Restoration	- Jeff Foss, DSD, Resources
11:35 – 12:00	- Latest in Fire Equipment! Look at BLM’s newest fire engine	- Andy Delmas, BDO, FMO
Noon hour	Break – poster session	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch and Speaker; Poster Session in foyer	Rocky Barker - Confirmed
1:00 – 2:30	RFPA Panel: Mike Morcom, Organize Jim Fincher, District Manager Julia Sullens, Fire Program Liaison Chris Simonson, Fire Mgmt Officer Mike Guerry – Three Creek RFPA Darcy Helmick – Saylor Creek RFPA Charlie Lyons – Mtn. Home RFPA Bert Brackett, State Senator/permittee	Tim Murphy moderator Boise District BLM Idaho Department of Lands Twin Falls District BLM Rural Fire Protection Association Rural Fire Protection Association Rural Fire Protection Association RFPA legislation sponsor
2:30 – 2:45	Break – Poster session	
2:45 – 3:30	Future Challenges: Sage Grouse conservation and Fire.	Jeff Foss, DSD, Resources Brent Ralston, Reg’l S-G Project Mgr.



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3:30 – 3:45	Close and Thank you	Tim Murphy, Acting Idaho State Dir.
3:45	Close agenda and invite to banquet	Ed Shepard, President PLF
1:00 – 4:30	Poster session in Foyer	BLM District/State staff members
4:30 – 5:00	Take down posters	BLM District/State staff members
5:30 – 6:00	Social Hour at hotel	
6:00 – 10:00	Banquet at hotel	
7:15 – 8:30	Ken Saunders and friend providing musical entertainment.	
8:30 – 9:15	BLM Reminisces by Joe Zimmer and Tom Dyer	
9:15 - close	PLF Awards – Ed Shepard	
	Photos – Kris support all day and evening if needed	
	IT support all day and evening if needed – Chris Garvin	

Thursday, September 11

Time	Topic	Presenter
8:15	Load Bus – Hotel	Participants
8:30	Depart for Simco overpass (via Federal Way and Gowen Interchange)	
9:15	Stop #1 (stay on bus): Simco overpass: view disk line	Lance Okeson
9:25	Travel to May Fire	
9:30	Stop #2: May Fire - Fire and priorities, issues, etc.	Andy Delmas
9:40	RFPA and I-84 disk line – - Wes Wooten - Elmore County Commissioner; - Charlie Lyons - Rural Fire Protection Association member and permittee	
10:05	Fuel breaks	Oasis Volunteer Fire Chief
10:15	Leave May Fire; travel to Mudd Fire	
10:45	Stop #3: Mudd Fire: fuel breaks, Mudd Fire, grazing study - Steve Demalie - Boise RAC Member and Permittee	
11:15	Depart for Mountain Home	
12:00	Eat box lunch	Carl Miller Park; Mtn Home
1:15	Depart Mountain Home; travel to Simco Fuel Break	
1:45	Stop #4: Simco Fuel Break: forage kochia fuel break	Lance Okeson
2:15	Leave Simco Fuel Break; travel to Oregon Trail Fire – Boise area	
3:00	Stop #5: Oregon Trail Fire and fire mitigation project	Jerry McAdams, City of Boise
3:30	Depart for Riverside Hotel	
3:45 – 4:00	Arrive Riverside Hotel – end of tour.	
	BBQ - \$20 – Bodacious Pig - Eagle Island State Park	
	Photos – Kris support all day and evening if needed	



**Public Lands Foundation
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- See attached maps showing stops and routes



Public Lands Foundation Annual Meeting Boise, Idaho Riverside Hotel September 9-12, 2014

Fuels/Fire Projects for Discussion at PLF Conference

Paradigm Project: The project, named for its aim to shift paradigms regarding land management, encompasses nearly 294,000 acres of federal, state and private land along the Interstate 84 corridor from Boise to Glens Ferry. The project entails planting non-native forage kochia in 300-foot-wide fuel breaks along both shoulders of 187 miles of road. The shift should result in fire priority management, fire strategy, vegetative management, use of science.

BOSH Project: Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-grouse Habitat project (BOSH)
Project is focused on conifer encroachment (western juniper) as it pertains to the maintenance of existing sage-grouse habitats. The proposal is to mechanically treat juniper in preliminary priority and preliminary general sage-grouse habitats (where it occurs) in a 10-km radius around occupied leks in the Owyhee and Bruneau Field Offices. The entire project area is approximately 1.75 million acres, however the actual treatment acres will be less as not all of the area is sage-grouse habitat. This EIS will be prepared over the next year with signing of final decision sometime in spring of 2015.

Tri-State Strategy: The southwest area of Idaho, northwest area of Nevada, and southeast corner of Oregon (tri-state area covers over 3 million acres) is extremely remote, and moving resources to fires in this area requires a long response times. This area also contains one of the largest areas of contiguous Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) and is a stronghold for sage-grouse in Idaho. Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon are cooperating to develop fuel breaks that would enhance the ability of the three states to protect this large area of sage-grouse habitat. Well planned and coordinated fuel breaks would compartmentalize the area and help contain large wildfires across the tri-state landscape and district boundaries. This would reduce the threat of wildfire to high value native plant communities and habitat. Fuel breaks would also provide firefighters areas where they can safely and more effectively engage in fire suppression operations. Maintenance of existing roads coupled with fuel breaks is critical to give fire suppression resources faster access to these remote areas.

Tri -State Strategy Objectives:

- Coordinate across 3 states and four Districts on large fire response
- Coordinate on mitigation/fuels treatments across state and district boundaries
- Identify priorities in tri-state area- life, property, resource
- Identify access routes into remote canyon country on each district
- Identify closest resources for quick response into remote country
- Develop resource advisor maps that will be common for the tri-state area- resource values, special designation areas that will present challenges to suppression resources.
- Identify and expand RFPA opportunities

Public Lands Foundation RFPA Panel Discussion

Wednesday, September 10, 2014

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Tim Murphy, Moderator

Opening Remarks (5-10 minutes)

Panel Discussion (5-10 minutes each)

- **Bert Brackett**, State Senator (RFPA legislation Sponsor)
“My role as sponsor of the current legislation”
- **Darcy Helmick**, Saylor Creek RFPA
“Logistics of setting up an RFPA”
- **Mike Guerry**, Three Creek RFPA
“Required training and challenges and successes with the training”
- **Charlie Lyons**, Mountain Home RPPA
“How it’s working on fires and some real life experiences”
- **Julia Sullens**, Idaho Department of Lands (Southwest Liaison)
“Current and planned RPFAs”
- **Chris Simonson**, Idaho BLM (Twin Falls Fire Management Officer)
“Benefits and challenges surrounding RFPAs from a BLM District FMO perspective”
- **Jim Fincher**, Idaho BLM (Boise District Manager)
“From a manager’s perspective”

Questions and Answers

Tim Murphy, Facilitator (15 minutes)

Closing Remarks

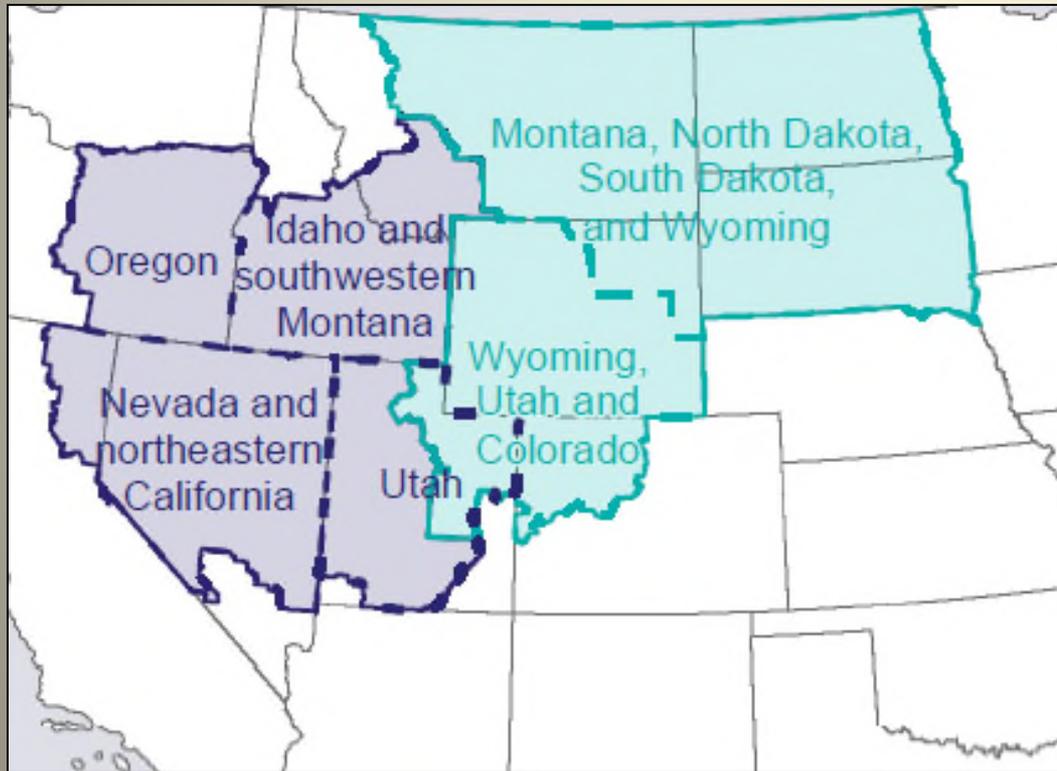
Tim Murphy (5 minutes)

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 3:31 PM
To: Jeffery Foss
Subject: PLF Presentation
Attachments: PLF Presentation.pptx

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy



Greater Sage-Grouse ESA Re-Cap

- 2005: FWS issued “not warranted” Finding
- 2007: District Court remanded 2005 Finding
- 2010: FWS issued “warranted but precluded” Finding
- Finding Identified Inadequate regulatory mechanisms as a major factor
- 2011: BLM initiated National Greater Sage Grouse Planning Strategy.
- FY 2015: GRSG final listing decision per settlement discussions



Purpose and Need

of all Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse EISs

Purpose

Identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures in LUPs to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat.

Need

Respond to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) March 2010 "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing petition decision, which identified inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms as a significant threat to GRSG.

The principal regulatory mechanism for BLM and FS is conservation measures in BLM's and FS's LUPs.



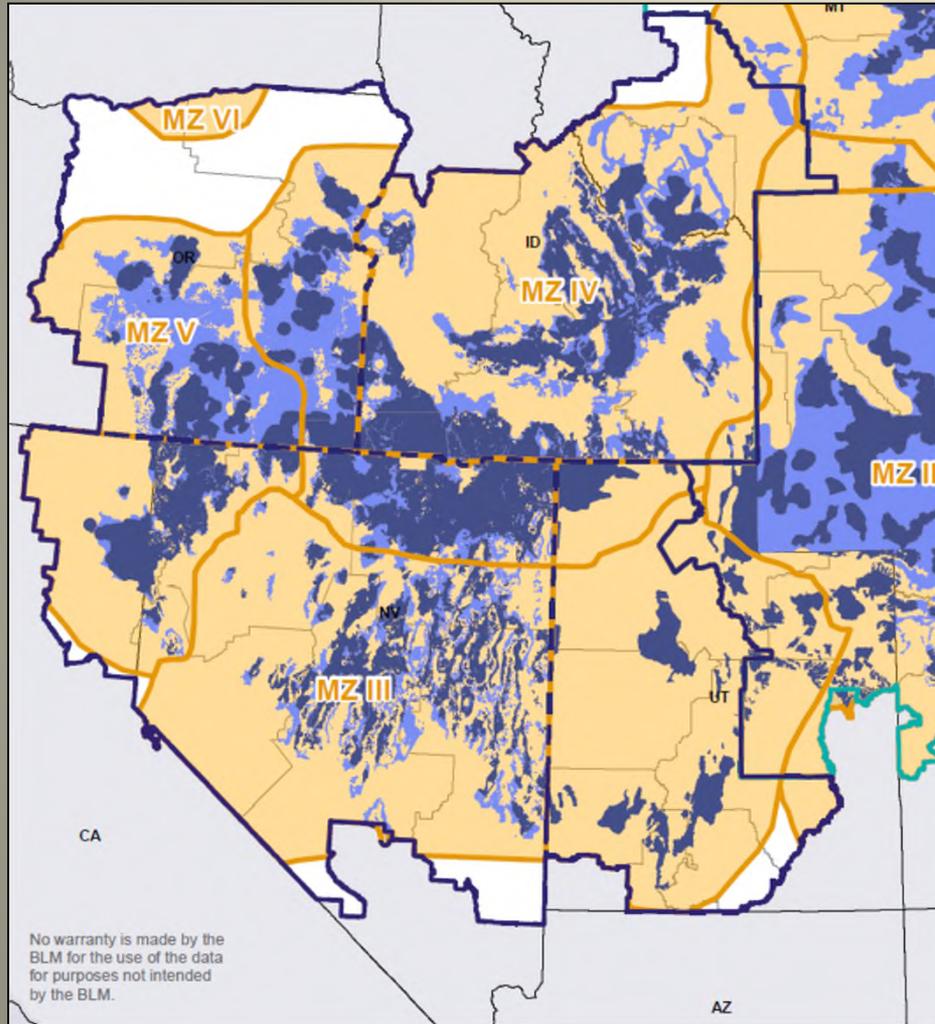
Major Threat – Great Basin Region



Major Threat – Rocky Mountain Region



Great Basin GRSG Habitat Overview



-  Great Basin
-  Rocky Mountain
-  Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Management Zone
-  Preliminary priority habitat
-  Preliminary general habitat



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Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region

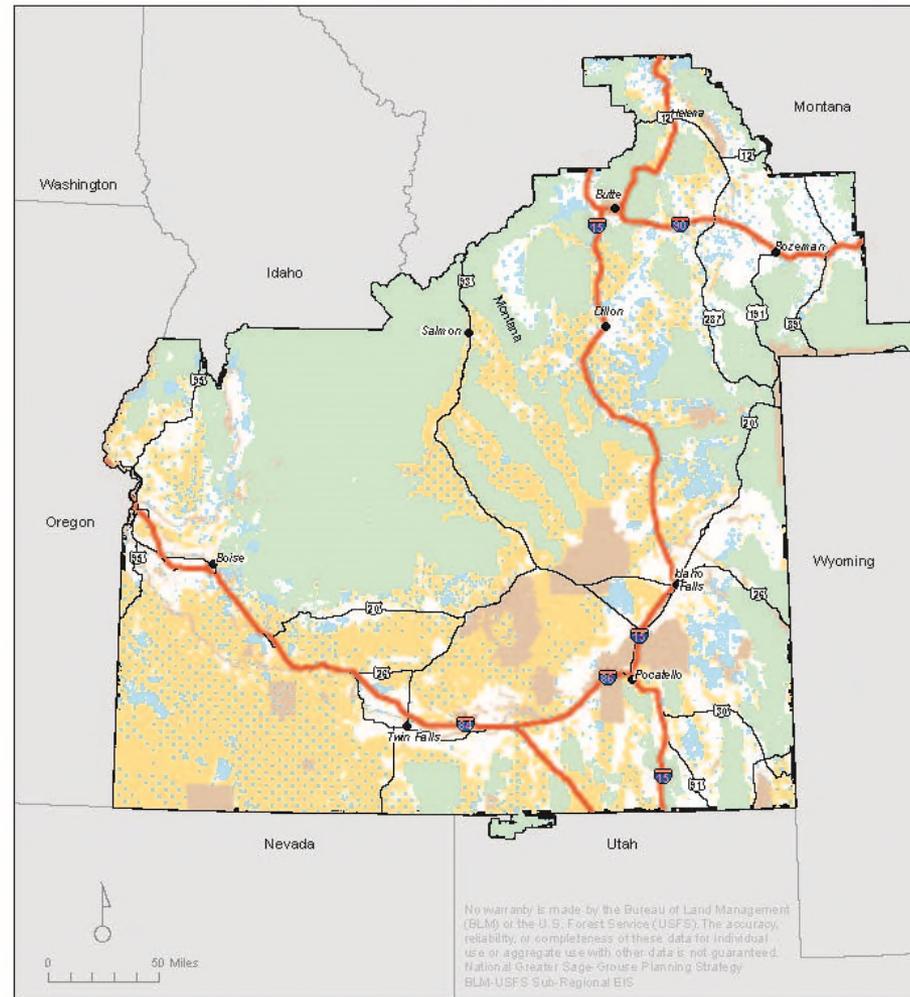
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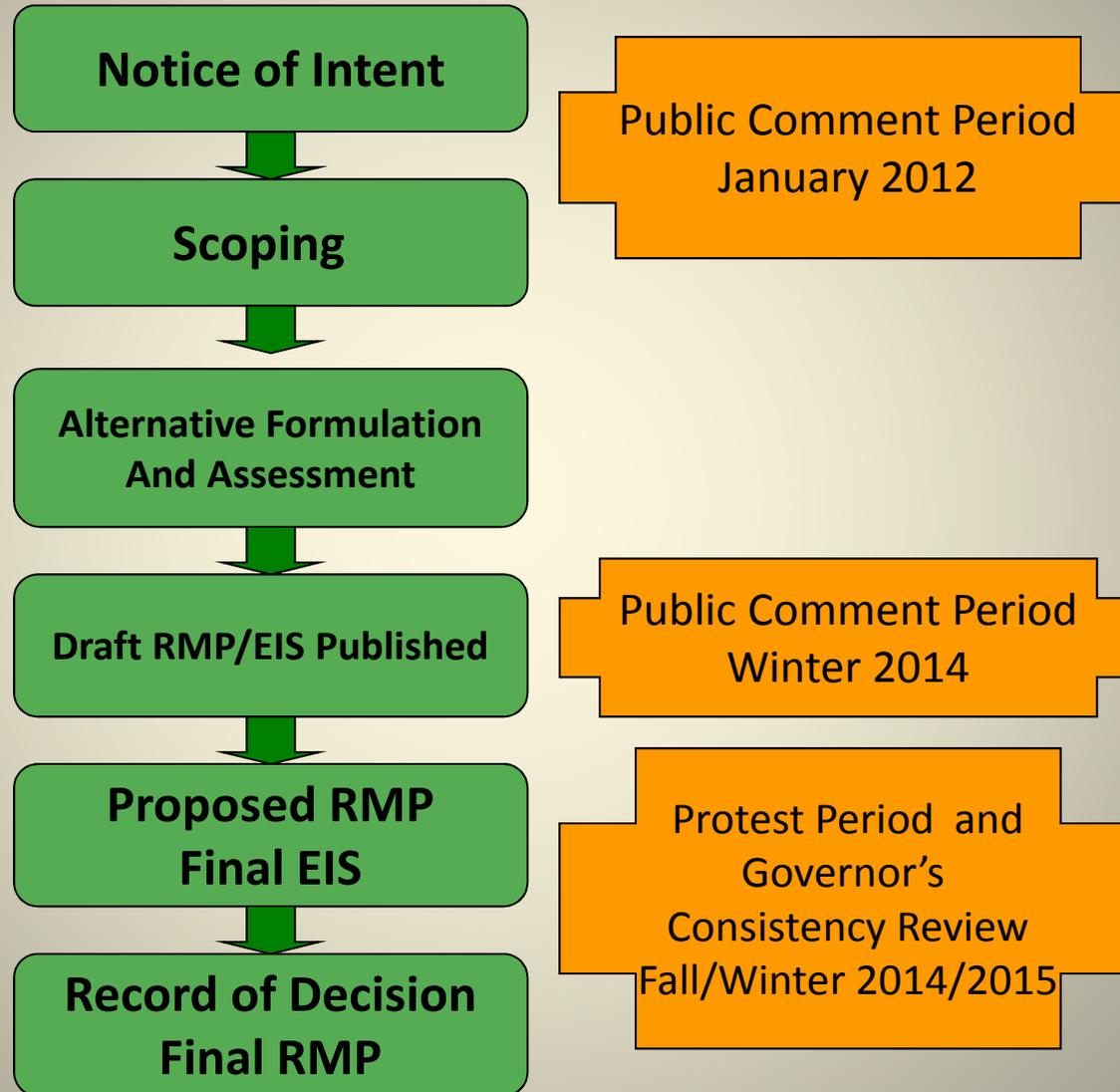
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Planning Area



- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Analysis Boundary | Bureau of Land Management |
| Interstate highway | United States Forest Service |
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Key Milestones



Plan Components

- **Management Zones**
- **Habitat Management Objectives**
- **Adaptive Management Strategy**
- **Anthropogenic Disturbance Cap**
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- **Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments**
- **Program Direction**
- **Monitoring**



Addressing the Wildfire Threat

- **Delineation of Management Zones to Prioritize Suppression and Restoration Activities to Protect the most Critical Areas**
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- **Development of Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments to Prioritize Suppression and Other Activities and Identify Beneficial Project Activities**



Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments

Each State is developing a **Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment**

Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas.

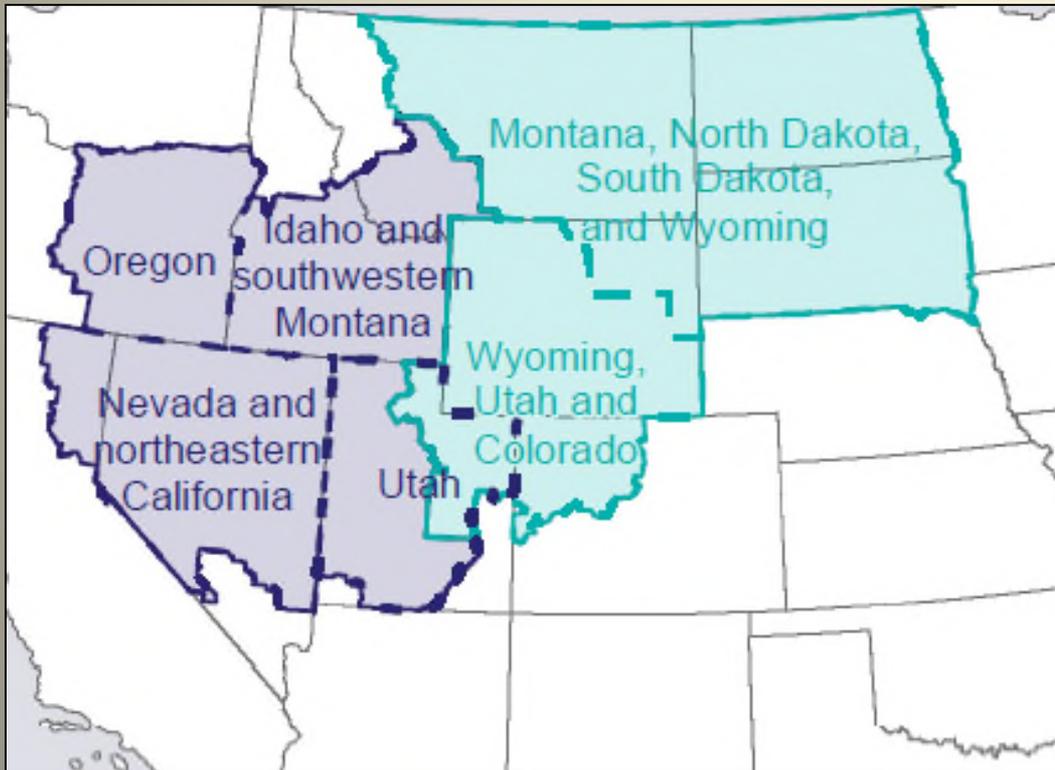
These assessments describe strategies and treatment opportunities for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities.



Questions?



BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy



Greater Sage-Grouse ESA Re-Cap

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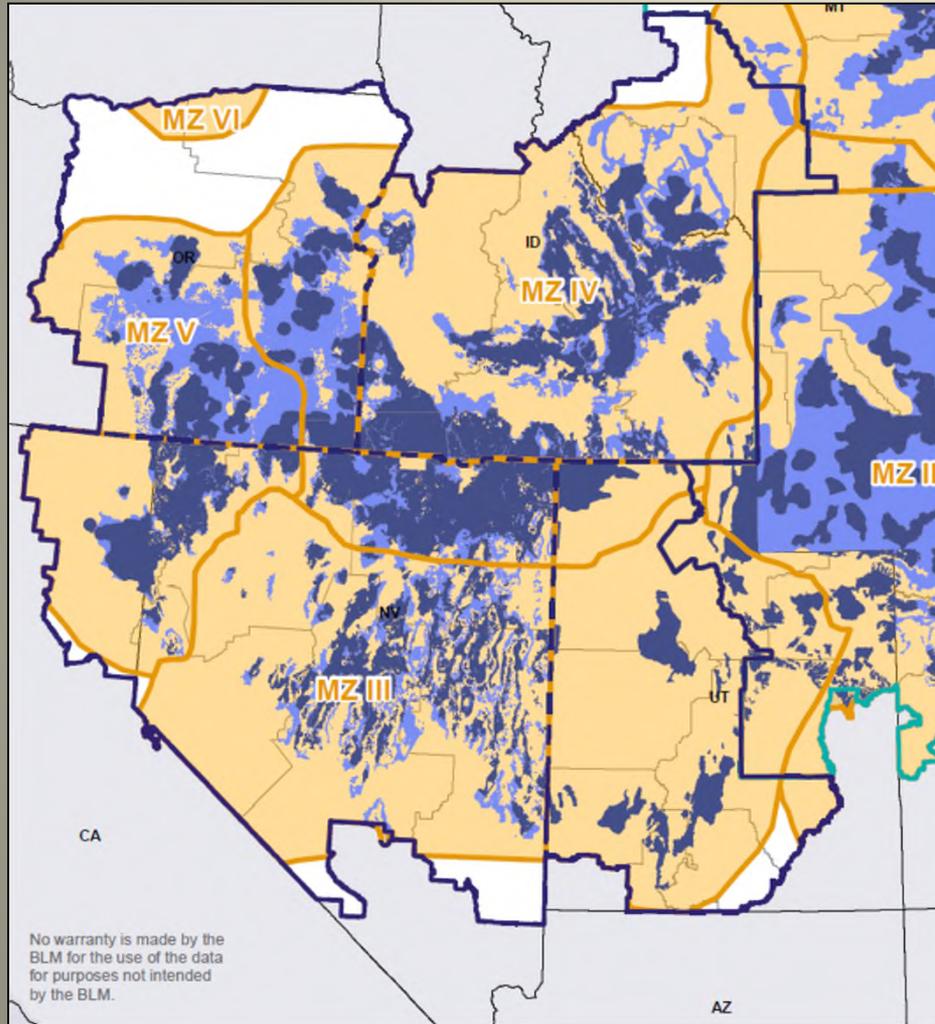
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Major Threat – Rocky Mountain Region



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 - 12 Forest Service Forest Plans



Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region

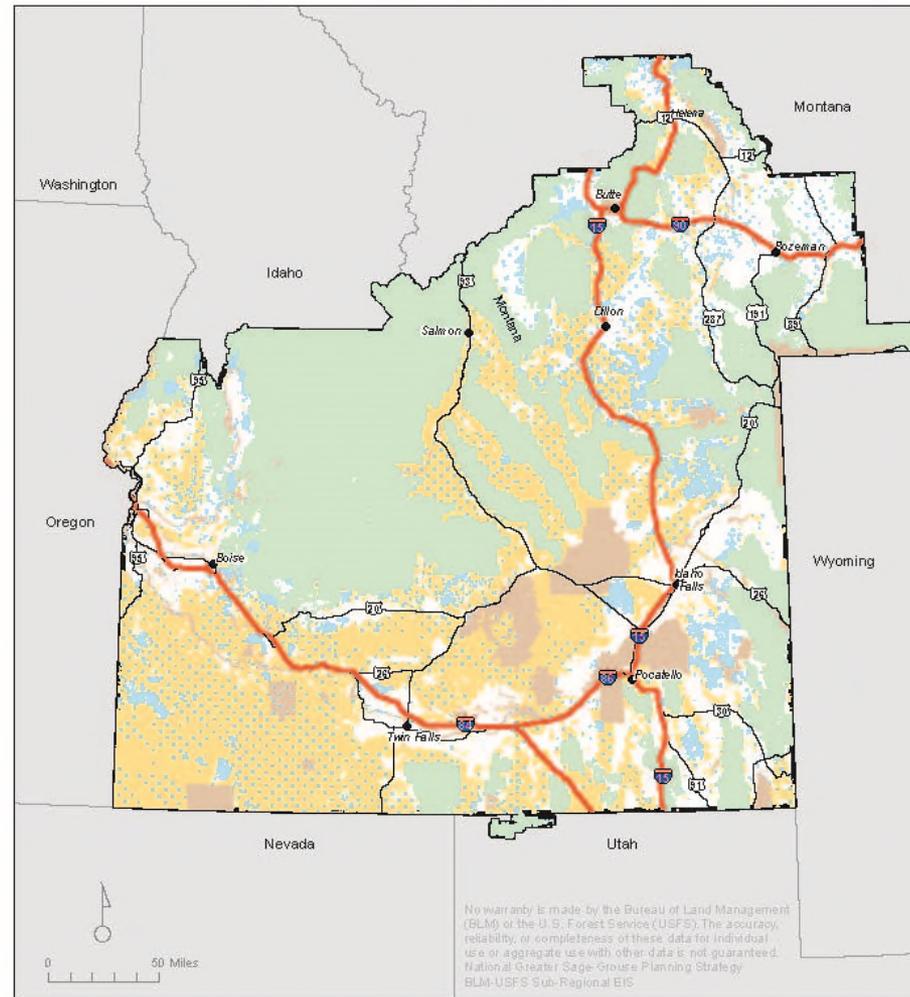
29 Plans Addressed:

Idaho – 20 BLM Resource Management Plans
 - 7 Forest Service Forest Plans

Montana – 1 BLM Resource Management Plan
 - 1 Forest Service Forest Plan

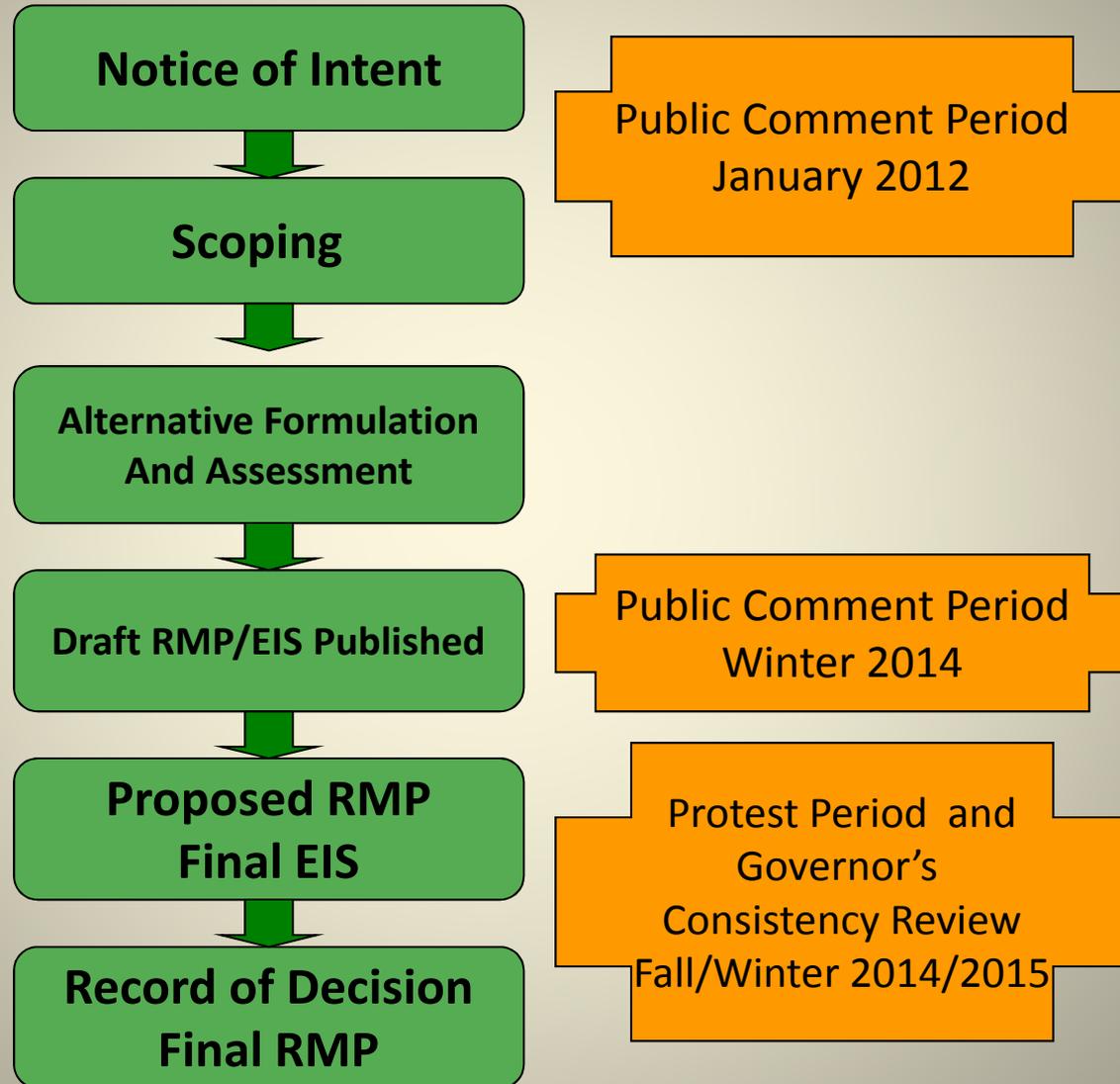
Subregion Includes
 18 million acres of habitat
 Addresses approximately
 11 million acres of habitat

Planning Area



- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Analysis Boundary | Bureau of Land Management |
| Interstate highway | United States Forest Service |
| US highway | Private |
| Major Cities | State |
| | Other |

Key Milestones



Plan Components

- **Management Zones**
- **Habitat Management Objectives**
- **Adaptive Management Strategy**
- **Anthropogenic Disturbance Cap**
- **Mitigation Board and Strategy**
- **Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments**
- **Program Direction**
- **Monitoring**



Addressing the Wildfire Threat

- **Delineation of Management Zones to Prioritize Suppression and Restoration Activities to Protect the most Critical Areas**
- **Adaptive Management Strategy to Reduce Development Disturbances on Broader Areas and Prioritize Additional Acres for Suppression Activity if Habitat is Lost**
- **State Development and BLM/FS Support of Rural Fire Protection Associations to Increase Suppression Capacity**
- **Fuels Reduction Treatments Through Effective Measures**
- **Fuel Break Development to Compartmentalize Areas and Reduce Fire Spread**
- **Restoration and Rehabilitation of Sagebrush**
- **Development of Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments to Prioritize Suppression and Other Activities and Identify Beneficial Project Activities**



Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments

Each State is developing a **Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment**

Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire and invasive species, as well as identification of priority areas.

These assessments describe strategies and treatment opportunities for fuels management, suppression and restoration activities.



Questions?



Brent Ralston

From: Wiedenmann, Kurt
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2014 3:22 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: when will ID-E MT sage-grouse FEIS be released?
Attachments: Jarbidge RMP Protest final submitted.docx; jarbidge rmp protest alternative for SEIS for cd submission.docx; Jarbidge RMP additional protest 9-21.docx

Brent - see Katies trailing email to consider the Jarbidge PMP protest submissions for the s-g EIS process record.

Kurt Wiedenmann

Resources and Science Branch Chief
BLM - Idaho State Office
208-373-3813

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Katie Fite** <katie@westernwatersheds.org>
Date: Wed, Sep 24, 2014 at 2:44 PM
Subject: when will ID-E MT sage-grouse FEIS be released?
To: Kurt Wiedenmann <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>
Cc: Travis Bruner <travis@westernwatersheds.org>, Ken Cole <ken@westernwatersheds.org>

Hi Kurt,

Is there any word on the date for the release of the ID/SW MT sage-grouse FEIS?

And will the public have to Protest each FEIS separately?

We have heard there is supposed to be a CEQ review and two RODs - one for east and west portions of the range. Is this correct?

Also please include these Jarbidge RMP Protest submissions in the ID/SW MT GRSG EIS process record for consideration of the abject regulatory failure of the Jarbidge RMP in regards to sage-grouse needs.

Thanks,

Katie Fite
WWP

GRAZING AND RESTORATION ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, livestock would be removed from the most sensitive areas (pastures within allotments or allotments), to prevent degradation of critical habitats, and disturbance of wildlife during sensitive periods. This would also be done to preserve the values of the Proposed ACECs. BLM must conduct the basic biological surveys – for northern goshawk, flammulated, owl, sensitive and important migratory bird habitats, current status of redband trout and other rare species habitats and populations. Sage-grouse habitats would be protected and restored, with all grazing disturbance removed from them. Within those areas where livestock are removed, facilities will be removed and restoration (as described below) will occur. In areas of less risk, grazing at stocking that could achieve the use levels described below would be allowed. Large livestock-free reference areas would be established.

Ecological Recovery Alternative (ERA)

The Ecological Recovery Alternative will:

- 1) Protect remaining occupied sage-grouse habitats as well as other important areas to provide enclaves to protect rare, imperiled and sensitive species from chronic grazing disturbance and new development. It will significantly rollback and rehab many existing developments associated with livestock management. This will provide for secure habitats, and recovering natural ecological functions.
- 2) Allow for passive restoration of lands to recover natural processes, and minimize and prevent invasive species expansion and enable recovery of sage-grouse, migratory bird, and other species including big game.
- 3) Provide for active restoration of existing developments or disturbances that are harming habitats. Examples: Removal of harmful fences, stock ponds, spring developments, water pipelines, salt supplement feeding sites, and their associated roading, and selected other facilities and disturbance as well. This reduces invasive species risk– since these sites serve as epicenters for initial weed invasion and then subsequent outward spread. So it also reduces fire risk by reducing risk of invasive annual/exotic grasses.
- 4) Provide for active restoration of some sites most infested with the invasive exotics bulbous bluegrass through recovery of natural vegetation and microbotic crusts.
- 5) Ensure lands are in the best possible ecological condition both before and after wildfires to minimize risk of invasive species spread. This also maximizes post-fire recovery and effectiveness of taxpayer-funded actions such as reducing the need for seeding since understories will be in better ecological condition. Livestock disturbance will be removed from some landscapes, so sage-grouse and other wildlife populations impacted by wildfire will not suffer continued grazing disturbance in unburned lands of importance to the population - as is the current situation. Reductions in invasive exotic grass species will reduce risk of frequent fire and aberrant fire disturbance intervals.

- 6) Minimize adverse impacts of a broad range of disturbances on wildlife habitats and populations, and aquatic species watersheds that are impaired.

This will promote conservation and recovery of sage-grouse, migratory birds and other rare species while also protecting watersheds with native interior redband trout, Columbia spotted frog, and other aquatic species.

The ERA will remove livestock from lands found not to be suitable for continued use due to conflicts with aquatic and/or sagebrush species. A battery of harmful fences, water developments, salt/weed infestation sites, etc. will be removed from large portions of the landscape, and other important habitats wildlife and aquatic species conservation and protection of Wilderness and lands with Wilderness Characteristics. This will promote natural values, solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and untrammled wild lands.

Habitat will be conserved, enhanced and restored. The range and abundance of aquatic and terrestrial species populations will be increased. Current systematic surveys will be conducted at the start of this process, so a firm baseline of species occupancy abundance and viability of populations can be established.

In any areas where grazing might continue, BLM must significantly reduce grazing levels while applying much more conservative mandatory standards of livestock use. These conservative levels of use must include both riparian and upland trampling, utilization and other standards. Avoidance of disturbance during sensitive periods/seasons is mandatory.

For any grazed lands:

The use levels must leave 9 inches of residual grass cover across understory communities at all times. This must be based on the grass composition present –not merely on sites where larger statured grasses may remain in depleted landscapes.

That in reality means 10-15% upland utilization, or no utilization at all except by wildlife, must be put in place. It must be measured at sites that are actually used to a significant degree by livestock. BLM cannot apply 30% or 40% utilization –this is inadequate to prove necessary residual nesting cover (9 inches) and also to promote adequate recovery. Utilization is averaged across the grass plants that are grazed. So typically, when an area “averages” 40% utilization - this means that many grass plants are grazed to levels of 60%. Even one time grazing use so severe can harm or kill native bunchgrass plants by removing growing plant parts and depleting scarce root reserves, as well as by exposing the grass crown to winter freezing damage or summer heat-desiccation. Native bunchgrasses did not evolve with intensive grazing by herds of large hoofed ungulates. See USDI Technical Bulletin Anderson 1991, Mack and Thompson 1982.

BLM must also apply an upland trampling standard to limit disturbance to soils, microbiotic crusts and native understory plants, as well as to limit increased young trees that BLM is so obsessed with killing. Microbiotic crusts are a frontline defense against invasive species. BLM

must limit cattle trampling to less than 5% of the area of a square meter monitored at grazed sites across the pasture/land unit. No areas of the allotment, including those receiving the most intensive use, will be allowed to receive greater than 10% of the surface area trampling. Ranchers have horses and herders, and concentrations of livestock cannot be allowed to create epicenters of disturbance and weed invasion. Stocking must be properly applied so that these standards can be attained during every grazing disturbance episode and so that ranchers are grazing numbers of livestock they can control.

At least 6 inches of stubble height must remain on all riparian/meadow area herbaceous species at all times. This must be applied to all species – not just Nebraska sedge or species that grow right by, or in, water.

Riparian shrub browse and/or breakage must be limited to 5% of livestock-accessible new growth.

Livestock bank trampling (and spring-meadow trampling) standards must be applied that limit disturbance to less than 10% of livestock-accessible stream and all spring and meadow areas.

Areas extending back from the green line through the entire historic floodplain/meadow extent must be measured and monitored and these standards applied. Plants that are not right by the water's edge are much less likely to regrow. They are critical for protecting and conserving vital watershed values, protecting riparian/meadow areas linked to aquatic habitat health. These areas in some sites may provide sage-grouse brood rearing. This promotes recovery of habitat components for species ranging from migratory birds to beavers that use willow thickets. Agencies have long biased monitoring of impacts by measuring only the thin greenline and species likely to regrow there following heavy grazing – rather than mesic areas that provide suitable conditions for the forbs required by sage-grouse broods. See Belsky et al 1999.

BLM must also apply upland shrub structural integrity standards to all shrubs and mountain mahogany. No sagebrush plants, mountain shrubs, mountain mahogany, ceanothus or other shrubs anywhere in the pasture should receive more than 5% breakage or other livestock impacts.

All of these standards must be applied as triggers for removal of livestock from the pasture. If the use level is reached, the livestock must be moved out. Timely and adequate monitoring must be conducted – with random spot checks if funding is limited.

If any of these standards are exceeded in any year, livestock reductions in numbers will be put in place - with reductions of 25-50% in stocking for each violation along with more herding and shorter periods of use. If ranchers are unable to meet these standards, they are unable to control their livestock, so the herd size is too large.

If standards are exceeded in multiple years, livestock grazing must be ended in the pasture.

Salt and supplement will not be used. Livestock trailing to such sites, and the impacts of concentrated use at these sites, severely alters and reduces native vegetation. These disturbed sites provide centers for cheatgrass, medusahead, and other weeds to spread outward from. Responsible herding and a herd size that can be controlled are required.

Habitat Security: Seasons of Use

These livestock use standards must be coupled with avoidance of any grazing/trailing disturbance during sensitive periods of the year.

No grazing will be allowed in occupied sage-grouse habitat during lek and nesting periods. This must be applied to all occupied sagebrush habitats. A significant portion of sage-grouse populations may nest considerable distances from leks, and distant leks may have greater nest success. By focusing protections only near leks, agencies are sacrificing a significant part of the remaining sage-grouse population and its habitats.

No grazing will be allowed in sage-grouse habitat during winter periods. This must be applied to all sagebrush habitats to provide ample undisturbed winter habitat for sage-grouse including during hard winters.

In all instances, livestock use must not be shifted and intensified into other fragile sites or other vegetation communities. To meet standards, livestock must be reduced, not moved elsewhere to create further conflicts.

No livestock grazing will be allowed in important migratory bird or nesting raptor habitat during nesting periods. This period can range from February (some raptors, owls) to July.

Restoration Actions – Both Active and Passive

Passive restoration: Passive restoration focuses on removal of disturbance to aid natural healing processes in the sagebrush ecosystem. Removal of livestock grazing promotes short, mid and long term healing so that the composition, function and structure of the components of the sagebrush and ecosystems can recover (see Fleischner (1004, Belsky and Gelbard 2000) and sustain sage-grouse and other dependent species and their populations. It also includes road closures where natural recovery of facility-related or other road ruts and road verge areas could take place. This will help buffer from climate change effects.

Removal of livestock disturbance prevents livestock from disturbing nests and nesting birds. Disturbance of nests and nesting birds and habitat components promotes predation. Eggs can also be damaged by livestock trampling, or even eaten by cattle.

Removal of livestock disturbance also removes a source of abundant food or artificial water sources in uplands that serve to attract and subsidize mesopredators and nest predators like ravens. Dead livestock, carrion, livestock waste, livestock feed and supplements, sheep camps and other things that promote sage-grouse nest predators are reduced.

Sage-grouse, migratory birds, small mammals, pollinators of rare plants - all benefit from both recovering vegetation structure that helps screen nests from scent and visual predators, as well as a reduction in livestock-associated activity and substances that attract nest and egg predators.

This also eliminates pressure from livestock interests to kill coyotes and other predators that help to keep mesopredators in check. This helps restore a more natural predator-prey system and helps to limit mesopredators.

Active restoration to aid Passive restoration processes is also proposed: Active restoration aiding passive ecosystem recovery processes focuses on removal of fences, troughs and other livestock facilities to reduce sage-grouse mortality, reduce disturbance zones where weeds invade and thrive, reduce predator travel corridors, reduce nest predator perches, reduce habitat fragmentation, reduce structures that attract ravens and other nest predators.

Active restoration practices:

Remove cwg seedings and forage kochia in proximity to sage-grouse habitats.

Removal of livestock water troughs, pipelines and wells to reduce livestock disturbance to surrounding soils, microbiotic crusts, and native vegetation and to promote their health and passive recovery. This will also benefit sage-grouse and migratory birds through removal of sources for Mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus. West Nile virus also poses a threat to the health of human visitors.

Where possible, without further damage to springs/water sources, remove waterline piping and maximize water at spring/stream sources supporting diverse riparian and meadow vegetation. Natural flowing water reduces West Nile mosquito habitat. This will help to raise water tables, so larger areas of meadows provide for sage-grouse brood rearing.

Promote natural healing of headcuts to the maximum extent possible by limiting disturbance throughout the watershed. Do not merely dump rocks and boulders into headcut – as this often destroys the potential for any natural recovery of meadow systems, and leaves areas permanently cut off from former riparian/mesic zones. At times, a combination of methods may need to be used – but gabions and structural devices and boulder dumping should be limited, and restoration should strive for a functioning system – not leaving meadows high and dry as structural fixes typically do.

No livestock grazing will be allowed on any areas that are restored.

Seed local native ecotypes in areas of more intensive disturbance, and restore any crested wheatgrass or other areas where the agency has removed sagebrush, including any recent “treatments”.

Benefits: Recovery of composition, function and structure of the sagebrush ecosystem.
Reduction in elevated perches for nest and egg predators and other conditions that promote nest

and egg predators. Removal of centers of weed infestation and spread, removal of facilities and conditions promoting West Nile virus. Recovery of functioning watersheds. Potential retention and increase in flows and length of flows in currently ephemeral or intermittent drainages to promote brood rearing habitat and counter adverse impacts of climate change.

Other benefits: Prevent migratory bird, bat and small animal deaths from drowning. Promote recreational uses and human health (cleaner more abundant water, reduction in potential sites for disease-bearing mosquitoes and exposure to livestock pathogens). Promote persistence of perennial surface water flows and watershed conditions that retain and slowly release waters favoring sustained perennial flows.

Active restoration: Ripping/recontouring of roads and seeding with native local ecotypes of shrubs and grasses. This promotes habitat security.

Seeding

Conduct active restoration of areas disturbed by trough, fence or other project siting and/or removal operations, and provide targeted restoration planning to expand, reconnect or recover habitats required by native wildlife by:

- Inter-seeding sagebrush seed or seedlings.
- Active restoration of cheatgrass/invasive exotic grass infestation areas.
- Active restoration of all crested wheatgrass or other exotic seedings.

In all cases, local native plant ecotype seeds and seedlings must be used.

By far the cheapest and most cost-effective method to sustain, recover and restore plant communities is to remove livestock grazing and trampling disturbance.

Monitoring sites in any areas where grazing might continue must be established based on site visits with the Interested Public – not just ranchers. Monitoring must trigger specific mandatory required actions, and not just loose uncertain claimed BMPs as “adaptive management”.

This must all be applied as Interim measures to protect the values of the sagebrush and other ecosystem components. BLM frequently attributes problems with lands and waters to historic grazing – ignoring that the current chronic grazing disturbance incrementally eats away at the remnants. Grazing prevents or greatly slows “recovery”. And even if one were to believe that “historic” grazing caused all the problems one sees on public lands, there are now scientifically recognized new threats of invasive species, altered fire cycles fueled by annual grasses, climate change, diseases, and other threats. Continued grazing and trampling depletion and disturbance are threats to the health of the ecosystem. Grazing causes harms and/or exacerbates and acts synergistically with other threats.

BLM must conduct risk assessments. These must systematically examine damaged areas - such as springs, seeps, intermittent drainages, damaged headcutting streams, sagebrush uplands that

are vulnerable to cheatgrass spread, areas where microbiotic crusts are greatly trampled --- to determine if these sites can withstand any continued grazing disturbance, i.e. if they are suitable for any continued grazing.

Immediate action must be taken to remove livestock from the pastures or watersheds – not simply use fencing while allowing intensive grazing disturbance to deplete watersheds and sustainable flows. These must also systematically examine all local populations of rare and sensitive species, and determine the threats to these populations, and the degree of risk of extirpation the population is under.

Under this alternative, grazing would be removed from occupied habitats in ACECs, and all other lands with significant risk of cheatgrass/exotic invasion or other serious degradation with continued disturbance, as well as lands where populations are at risk of extirpation or significant declines if grazing disturbance continues.

The Preceding Discussion identifies measures to address livestock grazing and grazing removal components, and measures to address fire and to aid recovery following fire, and ensure secure, recovering, conserved, sustained habitats and populations.

BLM must fully and fairly analyze the No Grazing alternative, as well to provide a full and adequate baseline for understanding impacts of grazing in any areas where it may continue.

Mitigation

Mitigation by avoidance is the first option to be considered and must be rigorously examined. It will be required in ACECs and occupied habitats for sage-grouse, other rare species, and other imperiled biota like slickspot peppergrass.

Soils

Soils will be protected from wind and water erosion, Microbiotic crusts will help protect soils, and also sequester nutrients, and some species sequester Carbon dioxide. Minimizing soil erosion through limiting disturbance that makes soils prone to erosion also will help limit wind-blown soil transport that is exacerbating the impacts of climate change. Soils eroded as dust are deposited on snowpacks, causing earlier snowmelt. This will help mitigate climate change impacts to watersheds and habitats for native biota, and reduce dust in the air.

Vegetation

Composition, function and structure of native vegetation communities will be maximized to provide for healthy, resilient and recovering sage-grouse habitat components. See Mack and Thompson (1982), Fleischner (1994), Belsky et al. 1999.

See also integrated weed measures.

Cultural

The integrity of natural systems, plants and animals important to Native Americans will be maximized.

Integrity of cultural sites will be protected, and adverse impacts of disturbance to these sites will be minimized and often removed altogether.

ACECs

Large ACECs will be designated to preserve, protect, conserve watershed, pre-settlement and ancient trees and forest, and to restore and sustain sage-grouse populations and the sagebrush ecosystem on which the sage-grouse and pygmy rabbit rely, as well as balance and achieve aquatic species habitat protections and those of other communities and biota. See WWP ACEC proposals already submitted to Jarbidge BLM and found to meet relevance and importance criteria.

Livestock grazing disturbance will be ended and/or greatly controlled in ACECs.

Active and passive restoration will be conducted as described herein.

Other disturbances will be reduced and minimized to the maximum extent possible, as described herein and in WWP comments to address the particular risks posed to sage-grouse as identified in risk assessments conducted with this process.

Hazardous Materials

Use of herbicides will be minimized and used only with extreme care. Flash burning, mowing of weeds and selected hand cutting will be used as primary and preferred treatments to minimize use of and pollution by harmful substances. Only if no other alternative exists will selected ground-based application of herbicides be used.

Use of other hazardous substances with existing mining, oil and gas or other development will be examined in a risk assessment, and contamination or infiltration into the environment will be minimized.

Integrated Invasive Species Management

Integrated invasive species management will be practiced.

Use of herbicides will be minimized, and used only as a last resort to achieve clearly defined goals and objectives. Flash burners, mowing of weeds and selected hand cutting will be prioritized. Only if no other alternative exists will selected ground-based application of a limited range of herbicides be used.

Vectors of weed spread will be addressed. Livestock will not be moved from areas infested with invasive species into public lands. Livestock will be quarantined before entering public lands if noxious weeds are present in areas last grazed. Lands infested with noxious weeds will not be grazed until weed infestation is eradicated and restored with native vegetation.

Any project vehicles will be washed, and will not drive through infestations during access to site.

Full and complete analysis of the risk of cheatgrass or other annual grass expansion will be conducted, and livestock use prohibited in areas where such disturbance will expand invasive annual grasses that drastically alter the wildfire cycle.

Other Vegetation Measures

If there ever is any legitimate need to reduce “thatch” in meadows, grass mowers will be used. Thus, livestock manure, trampling damage to soils, weed spread will be minimized.

Mowing of grass in any fuelbreaks will be used in any fuelbreak fuels reduction project (roadsides or other areas). There will be no targeted grazing, and no seeding of exotics. Exotics will be a particular target for removal.

Lands will be managed to be in the good or better ecological condition to help minimize adverse impacts of fire. Having lands in best condition when a fire occurs maximizes recovery post-fire.

Any fuels treatments will focus on interfaces with habitation or significant existing disturbances, or be specific focused areas, not sprawling “block” or “mosaic” treatments that greatly fragment habitats.

Habitat Security

Noise pollution, light pollution, vibrations, motions, tall vertical objects all will be minimized. All future NEPA reviews starting immediately in sage-grouse occupied habitats, native raptor, and other disturbance-sensitive wildlife will include sensory conflicts and habitat security as an element of the environment.

The need for buffers surrounding habitats will be examined here, as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Fite". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Katie Fite
Biodiversity Director
Western Watersheds Project
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Boise, ID 83701
208-429-1679
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web site: www.westernwatersheds.org

Working to protect and restore Western Watersheds and Wildlife

September 18, 2014

Director (210)
Attn: Protest Coordinator. WO-210
20 M Streets SE, Room 2134LM
Washington. DC 20003

Sent Cert. U. S. Mail Return Receipt Requested
Also Sent by email to: protest@blm.gov

Dear BLM Director,

This is a Protest from Western Watersheds Project (WWP) regarding the Final Jarbidge Resource Management Plan and its associated Final Environmental Impact Statement.

WWP is alarmed that, as concerns and science related to climate change, livestock grazing impacts, impacts of extractive uses and disturbances on sage-grouse, bighorn sheep and other wildlife and aquatic species and water quality have increased, BLM proposed management actions have slid further backwards. Jarbidge BLM has produced a Proposed Action in this RMP that is a throwback to Dark Ages management. The BLM action has, unbelievably, substantially **worsened** from that proposed in the DEIS.

A Supplemental EIS with a full and valid range of alternatives based on current baseline information and science related to invasive species, climate change, grazing conflicts with native biota and recreational and other uses of the public lands watersheds, water scarcity, development and extractive use conflicts with wildlife and recreational uses and enjoyment, etc.

***** □

In this Protest, we highlight concerns raised in WWP's DEIS comments and the even worse livestock industry-driven Proposed Action.

□WWP commented that we were very troubled by the lack of reasonable alternatives in the Draft RMP/EIS and the failure of the BLM to address protection and restoration of sage grouse and other sensitive and listed species habitat in any of the draft alternatives. BLM ignored this concern, and instead of undertaking revised protective alternatives and selecting more protective actions for sage-grouse, slickspot peppergrass (LEPA) and other native biota, watersheds, clean water in the FEIS BLM has reverted to a severely livestock-industry-biased Proposed Action. We Protest this.

PRMP/FEIS Violates Stipulated Settlement Agreement

We Protest the failure of BLM to comply with the Stipulated settlement Agreement in WWP v. Bennett. BLM must redo this failed 2014 RMP Proposed Action that defies the Jarbidge Stipulated Settlement Agreement and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

A Supplemental EIS must be prepared that addresses the dire ecological circumstances and declining sensitive species populations and other resource losses occurring in the Jarbidge, and analyzes a truly suitable and reasonable range of alternatives.

The species downward slides, cheatgrass and other weed advances, and watershed declines, and trajectories of this all -had been already been abundantly documented in the Jarbidge AMS in early summer 2007. The AMS showed large-scale increases in cheatgrass in grazed areas, and the situation has dramatically worsened over the years. BLM ignores the pressing crisis from climate change, as well.

A greatly revised final Jarbidge RMP/EIS must reflect all the legal mandates under which the BLM must was required to prepare this Land Use Plan. Instead of complying with the SSA, FLPMA, NEPA, the CWA, the MBTA, legislation that protects cultural values - BLM first produced the confusing mishmash of this Draft Jarbidge RMP/EIS which now in 2014 has been morphed into a 1970s-style extractive-uses-trump-all management scheme under the livestock industry Alternative VI of the FEIS. BLM's promises of species and other resource protections are wildly untrue given the greatly conflicting Goals, Objectives and Management Actions (GOMAs) under the limited range of alternatives that BLM deigns to consider.

Review of FEIS Section 2.8 Alternative 6, section 2.8.2, which lays out the exceedingly harmful and highly uncertain agency actions proposed for Jarbidge public land resources. These actions are contradicted by broad range of current science, much of which WWP provided to BLM as scientific Literature and in the body of our comments on the DRMP. We are now providing updated scientific Literature on cd with this Protest. Current science shows the BLM actions here will fail to protect, and will result in irreversible harm to, the following public resources in the Jarbidge: Air and Atmospheric Values Geologic Features, Soil Resources, Water Resources, Vegetation Communities, Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species, Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plants, Wildland Fire Ecology, Wild Horses, Paleontological Resources, Cultural Resources Visual Resources,

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics. The Proposed Action and limited alternatives would perpetuate very harmful levels and manner of Livestock grazing Resource Use (Sec 2.8.3.1), Land Use Authorizations (Section 2.8.3.4), Land Tenure (Section 2.8.3. 5, Transportation/Travel Section 2.8.3.3, Minerals (Section 2.8.3.6).

There is internal conflict between alternative actions. The RMP provides no coherent path forward. It provides pretty much an extractive industry free for all, lacking adequate required measurable standards of use, leaving in place a horrendous and inter-related road and livestock infrastructure system, and turning a blind eye to cheatgrass presence creeping into the livestock and seeding-treatment damaged understories across the Jarbidge.

We Protest all of these grave Jarbidge FEIS shortcomings:

Unclear Process Related to BLM Greater Sage-grouse EIS Process

We Protest the lack of clarity and certainty related to the Jarbidge RMP's interfacing with the GRSG DEIS Process. The State Director's letter included with the RMP adds to the confusion.

We Protest BLM relying on the GRSG EIS process to the extent that this may be occurring (and again that is unclear from the Director's letter – what, if any, concrete and effective actions may come out of the highly politicized exercise in largely perpetuating the status quo. Further, the RMP provides no rigorous science-based NEPA analysis of the flaws of GRSG EIS process (as shown in the various DEISs). These include:

- + the uncertain and limited actions and inadequacies of the Idaho state sage-grouse plan, the Nevada state sage-grouse plan, and other state plans affecting the local, regional and national populations of GRSG, including the northern Great Basin population.
- + the uncertain and limited actions and inadequacies and conflicts of the ID/SW MT GRSG EIS, the NV/NE CA EIS, and other sage-grouse EISs that attempt to balkanize/chop up the range into over a dozen management schemes, each and every one of them woefully deficient. See WWP comments on SW ID/MT and NV/NE CA, for example. The local Jarbidge population has undergone sharp decline, and it spans two states – Idaho and Nevada. The BLM GRSG EIS Proposed Actions are woefully deficient. Each EIS chops away and cuts out very important occupied habitat and habitat where agencies have previously committed to restoration from higher levels of habitat protection. For example, the ID/SW MT EIS and others fail to adequately protect all occupied habitats – let alone provide for sufficient restoration and recovery actions. They chop currently PPH into lesser habitat categories with minimal to no real measurable protections for livestock grazing and other uses, spurn **all** ACEC designations – guaranteeing no integrated management for sage-grouse on even a single area within these landscapes, etc. We are also alarmed at the level to the GRSG plans (and apparently this EIS as well) it would rely on the state proposals, which are greatly influenced by the livestock and other industries.

The BLM alternatives across the GRSG EIS process are weaker than and dumbed down

from the current PPH/PGH Interim protections. It cannot be used as a basis for providing adequate regulatory controls to conserve, enhance and restore GRSG habitats and populations, nor those of other wildlife species that agencies claim sage-grouse provide some kind of an umbrella for. See WWP Comments on the Idaho/SW Montana and Nevada/NE CA GRSG DEIS processes. From WWP inquiries to BLM about this process, it appears that little is intended to change from the Draft there – and the same greatly inadequate These GRSG shortcomings must also be fully considered in the analysis of the cumulative effects of the RMP/DEIS –as adjacent Burley, Bruneau, Elko BLM and Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest lands will be greatly affected at the local level. It is also necessary to assess adverse cumulative impacts of lack of sufficient regulatory controls to ensure sage-grouse conservation on the regional and West-wide populations of GRSG. Please consult the China Mountain wind sage-grouse and other wildlife studies, and the DEIS there to understand the regional importance of areas of the Jarbidge FO that will suffer continued high levels and harmful periods of livestock use, as well as where habitats will receive lesser protection that at present – under BOTH the GRSG DEIS process as well as this awful RMP which strips significant sage-grouse, bighorn sheep and other wildlife and natural resource protections that were present in the old Jarbidge RMP!

Sage-Grouse and Species Conservation Concerns Were Thwarted in RMP DEIS, and Now This is Made Even Worse in the FEIS

BLM's efforts to undermine the Stipulated Settlement Agreement (SSA) and bias the outcome of the RMP process strongly in favor of livestock and development interests were apparent from the start. RMP DEIS Volume 1, Executive Summary ES-2, Planning Issues and continue now in FEIS ES-1, The Draft, where the whole foundation of an RMP is laid down, did not even mention sage-grouse in this section. BLM vaguely referenced "resources", uses and special designations. The discussion of Alternatives (ES-2 to ES-3) did not even mention sage-grouse. BLM subverted the entire basis of the Agreement. Minimal mention continues in the FEIS, and mule deer, a generalist species, appears to receive greater emphasis.

BLM must promptly release a FEIS with a new series of ecological science-based alternatives that are honestly aimed at conserving sage-grouse, biodiversity and other very important values of the public lands here.

It is impossible to understand how this RMP process could have taken so long. BLM has tried to blame WWP and litigation that sought to protect sage-grouse in the aftermath of the Murphy Fire. But even before the Murphy Fire, it was becoming apparent that BLM was not going to develop a collaborative RMP.

It set up closed-door teams, excluding the public from that process. Then, Jarbidge BLM embarked on a highly controversial Wind Energy EIS where development of an industrial wind facility would destroy the best remaining sage-grouse habitat in the Jarbidge. Then there was a leadership vacuum in the Twin Falls District even more so following release of the DEIS, and range and extractive interests and range staff acting as their surrogates

then hijacked the RMP process – as shown in FEIS Proposed Action. The former Twin Falls District Manager went from BLM right into the arms of the livestock industry as a consultant. We also stress that there are only a small number of ranchers affected – primarily the various LLCs and sub-units of the Simplot Ag conglomerate, and various politicians and relatives of the Brackett family dominate the Jarbidge grazing.

After all of these years, BLM produced an unwieldy morass of confusion that would perpetuate - and now in the FEIS – would greatly worsen environmental conditions, loosen existing protections for habitats and populations like GRSG and Bighorn sheep, and perpetuate much of catastrophic management that has led to widespread losses of native species biodiversity, with sage-grouse and other sagebrush biota plummeting towards extinction.

It is a great concern that FEIS ES-1 (Purpose and Need) places minerals, food, timber and fiber as the first part of the purpose and need for this RMP. There is no timber produced here, hardly any minerals, limited fiber, and the “food” are a small number of taxpayer subsidized livestock operations run by various Simplot entities and the Brackett family and their relatives along with only a few other ranchers. The costs to all the public resources of this very harmful use are ignored. These are great – from loss of clean, clear and abundant water, to endless taxpayer funds sunk into trying to rehab the weed and exotic crested wheatgrass seedings these ranchers have forced upon BLM in the wake of fires that have been exacerbated by the livestock-caused flammable cheatgrass and dense livestock forage plantings of cwg and other grasses– through which wildfires rip across hundreds of thousands of acres – repeatedly -in less than a few days.

The EIS fails abysmally in providing a solid science-based analysis of the costs of livestock grazing to the public, including in destruction of land, air, water, wildlife and other resources (see Alt 6, Section 2.8, pps. 2-334 through 2-444. There is no valid analysis of the minimal role of public lands livestock grazing in producing food and fiber, as well as the minimal role of minerals. There is no valid analysis of the degree, severity and magnitude of conflicts of livestock grazing with clean and clear water, buffering climate change, reducing and destroying public lands recreational opportunities in many areas and ways through modification and destruction of habitats, etc.

We Protest this extractive interest-biased abuse of FLPMA - at the expense of all other public resources.

FLPMA was BLMs Organic Act. It was enacted for the purposes of establishing a coherent, comprehensive and systematic approach to management and protection of the public lands.

These lands are to be managed in a way that protects “*the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values.*” WHY isn’t THIS the Purpose and Need, and not the food, fiber, timber - i.e. public subsidies for private extractive interests? The FEIS resoundingly fails to protect these values, as required under FLPMA.

In fact, the inadequate near-status quo range of alternatives, the perpetuation and even increased gross overstocking of livestock, the FEIS's rejection and dismantling of ACECs, the proposal to round up and sterilize the entire wild horse herd, the near-non-existent protective GOMAs for environmental resources – all resoundingly demonstrate that the FEIS in its current form represents the de facto privatization of public resources in the Jarbidge for a few greedy public lands ranchers. THAT is what the P&N really represents.

Let's look for a minute at what the current grazing load is doing to the land, waters and watersheds:

A very significant contributor to the recent toxic algae bloom in Salmon Falls Reservoir is nonpoint source pollution, i.e. the the grossly overstocked and damaging grazing practices across the headwaters especially in the Salmon River allotment and other Elko BLM allotments, as well as the Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest allotments in Elk Mtn and the eastern Jarbidge. We have been complaining about the disgusting conditions on these public lands for decades.

See: <http://www.boiseweekly.com/CityDesk/archives/2014/09/13/toxic-algae-found-in-reservoir-near-twin-falls>

The Jarbidge BLM lands are located on the west side of the Reservoir itself, and the Burley BLM on the east side - with both using the Reservoir as a giant cow watering hole, with cattle defecating and urinating in the water in many areas, feasting on quasi-toxic cockleburrs, and other weeds, as the water recedes.

This is the situation at present – under the Proposed RMP, conditions would worsen in nearly all components of the environment – and there would be MORE cattle manure, urine, sediment, hormones in cattle excreta, etc. fouling and polluting surface waters.

BLM must establish a planning process for the management of public lands that accommodates multiple uses of the land and its resources and achieves sustained yields of natural resources. It is impossible to understand how there could be sustained yields of anything but weeds and livestock waste under the Proposed Action.

BLM must periodically inventory all public lands and the resources on those lands. Yet the RMP is based on now outdated and deficient baseline information on environmental conditions and public uses. It also presents information in a manner that misrepresents the severe cheatgrass problems and risk, native vegetation community depletion problems and other impairment of resources and habitats, and the the collapsing wildlife and other sensitive species populations, and otherwise is in violation of FLPMA.

FLPMA lays out a goal of preserving and protecting public lands in their natural condition to the extent possible. Instead – the RMP with its massive livestock grazing allocation load, uncapped TNR, vegetation manipulation schemes (the livestock forage

projects of the old RMP have been replaced with “fuels” projects in the new RMP –with the same outcomes), failure to greatly expand ACECs (only designating 5% of the ACEC-eligible lands – see FEIS 2-459), will further destroy natural values and public lands environmental conditions.

The RMP fails to adequately retain federal ownership of public lands in sage-grouse Priority habitats, and has not provided a reasonable analysis of why disposal could be in the national interest. In fact, the lands targeted for disposal would only benefit the various Brackett and other politically connected ranchers.

Conservation of biological, archeological, historical, and cultural resources simply will not occur under the massive grazing, treatment and other disturbance load, and development allocations and highly uncertain and ineffective GOMAs of the RMP.

BLM greatly ignores the need for protective withdrawals across Priority Habitats and other areas of vital importance to preservation of public resources.

FLPMA requires the BLM to develop land use plans to:

- implement principles of multiple use of public lands and sustained yields of resources;
- use a systematic, interdisciplinary approach that incorporates the consideration of the physical, biological, economic, and other sciences;
- **give priority to areas of critical environmental concern**;
- consider the present and potential uses of public lands. Yet here - while southern Idaho is rapidly urbanizing and the human population that uses public resources is increasing - the RMP increases extractive uses that conflict with public recreational uses, wildlife viewing and enjoyment, production of clean water and abundant water, etc.;
- consider the relative scarcity of the various values of public lands The RMP represents a tragic failure to conserve, enhance and restore the very scarce and vanishing sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and other rare species habitats and populations of the Jarbidge; the very scarce surface waters and sustainable perennial flows, threatened bull trout and slickspot peppergrass and other rare plant species; high quality recreational experiences close to Idaho population centers; unique crossroads areas for regionally essential populations for survival of sage-grouse, crucial bighorn sheep habitats in the Bruneau-Jarbidge canyon complex, etc.
- weigh long-term and short-term public benefits, The RMP greatly fails to weigh long-term uses vs. short term gain for public lands “welfare ranching” operations – primarily Simplot entities, Brackett ranchers and their relatives, and a very small hand full of other ranchers;
- comply with pollution control laws (see 9/14 Salmon Falls Reservoir algae bloom article above). Under the RMP – the livestock waste load will worsen under the same or increased stocking and TNR – and these adverse effects will be amplified by climate change. Here we are nearly a decade after a TMDL on Salmon Falls and Cedar Creek and other Jarbidge areas, and conditions are worsening. Under the RMP, more manure and waste is likely to impair the surface waters. It is a VERY important public recreational use area. This pollution also jeopardizes the health and populations of wildlife species that may drink the water. Similarly, Cedar Creek reservoir is another greatly impaired

water body that RMP is likely to worsen conditions in. By maintaining the same or increasing AUMs, and issuing TNR, BLM will contribute substantial quantities of methane and other climate change gases, reduce the ability of the land to capture and sequester carbon, and reduce the ability of the lands to buffer the adverse effects of climate change.

These represent only some of the myriad deficiencies of the RMP FEIS regarding resources and sustainable uses of the public lands that are mandated under FLPMA.

The RMP and its limited range of industry-friendly alternatives greatly downplays the many conflicts with the tremendous livestock over-allocation load at present, and the continued downward trajectory of the sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, slickspot peppergrass, Columbia spotted frog, redband trout and other native biota habitats and populations, along with native vegetation communities and watersheds and water resources. These conflicts are all amplified by climate change stress, BLM has failed to develop a suitable range of alternatives for a modern day land use plan that would comply with FLPMA. Thus a Supplemental EIS must be prepared.

We Protest all of these violations of FLPMA as shown in this Planning process that has been hijacked by the livestock and other extractive industry.

SSA Requirements Are Blatantly Violated by RMP/FEIS Proposed Action

Under the Stipulated Settlement Agreement (SSA):

BLM was required to re-visit and conduct studies on Ecological Site Inventory sites – which it did indeed do in 2006. This was to present a science-based comparative analysis between conditions in the 1980s vs. the baseline for the new RMP effort. It was to settle the debate over how much conditions had deteriorated, and determine how jeopardized habitats were. BLM then presented the bleak analysis of ecological conditions - up to the point just before the 2007 Murphy Fire - in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS).

Reading the 2014 worsened FEIS commodity and development-oriented RMP (worsened from the DEIS), it appears that BLM has forgotten how bad conditions were. Now, with large-scale additional habitat loss and degradation, conditions have only worsened since the AMS. This calls for sweeping and immediate conservation-based change –and not the increase in AUMs, stripping of ACEC protections and other radical backsliding of the FEIS.

Under the SSA, BLM was required to establish protocols and develop data necessary to evaluate current populations and habitats for BLM-designated sensitive species across the Jarbidge. BLM has not provided substantive current data in the RMP to base the RMP FEIS analysis on, and there are large gaps in data on current habitats and populations of sensitive species.

BLM's EIS lumps sensitive species into guilds/groups, and provides old, stale info and minimal to no analysis for many important sensitive species particular survival needs. For the few species that get a few sentences of specific mention, BLM provides only the most cursory, limited and often slanted analysis –fraught with omissions. Even sage-grouse conservation needs for habitats and populations are given short shrift, with no coherent analysis of the current status of habitats and populations, and no vision or science-based planning for conservation of viable populations. Thus, BLM cannot point to its greatly deficient FEIS sage-grouse analysis as some kind of “umbrella” for all the other rare species in the unraveling sagebrush habitats of the Jarbidge. It is not a suitable analysis, there is not adequate current baseline data, and the only protocols used appear to be to consult old databases, make species lists, and then gloss over the catastrophic effects continuing on an even worsened path would have. In fact, we wonder if BLM dragged this process out so long that the essential Ecosite and other information including the bleak ecological conditions and species summaries in the AMS would become old.

BLM was required by the SSA to consider utilization, trends, and other monitoring data. Yet the Affected Environment section of the EIS is minimal and presents information in a manner that favors the limited near-status quo or increased stocking/continued largely full throttle exploitation alternatives. It is particularly deficient, providing hardly any concrete analysis of any component of the environment. The Goals, Objectives and Management Actions (GOMAs) section (Chapter 2) dwarfs it. No Action receives a mere 30 pages (2-22 to 54 in FEIS). Yet the recidivist Proposed Action receives 100 pages. There is no rationale provided for how ecological conditions including the ESI data which already had shown large-scale increases in cheatgrass and loss of microbiotic crusts in unburned habitats, and ecological monitoring information, ecological needs of sensitive species for food, cover, space and the needs for sustainable populations have been assessed. There is no valid explanation and rationale for how this was used in developing a range of alternatives, or analyzing the conservation effectiveness and outcomes of alternatives.

BLM was to address desired outcomes, allowable uses, and management actions. In many cases, it is clear that based on the current science for the sagebrush ecosystem, the outcomes of the flawed FEIS alternatives will be more flammable weeds, a continued downward trajectory of sensitive species and sage-grouse populations until they reach the point of no possible recovery, and further environmental ruin. See Connelly et al. 2004, Braun 2006, Federal Court Findings in WWP. V. Bennett and showing need for avoidance of grazing disturbance to protect sage-grouse over substantial portions of the year, Reisner Dissertation 2010, Reisner et al. 2013, Beschta et al. 2012 and 2014, Manier et al. 2013 Baseline Ecological Report -for example. Current ecological science and necessary data is not used in assessing desired outcomes, there is no certainty what levels of allowable use will be, management actions are loose, uncertain, and often mere platitudes. BLM ties itself into knots with hollow and often not even rational claims in the FEIS Summary Tables 2.6 ad 2.7, particularly in trying to compare environmental consequences FEIS 2-445 to 2-459.

BLM was required to consider lands available and not available to livestock grazing,

considering factors including **other uses of the land, terrain characteristics, soil, vegetation, and watershed characteristics, the presence of undesirable vegetation including significant weed infestations, and the presence of other resources that may require special management or attention such as special status species, special recreation areas, or areas of critical environmental concern.** BLM has failed miserably. It has ignored conducting any kind of valid conflict analysis, capability, suitability or other similar analyses. It has downplayed the adverse effects of livestock grazing allocation/load, grazing disturbance adverse effects, the astonishing amount of roading and livestock infrastructure, energy development, minerals, that would be imposed to an extraordinary degree (FEIS 2-445 to 2-459), made nearly all grazable lands available to livestock, ignored the myriad competing public uses of the public land other than livestock, ignored grazing weed expansion risk – from the adverse effects to soils including causing cheatgrass by trampling crusts, creating hoof pocks in wet soils where weeds germinate and also tearing apart crusts, degradation of the proper composition, function and structure of native vegetation communities (Fleischner 1994, Connelly et al. 2004, Manier et al. 2013).

BLM takes giant steps backwards to pre-FLPMA days in gutting the B-J bighorn sheep ACEC (inexplicably shrinking it from 85,000 acres to 22,000 acres rather than expanding the land area. BLM cuts out the entire Jarbidge River area, and significant portions of the Bruneau area as a gift to Simplot and Brackett grazing interests. It reduces recreation protections, and would have broad sacrifice zone recreational designations that are essentially meaningless (ERMA) across much of the FO.

BLM was required to consider no grazing and other alternatives. BLM has failed to evaluate a No Grazing alternative in the FEIS, not even as a comparison with its severe grazing disturbance alternatives so the agency could properly gauge how harmful its grazing load really was. BLM shuns passive restoration, and purposefully rigs alternatives to try to discredit the role of passive restoration in conserving, enhancing and restoring native sagebrush habitats.

BLM did not consider an alternative that removed grazing and any portion of the infrastructure Footprint from lands of a proposed Sagebrush Sea landscape alternative to conserve sage-grouse –despite sage-grouse being a landscape species. It did not even consider an alternative that removed grazing from half or ¼ of the Sagebrush Sea alternative while significantly reducing the footprint of livestock grazing disturbance and infrastructure in areas of the Jarbidge. And that was in the Draft. In the FEIS, BLM would not even consider any additional ACECs, and instead guts the B-J bighorn sheep ACEC –which contains some of the only unseeded and intact Wyoming big sage and salt desert shrub inclusion communities remaining in the FO. Yet FLPMA requires that BLM give priority to ACECs.

BLM was to analyze in detail “at least one alternative in the EIS addressing significantly reduced grazing levels in those areas demonstrating livestock-related conflicts with other multiple uses”. BLM has not used current science to determine and assess conflicts. It has not conducted a capability and suitability analysis. It is impossible to tell from the RMP

what grazing levels will actually be. Use standards are uncertain. AUM changes are provided in broad ranges. The RMP Proposed Action heaps TNR, “targeted grazing” and all manner of additional possible uses on top of the ranges.

BLM was to establish reference areas. BLM consistently ignored WWP input that tiny little fenced off areas near fence corners were not sufficient reference areas and should not be considered viable alternatives, because they would add even more of a burden of fencing to the region and its antelope, sage-grouse and migratory birds that have serious problems with fences. Plus they would not be large enough for meaningful comparisons including for wildlife use.

BLM was to establish guidelines for drought. While there is a section on drought, there remains no clear and guaranteed actions to control grazing impacts during drought. Plus BLM used this as an excuse to sneak in consideration of more harmful “temporary” livestock facilities.

The SSA stated that “BLM acknowledges and agrees that protecting and restoring sage-grouse and their habitat on the JFO is a **high priority** and consistent with FLPMA and other laws”. Yet the BLM failed to analyze an adequate range of protective measures and mitigations in the FEIS alternatives, and now Alt. VI takes BLM back to the dark days of gross TNR damage, and even greater overstocking, plus more “forage” projects thinly disguised as fuels treatments or targeted grazing,. Plus this all is accompanied by rolling back ACEC and other habitat protections. It is shocking that in an RMP that was supposed to emphasize sage-grouse needs, BLM would designate only a mere 5% of the land area as ACECs that its own analyses found fulfilled ACEC Relevance and Importance Criteria.

In preparing the RMP, BLM was required to “follow its national Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy, to identify and provide desired outcomes, strategies, restoration, opportunities, use restrictions, and management actions to conserve and restore sage grouse habitat”. The strategy has developed into the National Technical Team Report and its accompanying series of Implementing Memoranda. All the while over the past decade as BLM has been failing to produce a new RMP, the habitat conditions have been worsening and populations declining and occupied ranges contracting. So any logical person would assume that BLM needed to develop and adopt a much more protective management framework, greatly reduce allocations, and greatly commit to effective habitat and population restoration actions. Instead, the FEIS Proposed Action contains many of the worst elements of the existing RMP, and rolls back protections even more – in its jettisoning ACECs and other environmentally harmful measures such as gross overstocking “forage” allocations, lack of required protective measures to control livestock disturbance and environmental damage being caused, etc.

BLM is required to issue new permits that apply “the criteria adopted” in the new RMP. There are no solid and mandatory criteria in the RMP, and no clear direction forward to be found in the RMP FEIS to issue permits under. In fact, it is impossible to pin the RMP down on any measurable criteria –and the FEIS punts to the permit renewal process for

applying specifics.

The SSA refers to the Regulations at 43 CFR Part 4100. Management under the weak, uncertain and confusing industry-biased RMP Alternatives and GOMAs will not comply with the binding requirements of the Grazing regulations and will not ensure compliance with Rangeland Health requirements, including:

The following conditions **must exist** on BLM Lands (and it will be impossible to achieve this with the increased stocking, TNR, massive treatments, extensive energy and minerals and other development of the RMP):

§ 4180.1 Fundamentals of rangeland health.

Standards and guidelines developed or revised by a Bureau of Land Management State Director under § 4180.2(b) must be consistent with the following fundamentals of rangeland health:

(a) Watersheds are in, or are making significant progress toward, properly functioning physical condition, including their upland, riparian-wetland, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance with climate and landform and maintain or improve water quality, water quantity, and timing and duration of flow.

(b) Ecological processes, including the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow, are maintained, or there is significant progress toward their attainment, in order to support healthy biotic populations and communities.

(c) Water quality complies with State water quality standards and achieves, or is making significant progress toward achieving, established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.

(d) Habitats are, or are making significant progress toward being, restored or maintained for Federal threatened and endangered species, Federal proposed or candidate threatened and endangered species, and other special status species.

The Fundamentals of Rangeland Health regulations require BLM to use mandatory Terms and Conditions to “ensure compliance” with the duty to make significant progress. See 43 C.F.R. § 4130.3-1; *WWP v. U.S. Dep’t of Interior*, No. 08-CV-506, 2009 WL 5218020 (D.Idaho 2009), *WWP v. Salazar*, No. 4:08-cv-435 (D. Idaho 2012).

The SSA refers to permits with utilization levels, seasonal restrictions, and other management requirements. The RMP FEIS, with its lists of BMPs and loose, uncertain, non-binding industry wish lists of Management Actions (GOMAs), provides no clear plan to ensure sage-grouse and other rare species habitat and population protection, no certain standards, no required rest, no protective levels or methods of livestock use. Yet these are required for conservation of sage-grouse and sagebrush habitats, and those of any other rare and imperiled species, and sustaining a wealth of other very important values of the public lands. □ □

The SSA states that “reasonable and necessary measures” to conserve sage grouse as laid down in the new RMP are to be considered in the new permits. It is impossible to understand what is reasonable and necessary in the FEIS –other than maximize grazing at

all costs to every other value, and what BLM will actually act to do. The complicated, uncertain lists of BMPs, numerous Appendices, unclear battery of treatments, uncertain increased stocking rate ranges, stocking dependent on the scorched earth battery of “active” disturbance and “fuels” treatments, and often internally contradictory lists of uncertain actions and platitudes of the EIS GOMAs - all guarantee that significant changes for the better will not take place.

The newly added recidivist Proposed Action Alternative, which closely resembles the permittee comments, does not provide a basis for protection of any resource values under the new permits –but instead would result in serious, irreversible new adverse effects, potentially increased AUMs plus TNR use. It rejects clear measurable use standards shown by current sage-grouse, riparian and other science to be adequate to conserve, enhance and restore sage-grouse, other native biota, and watersheds across the Jarbidge. See FEIS Table ES-5, pps. ES-38-45, FEIS 2.10, Table 2.6 and 2.7.

The series of allocations often represent little change from the present/No Action – and in the case of the Proposed Action a Change for the Worse. There is no detailed science-based analysis that shows how allocations were determined, including those of the Proposed Action – and how factors such as livestock or development disturbance of habitat (food, cover and space) and recreational uses and enjoyment -were actually factored into and balanced with any allocations.

The allocations and near-status quo and even increased stocking is overlaid with unlimited TNR, targeted grazing, and a confusion of uncertain “fuels” actions and grazing imposition across much of the landscape. The Proposed Action (VI), and Alts I, II, III, IV, and the appalling Alt VI all focus overwhelmingly on “forage production” i.e. grass, ignoring everything from soil function to watershed health to shrubs to nesting, birthing or wintering habitat security for wildlife. BLM fails to provide clear management to address impacts like flammable weed-promoting soil trampling compaction and displacement to microbiotic crust recovery to passive recovery of native forbs to the need for long-term rest to provide passive restoration and aid in success and public investment in active restoration success. This is despite the severe degradation and loss documented in the AMS early in this process in 2007.

BLM failed to conduct valid carrying capacity and suitability analyses balance conflicts and competing uses, and then to allocate land and resource uses and ensure that they are sustainable. Forage is just one part of the analysis. The FEIS fails to provide any clarity at on how it arrived at the very high levels of allocations for livestock grazing and other extractive uses across these alternatives. See Table FEIS ES-5, pages 38 to 45. WWP submitted lengthy comments based on carrying capacity and suitability determinations, including a detailed paper during the Scoping process – and they have been ignored.

There are many habitat conflict, recreation conflict, and other factors that must be considered in current ecological science-based analyses to determine suitability. These analyses must take into account the failure of the use levels applied in the Jarbidge to protect critical native habitat components. This is compounded by the failure of Jarbidge

BLM to properly monitor use levels that have been occurring –often biasing the measured levels of use in favor of industry, and failing to adequately consider sage-grouse and other species needs for freedom from grazing disturbance during crucial periods of the year; the need for 7-9 inches of residual nesting cover; the need for avoidance of leks by a minimum of 4 miles (actually much greater in the wide open country fragmented Jarbidge) with any disturbance or energy development - and this must include gazing, oil and gas, geothermal, wind and other allocations or uses. Table ES-5 shows this was ignored. BLM ignored the necessity to have blocks of undisturbed habitat, and prevent disturbance of large areas of the landscape in order to conserve, enhance and restore sage-grouse and other native biota. There is no clear rationale for how any allocation or projected stocking rate or level of use was determined.

The necessary use of current ecological science to demonstrate that the loose, uncertain “GOMAs”, or a combination of the laundry lists of promises and BMPs in the morass of Appendices, will indeed preserve and protect, i. e. **conserve**, sage-grouse populations in the fragmented, tattered and unraveling habitats of the Jarbidge is profoundly **lacking** in the RMP. We believe that is because the RMP FEIS actions cannot be supported by current science on the ecology of the sagebrush biome and sage-grouse. See Braun 1998, Connelly et al. 2000, Connelly et al. 2004, Steinfeld et al. 2006, USDI BLM GRSG NTT Report, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011 Studies in Avian Biology, Reisner Dissertation, Reisner et al. 2013, Beschta et al. 2012 and 2014, Manier et al. 2013.

The SSA requires that new permits be issued in three years. In reality, this will be prior to significant restoration actually taking place. There is no clarity on how the RMP’s promises of restoration will factor into the grazing permit process - especially since under Alt VI and most other alternatives, where gross overstocking would continue or even expand. One of the fantastical assumptions on which BLM bases its rosy predictions in the EIS is that a very large amount of significant restoration will take place in five years following the RMP completion. BLM will never be able to act this quickly. Witness the restoration promises of the Craters of the Moon RMP and the Snake River Birds of Prey RMP. Here we are – nearly a decade after adoption of the Craters RMP, and 7 or so years after the SRBOPA RMP was finalized. BLM has undertaken only the most meager and minimal measures in a couple thousand acres. And meantime, as in the Big Desert Grazing Permit Renewal, BLM chose to dramatically intensify livestock damage to lands identified for restoration, and significantly expand and infrastructure while shirking any real restoration, continuing gross overstocking, and perpetuating harmful periods of livestock use that conflict with the needs of sage-grouse and other wildlife for habitat security. We Protest the failure of BLM to consider its own recent actions (and especially its own inaction and failed restoration promises). WWP is including information on Craters and Big Desert as part of this Protest. See cd Big Desert MSJ filings. The Jarbidge FEIS suppositions here are not based on economic and agency inertia inaction reality.

Unless sharp cuts in livestock numbers are made upfront, it is extremely unlikely any effective restoration will ever be able to take place. Witness the travesty of BLM spending hundreds of millions –or potentially billions – of dollars on post-fire rehab. Yet

recent studies such as Arkle et al. 2014 show they have not provided habitats necessary for sage-grouse. Of course, the failure of the post-fire rehab efforts and seedings to provide proper GRSG and other sensitive species habitat is highly foreseeable – as intensive pressure from public lands ranchers always prevented BLM from providing necessary rest to re-establish native vegetation components of grasses, forbs and shrubs and microbiotic crusts, Areas of the Jarbidge are featured (such as Poison Creek) as failures in the Arkle 2014 failed fire rehab Report.

Thus, we Protest all of these failures of the BLM in the RMP to comply with the SSA, and to properly assess and balance uses of the public lands.

Lack of Coherent Restoration Plan: AUM Cuts Needed to Undertake Effective Restoration Are Absent from the RMP FEIS

There is no coherent plan for restoration, in the RMP. BLM cannot dribble in bits and pieces of re-seeding here or there based on the crazy quilt pattern of the Jarbidge allotments in permit renewals. A greatly revised RMP must provide clear, unequivocal planning, guidance, and lay out a determined science-based path forward with required milestones (acres planted per year, passive restoration needs per year that have been applied, etc.) in order to conserve sage-grouse and other species. □ □ In the Snake River Birds of Prey RMP, Idaho BLM tied any significant reduction or removal of livestock to restoration. BLM never provided specifics on what restoration would occur where and when in that RMP. That landscape, like the Jarbidge, has also suffered large-scale habitat loss for sagebrush-dependent species, and similarly has large areas of lands in desperate need of true restoration.

The FEIS fails to provide a coherent and effective restoration plan for native vegetation communities and important habitats for native terrestrial and aquatic biota. In fact, it is impossible to understand how restoration could ever effectively take place with the RMP's extremely high livestock and development allocations, as well as minimal protective mitigation. It fails to show and describe how livestock impacts will be removed for sufficient time to allow any restoration or the battery of "fuels" or other projects to be established. The FEIS ignores the recent Arkle et al. 2014 report on the abject BLM fire rehab failure. BLM does not show that this has been taken into account in its alternatives, allocations, or other series of actions. This analysis and planning are critical as part of the RMP alternatives and fabric so that all the Alternatives measures can be examined to see if they are mutually achievable. It is needed to ensure that promised actions actually happen, the necessary degree of mitigation is applied, and that BLM can be held accountable if long lags or delays occur.

Thus, we Protest the lack of a coherent vegetation and habitat restoration path, given the overwhelming livestock disturbance load and other extractive uses and large-scale roading and other activities under the Proposed Action and Alts, 1-IV as well. This is arbitrary, and defies current science for sagebrush ecosystems.

If BLM ever would follow through with some meager AUM cuts (which we do not

believe would ever happen), will the public have to wait for the next round of permit renewals – i.e. 13 or more years – until any significant livestock reductions or removals occur? If so, the sage-grouse and other sensitive species populations will be past the point of no return.

What appears to be driving the looseness, uncertainty and lack of a coherent plan is that the livestock burden will be increased and intensified under the guise of TNR, Fuels “management”, undefined “targeted grazing”, and other schemes to ensure that no significant change or increased livestock use occurs. This is certain to doom the persistence of sage-grouse and other sensitive species populations. We commented on the Draft that *the RMP is written so that it is likely that livestock use in many areas could actually be increased - including through uncapped levels of TNR.* Now we see the FEIS newly contrived Proposed Action bringing this about.

We Protest that BLM has failed to provide a specific set of actions to ensure sage-grouse survival. It has failed to prioritize passive and active restoration actions in the face of near-certain federal budget cuts and limited funding for restoration projects. This part of the RMP process must be grounded in reality and lay out concrete actions that lead to conservation and recovery of sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, slickspot peppergrass, Jarbidge bull trout, redband trout, and other rare and imperiled species. Specific actions that must occur if restoration does not happen (as is very likely given the BLM’s track record) must be laid out. Example: In areas where there is No significant progress in restoration of sagebrush habitats (both initiation of restoration and/or successful outcomes), the RMP must trigger removal of grazing and other very intrusive disturbances in still-occupied habitats so that they can be protected and passive restoration can be maximized.

Using the BLM’s Snake River Birds of Prey Analysis as an illustration, we stress that BLM did not specify with clarity where and how its promised restoration would occur, and how outcomes would be achieved to effectively preserve and recover sagebrush species. It provided no concrete plan for these actions - and linked removal of livestock to restoration. BLM now claims actions are: “in the Implementation Plan”. The SRBOPA Implementation Plan following the ROD was prepared behind closed doors without public involvement and NEPA. This Plan that we obtained long after RMP completion, was an excel spreadsheet, with lists of activities under broad categories. There were no specifics attached to any activity so there could be no understanding of what was to occur, how effective actions might be in addressing ecological threats, how various parts of the spreadsheet fit together, or if actions actually were accomplished. The lack of a certain, scientifically supported and expert vetted plan for a restoration path forward has been forsaken in the Jarbidge EIS process as well.

Unless a detailed and specific Plan for restoration and sage-grouse and other TES species conservation is laid out in the RMP, with specific actions to be accomplished and clear and measurable recovery goals, benchmarks for progress and time frames (such as acres of sagebrush re-established per year or acres of cheatgrass-vulnerable sage that receives passive restoration for sufficient periods to heal the understory). Thresholds of recovery must be gauged by BLM undertaking clear and specific effective actions – and without

this - promises of restoration are meaningless. There must be consequences triggered by BLM failure to undertake promised restoration actions or to meet goals. There has been no valid NEPA process related to understanding all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the RMP claims concerning restoration, which is thrown loosely about, but never clearly defined and a path with specific actions laid down. There is no concrete Plan for conserving, enhancing and restoring remaining sage habitats, and re-connecting and restoring with native sagebrush vegetation areas of exotics, sterile post-fire seedings, etc.

There is no clear path for conserving sagebrush habitats and sage-grouse in the Jarbidge RMP DEIS. In fact the livestock and extractive use allocations under the Preferred Alternative ensure the bird's doom. Large-scale and profound changes will have to be made in a Supplemental EIS cutting through the RMP's morass of confusion for there to be any clear science-based plan for conserving sage-grouse and preventing any further habitat and population losses. A new range of real conservation-based alternatives must be analyzed as a first step. The range of unreasonable current Alternatives that continue to treat the Jarbidge like a feedlot must be scrapped.

The RMP under all Alternatives provides no certainty that the most pressing ecological issues will ever be dealt with, and that includes the habitats for all sensitive species. Here is an example using aquatic and riparian habitats. The public is faced with BLM's RMP – an agency that promised in 1997 (and prior) that riparian areas would be in PFC in five years – taking until 2021 to move 70% of degraded Jarbidge riparian areas even to the minimal PFC under the DEIS. Under the FEIS PA, 183 miles at claimed PFC (largely livestock-inaccessible canyons) and the rest – 42 miles “towards PFC”. This also appears to completely ignore springs and seeps. The 42 miles could be Non-functioning, but have some caving collapsed banks that BLM could claim were “moving toward” PFC – we have seen this kind of thing done before. PFC is a minimal level of riparian habitat quality, and often highly arbitrary health assessments are made. It does NOT ensure adequate aquatic species habitats, water quality, perennial water and flow sustainability, sustainable recreational uses and enjoyment, etc. It does not adequately provide for buffering riparian resources from adverse climate change impacts. The RMP has minimal riparian measures in its GOMAs. See Table ES-9 Riparian Vegetation ES-38, ES-39. There are no suitable alternatives to achieve needed recovery of riparian vegetation and watersheds, and to ensure compliance with rangeland health standards. As the Jarbidge ESI, microbiotic crust studies, biological studies, the plummeting sage-grouse and other wildlife populations all showed - and the AMS then compiled and affirmed - the Jarbidge has been turning into a biological desert and wasteland from intensive grazing and industrialization of the land from domestic livestock grazing, fire, post-fire wheatfield-like dense seedings comprised of exotics or large-sized coarse cultivars, lack of adequate rest from grazing so native components can recover. However, BLM has steadfastly refused to remove the coarse exotic dense seedings, intensive livestock grazing disturbance to vegetation, soils and microbiotic crusts that promote flammable cheatgrass, the synergistic effects of fire and grazing disturbance, and other severe ecological degradation. Please see WWP's Appeal of BLM Lone Butte fire ESR and Rehab Plan discussing the ecological disaster of BLM post-fire rehab and re-imposition of high

numbers of livestock on rehabbed land with minimal rest (submitted with DEIS comments and carried forward in this Protest).

BLM has now wasted a decade and many millions of taxpayer dollars in drawing up a range of near-status quo and increased exploitation alternatives mired in confusion and uncertainty. BLM's RMP DEIS, and its uncertain and largely status quo Preferred Alternative, and now the FEIS with its even worse Proposed Action, ensure further losses of sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, migratory birds, aquatic species populations, and losses of public uses and enjoyment on the public lands. □ Restoration is desperately needed. Large-scale reductions in livestock grazing are necessary for any restoration to have any chance to succeed. It is necessary to protect the remnant native vegetation, and slickspot peppergrass potential habitat so that passive restoration can occur.

BLM has known the very significant problems with the tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars it has spent on post fire livestock forage rehab that used densely planted exotic or large cultivar grass fire rehab plantings. These seedings have promoted even more fires, and BLM perpetuated high cattle stocking rates that cause cheatgrass proliferation in understories, retard recovery of native species, and essentially convert lands to biological deserts where only a few deer mice can live. The RMP lacks adequate review of the past fire rehab and other failures of BLM and lack of cogent analysis of WHY this occurred. This is the least the agency can do – after taxpayers have lavished tens of millions of dollars on rehab on the Jarbidge – only to have it destroyed by Simplot, various Brackett family, and a hand full of other grazers.

BLM has allowed the livestock industry to drive post-fire actions – cattle to be turned out with minimal rest, and very large amounts of “temporary” infrastructure has enabled grazing of nearly every unburned acre –providing no havens for native wildlife suffering from habitat losses. The result has been non-existent to poor sagebrush recovery, limited native grass and forb recovery, reduced microbiotic crusts, intensively trampled soils creating an environment nearly devoid of native wildlife – where weeds thrive.

This continues up to the present – despite the AMS documenting cheatgrass expansion including in large acreages of lands seeded in post-fire species that were claimed to help exclude cheatgrass. The non-native perennial and coarse cultivar seedings did not exclude cheatgrass and instead exacerbated desertification processes and weed expansion. Chronic intensive grazing practices and limited post-seeding rest have spawned even worse problems – with rush skeletonweed and other weeds increasing as well.

It is clear that what BLM has been doing has not worked. BLM must critically examine the ecological wastelands that have resulted from its post-fire seedings and limited rest. The RMP does not do this. Instead, under the guise of “targeted grazing”, fuels, and other actions, on top of which TNR can be heaped, BLM plans to continue more of the same - minimal rest and then full-throttle grazing disturbance, and forage seedings under the guise of “fuels” projects.

BLM must reckon with its catastrophic past mistakes that have driven the unraveling of

the ecosystem. It must develop a plan with a range of alternatives to remove and minimize livestock grazing and other disturbances in remaining native sagebrush habitats. BLM must act to restore connectivity between habitats so that conservation of the sage-grouse and other populations can occur. This must include removing large areas of dense exotic or other coarse grass seedings. The RMP lacks any science-based effective controls on post-fire or post-treatment livestock disturbance.

Instead, what BLM has developed in the FEIS is a plan that is so wedded to continuing the livestock disturbance load (including through use of TNR to make up for any livestock cuts on paper), as well as a full battery of resource exploitation and industrialization, that it will be impossible to conserve sage-grouse under the Alternatives. Conservation is also unlikely under the loose and uncertain GOMAs and “poison pill” energy exploitation, VRM, mining and industrial use allocations that BLM bizarrely rolled into the only remotely conservation-minded Alternative, Alt V. BLM included several harmful provisions that appear to be thrown into Alternative V as “poison pill” components, to bias analysis of Alt. V conservation values. See Alt comparison FEIS Section 2.10.2, Table 6 and 7 for example. There are no suitably protective Alternatives, and BLM comparisons between the RMP’s limited alternatives and its evaluation of direct, indirect and cumulative effects of alternatives is greatly biased towards minimizing exposure of the harms the Proposed Actions will cause, and the high degree of risk with the confusing and often mutually incompatible management schemes and promises.

BLM wasted nearly ten years of time in this process – only to produce a document that often is more harmful to the environment and provides less certainty than the existing RMP. The Proposed RMP has several very similar intensive exploitation Alternatives (see Table ES-5) with loose, unclear, and uncertain Goals, Objectives and Management actions. See FEIS Chapter 2: Alt 1 Sect 2.3, Sect. 2.4, Sect 2.5, Sec. 2.6, Sec. 2.7, Sec. 2.8. Yet BLM had on hand information from the flawed Simplot and RCI permit renewal EA processes, its own ESI, its own AMS, IDFG Wildlife Progress Reports, lek surveys and databases and other reports of continued losses of sage-grouse and leks, and a large body of other scientific information to know without a shadow of a doubt that the FEIS fails to undertake actions essential to acting to conserving sage-grouse and all other sagebrush biota in the Jarbidge.

Alts 1-IV and VI are scientifically unreasonable Alternatives that violate FLPMA and NEPA in the ecological context of the Jarbidge in 2014. Alt V is laced with Poison Pills, and is also unfairly evaluated by BLM - through excluding any active restoration, for example.

BLM’s Alternatives Range, in the context of the Jarbidge in 2007 with its AMS data, then the Murphy Fire, and even more so now in 2014, is scientifically indefensible, and much of this continues in the FEIS. Some Alternatives were so bizarre that they would let fires to burn over much of the FO, and industrial-level visual despoliation could occur under VRM Class IV across vast areas of the FO. All manner of mineral and other development activity could occur across many sage habitats.

□BLM has developed an RMP plan that is a morass of confusion. Its Goals, Objectives and Management Actions (GOMAs) are filled with loose, non-binding, unspecific, and often contradictory wording. There is often little recognizable difference between many components of Alternatives. See Executive Summary (ES) Table ES-5 to ES-42, showing minor differences in many allocations, for example.

There is no certainty that any real significant change will ever occur in addressing the most significant issues facing the health of public lands and native species, and that actions needed for population persistence and conservation will happen. □□BLM must provide concrete and reality-based specific actions to address causes of habitat degradation and loss. It must require that specific and concrete actions be undertaken in specific time frames to remove and reduce livestock and other disturbances, and conduct restoration in sagebrush and other important habitats in the Planning process.

Actions must be immediate. Sagebrush and other native species are sliding to extirpation and extinction. Just look at the alarming paucity of small animals, and near-monocultures of a few deer deer mice, in the BLM mammal surveys of a few years ago. There is no indication that a proper baseline currently exists. Some areas of the Jarbidge have been so intensively disturbed by livestock and other uses that animal communities are greatly depauperate even in remnant unburned areas that are so trampled and intensively disturbed. The structure of the sagebrush structure is diminished and simplified from livestock breaking and browsing it. This has resulted in loss of structural diversity and “see-through” sagebrush that offers minimal nesting benefit to many species. The soil surface is extensively trampled, often lacking in microbial crusts. Which has caused cheatgrass expansion and risk. Understories are greatly depleted, lacking forbs and larger stature native grasses. The recovery of forbs and other species is impossible due to intensive livestock use and disturbance with little to no rest, and aggressive exotic or coarse large-statured cultivar dense seeding grasses and intensive stocking based on these grasses that promotes a profusion of cheatgrass or other weeds in interspaces. Since then - conditions have worsened. We Protest BLM failing to undertake the dramatic livestock reductions necessary to protect remnant better condition areas, and ensure rehab and FRH compliance across the landscape. BLM can’t control funding for vague promises of restoration – thus passive restoration is made even more imperative. The RMP lacks a clear Plan of what actions will occur - where, when and how, and costs - to fulfill any promises to conserve sage-grouse. A Restoration plan must be the foundation for alternatives and analysis - and must be based on viable sage-grouse populations, pygmy rabbit populations, LEPA, clean surface water, and other species survival needs and “goods and services (like clean abundant water in riparian areas) accompanied by detailed ecological analysis that looks at population viability under a range of alternatives.

Development of specific management changes and passive restoration actions that are not dependent on funding – such as removal of livestock from remaining native vegetation habitats in the highly fragmented Jarbidge would immediately save large amounts of admin. costs and would be a boon to wildlife, aquatic species, clean water, watershed processes, etc. It be considered with a hard look analysis under a range of reasonable alternatives in a SEIS process. Economically, de-stocking and long-term closures of

rehabbed areas to livestock disturbance, is the only certain path to some degree of effective rehab and restoration actions. See Moskowitz and Romaniello report.

MYRIAD RMP FLAWS

Vague and Ineffective Resource “Protection” Actions

Under the Riparian and the Upland Vegetation discussions, and indeed throughout the whole RMP with its platitudinous and vague Goals, Objectives, and non-binding Management Actions, BLM doesn't have to act to do anything.

When questioned about this, BLM RMP managers have claimed that the agency is not supposed to be specific in Land Use Plans – asserting that the Plan is for a large landscape over a long time – so BLM cannot be pinned down. This ignores the ecological crisis facing the Jarbidge, the large-scale losses of sage-grouse and other populations whose viability is threatened right now, like pygmy rabbit and bull trout; the many outdoor-oriented recreational uses of the lands that are threatened by continued exotic grass seedings, cheatgrass advances under the synergistic adverse effects of livestock grazing, or other development and disturbance. In other words, BLM is saying a Plan does not really need to be shown to be a coherent and effective document, and merely a list of often conflicting promises – where the extractive use burden under the status quo and Proposed Action makes the promises for natural resources values and native biota clearly unattainable.

The point of a Land Use Plan is to enable the agency to make needed changes and be current in effectively addressing the environmental and other issues and threats that the public lands face, while providing benefits to the public. In the case of the Jarbidge – the benefit is overwhelmingly thriving wildlife populations, clean water, clean air and recreational uses and enjoyment. As the population of southern Idaho grows, open space and wild lands become ever more precious and sought after for relaxation, photography, birdwatching, camping, hiking, fishing, etc. This plan has little capability of enabling good choices – since BLM doesn't have to do anything under it but allow the same and often even more livestock that have already so highly degraded all the other public uses of these lands. It is unclear how any potential action would occur. Instead of referencing vague lists of “tools in a toolbox”, BMPs, etc. – the BLM must methodically lie out effective actions and ensure that they are realistically able to occur.

Despite repeated comments by WWP and others throughout this process, and the BLM's own AMS showing the ecological crisis facing sage-grouse, and other values of the public lands like antelope that face the extremely high fence densities in the Jarbidge, BLM has structured all of its alternatives around the immense allotment and pasture fence footprint remaining. Even more would be built under the FEIS– including untold miles of “temporary” fence a massive forage projects occur. There is no specificity to hold the agency accountable for anything that is glibly promised in the EIS, or to base any uncertain “adaptive” management on.

BLM's Plan views the current maze of barbed wire as nearly immutable. BLM has explained to us that fence removal to benefit bighorns or grouse could not occur if it altered an allotment boundary fence. BLM also said that the plan's cutting off boundaries of lands in Alt IVA for removal of grazing from LEPA habitats was based on fencing layout. Slickspot peppergrass was a Threatened species, and is again Proposed by the USFWS as Threatened, yet BLM is holding fence lines that bisect critical habitats immutable for the convenience of greatly subsidized large-scale Brackett family public lands ranching operations. The entire RMP is structured to give far more protections to disturbance-tolerant mule deer than it gives to sage-grouse, the sensitive California bighorn sheep, the pygmy rabbit, sensitive migratory birds, golden eagles, imperiled rare plants like slickspot peppergrass, etc.

There is no specificity of management choices and outcomes. Providing lists of BMPs and describing RCA categories does not ensure that all of the actions will be followed, or if only some will, or perhaps none. Examples of the meaningless lists of BMPs and SOPs: Appendix B, A-5 to A-75 is a laundry list of the usual range of harmful actions (like fencing) and long known to be ineffective "mitigation" measures and excuses for allowing extractive and other uses and development to occur. There is no clarity – Ex: Veg Treatments Water Quality, Resources and Resource Uses (includes livestock recreation, Fire, Special status species/Sage-grouse, Rare aquatic species, Noxious weeds and invasive plants (RMP lacks any integrated weed management), Wildfire suppression, Livestock – General, and Upland. In fact most of these loose BMPs are aimed at enabling grazing seedings to dirt, likely using TNR and gross overstocking across sagebrush habitats, extreme range infrastructure loads, water developments, travel planning that would maintain the massive road footprint, high degrees of extractive land use, wind energy, unprotective Plans of Development and project operation that sacrifices wildlife and other ecological resources. Mere lists for visual resources, roads, transportation, noise, noxious weeds and pesticides, cultural/historical resources, paleontological, hazardous materials, storm water, human health and safety, construction impacts on wildlife, visual, roads, air emissions, noise health and safety, operations, monitoring, etc. do not ensure resource protection and do not ensure harm will be minimized.

The solar energy BMPs, wind energy BMPs, geothermal BMPs, mining and other development BMPs, all fail to provide effective conservation of public resources and mitigation of direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects of facility development and operation on public land resources. There is also no clear path for requiring mitigation by avoidance, or to ensure that mitigation will effectively conserve species.

The same concerns apply to Appendix G – Cultural A-193-199, Appendix F Drought Measures A-191-192, and others.

Further, Appendix E Conservation Measures A-129-190 for LEPA, bull trout are insufficient to ensure conservation of the species and viable populations. There is no effective population analysis, triggers for action, thresholds, etc. Trampling and other severe disturbance is not effectively controlled, for example.

Under *Kleppe v New Mexico (1976)* the federal government has authority over wildlife on federal lands, because it owns them. BLM has authority to protect habitat. Yet for sage-grouse, BLM in the DEIS where the foundation of the flawed RMP was laid down - defaulted to the Idaho sage-grouse Plan and the industry-dominated "Local Working Group". BLM never bothers to show how these efforts would effectively conserve sage-grouse. Now in the FEIS that legacy continues and the GRSG DEIS is on a path (albeit voluminous and full of vague and hollow promises) to avoid solid habitat protections.

We Protest the failure of BLM to adequately respond to all of these serious environmental concerns and RMP flaws.

Water Development and Artificial Upland Livestock Water Harms - RMP Inaction Worsens

We Protest the following:

The Water Development Mapping DEIS 22 (M-23 and M-44), and FEIS Map 51 shows what is driving the Jarbidge RMP process – i.e. maintaining massive industrialization of the landscape for livestock at all costs. This is the very same massive industrialization that has so greatly harmed the landscape and sage-grouse habitats- allowing intensive livestock grazing which has promoted frequent and often very large fires - as a result of livestock industry pressures, past TNR, harmful dense exotic seedings with flammable cheatgrass in the interspaces from grazing loads, etc. BLM provides no mapping or any specificity showing it will ever remove a single pipeline or water trough to conserve and protect sage-grouse or other wildlife, or slickspot peppergrass.

In a 2011 meeting, BLM told us that the RMP Team didn't want to consider removing pipelines because of the damage to the land that this would cause! This is absurd, since so many of the Jarbidge pipelines have roads on top of/by them. Ranchers, at present, rip up the land all the time as the pipelines leak – and BLM turns a blind eye to that damage. Much of the roading is entirely unplanned, and was caused by the construction of the pipeline, and ranchers continuing to drive in routes following facilities. The greatly excessive road network has grown up alongside fences, and on or by pipelines. It has grown as ranchers try to maximize AUMs in a depleted landscape through placing salt – and now feeding supplement – over thousands of sites creating new zones of depletion and cheatgrass infestation that are completely unassessed in the RMP. Vast areas of the Jarbidge have now been crisscrossed with thousands of miles of unplanned roads that were spawned by industrialization of the land for intensive livestock use. Yet the RMP provides no adequate baseline numbers on road densities (the RMP Map M-71 is so pale as to be illegible but it shows a monstrous number of roads – ALL of which would remain under the woeful proposed action. There are no specific goals, objectives and management actions for removing miles of roads to ensure wildlife species habitat security or untrammled or quiet recreational uses. There is no binding requirement to reduce road densities in important habitat areas to conserve wildlife. BLM must overlay the road mapping with facilities and show what is really going on. See Road density mapping Map M-71 FEIS.

Ranchers have horses. Yet relying on herding and horse use has fallen by the wayside in the Jarbidge, as roads have been driven into virtually every area – resulting in a truly astounding road density especially in association with the livestock facilities and intensive grazing disturbance practices.

It isn't necessary for BLM to disturb the ground at all ripping up a pipeline. BLM could just remove and recycle the troughs, plug the pipe, and leave it buried. This is illustrative of how BLM arbitrarily seizes on any possible excuse to scuttle any meaningful change to grazing in the Jarbidge, without any science –based or common sense rationale.

Unless significant numbers of these developments are de-commissioned, BLM will continue to impose livestock use even in the very few areas (outside the small Reference sites) under its Alternatives. The RMP is laced with provisions that thwart grazing permit retirement, and ways to impose sacrifice area “grassbanks”, or the ruse of creating “Fuelbreaks” full of cow food, and targeted grazing dustbowls, and impose TNR over all but 300,000 or fewer acres of the Jarbidge (DEIS) and now in the worsened FEIS over virtually all the landscape. Under Alt VI it could include even the scarce non-canyon riparian areas, inflict severe livestock disturbance of “targeted grazing”, TNR, etc. The basis for the livestock grazing allocation is deeply flawed and greatly under-estimates the forage use of the heavy and often hormone livestock. BLM uses a long-outdated 800 lbs. per AUM (FEIS A-239 footnote) when in reality the cows/AUMs now weigh 1000 to 1200 lbs. Plus they typically have a large calf with them that gets to eat for free.

If BLM is so concerned about the impacts of pipeline excavation, then the RMP needs to clamp down on just letting Jarbidge ranchers go out with backhoes and work on pipelines without any oversight, as is common practice in this area especially in slickspot peppergrass and remaining sagebrush habitats. But of course this was just an excuse to perpetuate the extreme levels of grazing laid out in the RMP.

The issue of failing to clearly identify facilities (or at least a percentage of them) for removal is linked to BLM's ability to develop appropriate grazing alternatives and sideboards for Travel Planning. The RMP must lay a framework for reduction in the horrific road density in the RMP. FEIS ES-33 admits to **4300 miles of known roading, and that there could be twice that amount.** Thus, there was no adequate baseline of the road footprint, causes and impacts provided, with road miles ranging from 4300 to 8600 miles.

BLM must layout and identify in the RMP targeted pipelines, troughs, and fencing for removal so that unnecessary roading that can be removed and high road densities reduced to provide habitat security for wildlife and limit human intrusion in sensitive habitats, reduce or limit weed spread, decrease sage-grouse predator travel corridors, and provide many other habitat security benefits. See USFWS WBP Finding for GRSG. These unnecessary roads can then be closed in the Travel Plan and slated for de-commissioning/rehab. BLM must plan for re-connecting habitats and reducing rather than increasing habitat fragmentation.

Land Areas Available vs. Unavailable for Livestock Grazing

The only areas not available are cattle-inaccessible steep canyons, scattered tracts in the north, and the reference areas. It appears even exclosures are able to be grazed under the FEIS.

Reference Areas are identified as not available. The RMP DEIS would have created 75 reference areas paired with adjacent areas – now in the FEIS this area is even less (Map M-59). The RMP provides no monitoring requirements for reference areas, and no specific or clear actions that will occur if monitoring shows adverse impacts – or standards are exceeded.

BLM must close entire pastures or allotments for reference sites. Otherwise the burden of fencing in this tragically industrialized landscape becomes even greater. The SSA says that the Reference Areas are to be used to allow comparisons for future evaluations of livestock grazing. Thus, large areas based on existing fence lines, at a minimum, must be used.

Grazing Permit Retirement

Western Watersheds Project provided scoping comments requesting that the Jarbidge RMP include language that will enable relinquished or waived grazing permits to be held indefinitely for wildlife habitat and watershed health and not be reissued for livestock use. The Draft RMP/EIS did not include such a provision. WWP does not support using such allotment permits as grass banks. This language needs to be part of each alternative in the final RMP/EIS. The language WWP supports is as follows: ***Grazing privileges that are lost, retired, relinquished, canceled, or have base property sold without transfer would have attached AUMs held for watershed protection and wildlife habitat***. RMP direction provided by this language can enable collaborative and voluntary efforts to reduce conflicts between livestock grazing and native plant and animal communities as well as riparian and watershed health and should be adopted and encouraged by the BLM for the future management of the Jarbidge Field Office through the final RMP/EIS.

We Protest BLM failing to fairly consider this.

Jarbidge Fencing, Water Trough and Other Facility Nightmare Is Not Adequately Assessed, Mitigated and Minimized

Much of the horrendous footprint of fencing in the Jarbidge was imposed haphazardly following fires when fire fences were left in place. FEIS Map M-51 shows existing fence areas, and a plethora of water developments. Now, on top of this, BLM in the FEIS proposes to allow unchecked amounts of water hauling.

BLM made the reference areas as meager as possible and increase fencing in the process. BLM stratified allotments, and randomly selected points in an elaborate scheme based in

part on existing fences. However, this reference fencing scheme must be simplified and the tiny little areas abandoned—we can foresee BLM claiming that the exact configuration of fences must be maintained – because the reference areas are based on the current configuration. The burden of existing fencing hazards to sage-grouse, raptors, antelope and other big game must be much reduced. From the start, WWP asked BLM to consider large-scale rollbacks and removals in fencing, water developments and other livestock facilities as part of this analysis to allow for recovery and maintenance of wildlife and other sensitive species populations, reduce invasive species, improve watershed health, and to promote less trammled recreational activities. BLM ignored this in the DRMP and the Final is worse. BLM has developed a scheme for reference areas that would increase the footprint of harmful fencing hampering antelope and other animal movement, killing and injuring sage-grouse, raptors, owls and bats through providing a collision hazard and interfering with habitat use – increasing fragmentation.

How does the Jarbidge fence density compare to that recommended in the BLM National Technical Team Report? The RMP fails provide detailed analysis. We know of no other landscape that is so tragically industrialized for the sole benefit of livestock. See Jarbidge AMS 2007, the FEIS Map M-51, the Roding Map M-71, and Map of Remnant sagebrush habitats. Much of the FO is within a mile of water. Removal of half, two thirds or more of these water developments, including through expanding pastures and removal of fencing, and rolling back existing water hauling would assist in getting rid of some of the ecological blight, habitat fragmentation and degradation caused by water developments. Cattle in flat landscapes are readily able to travel two miles from water sources. Ranchers have horses, and can work to herd livestock. This must be considered in all grazing alternatives.

There is no alternative that shows fence or other project removal and reconfiguration based on a Plan to conserve sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, LEPA or other rare species. We believe that is because livestock-industry constrained Twin Falls BLM had no intention of ever making significant changes in the livestock grazing intensity in the Jarbidge and has constructed this RMP morass of confusion to ensure that change does not occur in time to save sage-grouse and other rare native biota in the Jarbidge. Even if livestock were removed from significant areas, the lack of clarity in the EIS leaves the door open for efforts to be made to move them back in under the guise of “fuels”, TNR, forage reserves, or some other artifice.

The DEIS contained Map 22, the Water Development Map (now overlaid with fences in the RMP) which vividly portrayed what appears to be driving this tragically industrialized landscape RMP. i.e. the retention of all water developments. BLM never presents a single map or plan or required action to remove a single one of these harmful sage-grouse habitat impairing and fragmenting, predator sink, and potential West Nile virus source areas. These facilities promote West Nile mosquito virus, facilitate livestock depletion of sagebrush habitats, serve as infestations sites for weeds, and have many other adverse impacts. See Connelly et al. 2004, USFWS WBP Finding for GRSG 2010, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, Declaration of Dr. David Dobkin, Stevens et al. 2012, Manier et al. 2013.

There is no analysis of the toll the existing infrastructure is taking on wildlife. The AMS showed there were serious conflicts – these are woefully unaddressed by the RMP failed to effectively rollback the horrendous livestock facility footprint.

We Protest all of these Jarbidge FEIS deficiencies.

We Protest the grassbanks/Reserve Common Areas – as they are another form of taxpayer welfare to reward ranchers including those who may have so abused the allotments where they hold permits that those areas must be rested/rehabbed. The fragmented and livestock-degraded Jarbidge desperately needs significant landscape areas free of livestock disturbance.

RMP S&G Compliance Failures and Monitoring Uncertainty

We Protest the following:

The RMP has no protocols and no binding requirements that forge a clear management path forward – but plenty of elaborate fuels, TNR, grassbank, water hauling and other schemes to maximize livestock numbers for the financial gain of a tiny hand full of private grazing interests. The RMP does not provide mandatory annual measurable use standards and other actions needed to comply with the FRH requirements. The RMP must also specify how monitoring results would then be applied, i.e. fed back into the system and used to trigger clear and specific changes – specific AUM cuts, closure of areas from grazing, etc. Instead, the RMP has loose, uncertain “adaptive management” as a cover for allowing uses to be minimally controlled and their harms minimally detected. Thus there is no certainty that the FRH will be attained.

There is no schedule for S&G analysis and re-analysis. BLM needs a schedule for compliance with S&G. Even though the SSA requires new permits in three years, BLM never met the schedule for the RMP, and may also fail to meet the permit renewal schedule. Actions must be prioritized on the basis of the importance habitats in affected lands for rare and imperiled species like sage grouse. S&Gs must be scheduled for re-assessment, as well.

Under BLM’s 1997 National Riparian Goal - **within five years, all streams were supposed to be in PFC. Yet here is BLM 17 years later, taking baby steps towards attaining PFC** with no clear path to achieve even this minimal and arbitrary condition on some Jarbidge streams. See the pathetic meager measures in the Alts in Table ES-5, FEIS 2.8.2.4, 2.8.2. 5, 2.8.2.6, 2.8.3.1. There are no mandatory annual grazing use requirements (6 inch stubble triggers, less than 10% bank alteration triggers, less than 10% woody browse standards) and specified timely monitoring in the RMP, so there is no certainty any progress will be made.

PFC is the wrong goal, and does not ensure water quality compliance, or progress under

the FRH for water quality. FEIS at 4-1119 wrongly claims that the rate of improvement in water-quality and habitat impaired streams would depend on the rate of improvement of PFC and HC ratings and that HC is expected to improve more slowly. This must be why Alt VI GOMAs seems to be primarily focused on just trying to keep exotic fish species present – rather than native fisheries and aquatic species restoration. Exotics tolerate wretched water quality and habitat quality better than natives. Species like brook trout thrive in more degraded waters, and prey on natives. The poor water quality and poor habitat conditions under the new RMP will provide exotic fish with a strong competitive advantage.

WWP commented that BLM should use **a desired natural condition** and a natural rate of recovery that far exceeds PFC. This is required to comply with INFISH. PFC is an arbitrary non-scientific basis for assessment. PFC does not address instream habitat conditions for riparian areas. BLM efforts to claim PFC can be “cross-walked” and translate into instream conditions are not valid. This has been ignored, as the severe pollution and impairment footprint of the EIS Alts and the Proposed Action will not provide for natural conditions and a near natural rate of recovery.

BLM’s discusses its very infrequent riparian MIM monitoring in the riparian section. MIM monitoring can be as infrequent as one year in six – or longer given the degree to which BLM falls behind in commitments. This introduces a great deal of uncertainty. Over the life of the RMP, BLM is also likely to change monitoring schemes many times – MIM is just the latest system by BLM. None ever lasts very long.

BLM provides no analysis of the effectiveness of the MIM monitoring – especially under the rudderless GOMAs and the limited range of high extractive use alternatives in the RMP. Under the BLM methodology of the MIM method, the agency claims that it is not necessary to meet particular use levels every year. There is little to no grazing accountability with MIM. Under the infrequent and minimal number of sites monitored under MIM, harms cannot be properly mitigated and minimized before irreversible damage occurs.

MIM measurements for riparian vegetation are taken right by the water’s edge – the first line of vegetation where even the thinnest of green spikerush (*Eleocharis*) or other shallow-rooted poor bank stabilizers would be measured and considered towards meeting goals. MIM sets no standards of use. It is just a technique/set of limited measurements that are taken. Worse, BLM often arbitrarily selects better condition sites as its very limited monitoring areas. Thus only a small subset of riparian systems get monitored at all – and typically in better condition cherry-picked sites.

The RMP must set clear measurable triggers to gauge progress towards the FRH and ensure standards are met -for stubble height bank, trampling of livestock-accessible areas of streambanks, and riparian browse triggers for livestock removal under a range of alternatives to be measured by the MIM system in all riparian areas – not just a select few.

BLM must analyze a range of alternatives that rely on 6 inches stubble height, analyzing

5% and 10% annual bank trampling requirements, and less than 10% woody browse. Livestock use reaching any of these levels must serve as a trigger for their removal from the pasture. Excesses must have specific actions taken in the following grazing year to correct them –including substantial reductions in livestock numbers. This must be analyzed in a SEIS. See Alternative submitted on cd which expands on, and updates WWP’s initial alternative submission that was submitted under strict BLM constraints and then rejected.

We Protest all of these RMP Deficiencies as described above.

FEIS Fisheries (Section 2.3.6 Fish and Wildlife) and other Sections

The over-arching Goal for Fisheries is nearly identical in all alternatives. Reference in the DEIS was made to the “ARMS” document, Appendix D. The even more harmful FEIS 2-345 refers to ARMS Appendix D under Alt VI. Appendix D contains many numbers, acronyms, and categories applied to streams. Yet it fails to provide essential baseline information on the causes of loss of flows, reaches now lacking sustainable perennial flows and the causes, reductions/absence in native fish species and other aquatic biota like amphibians, or impairment or loss of habitat components, and specified actions taken to recover flows, fish, water quality, etc. It does not provide required actions to make positive change happen. It does not address and develop a range of measures to minimize adverse foreseeable effects of climate change on aquatic resources and biota (less winter snowpack= reduced perennial flows, more precip falling as rain, violent runoff events, etc.) See Comer et al. 2012, Great Basin Rapid ecological Assessment, for example.

The RMP RCAs have four categories – with bias towards less protection if the waters currently do not have fish. Thus, there is no guarantee that these areas will ever be improved. If the fish fauna is wiped out at present, BLM places the stream in a lower category and dooms it to poorer management and especially severe losses under the maximized stocking and TNR alternative VI. Plus, it is unclear if native dace and other species are considered expendable. This sacrificing of whole drainages and watersheds is highly likely to doom many native aquatic species, including amphibians, prevent survival and recovery of Columbia spotted frog, a federal candidate species and other rare species. This is not a Plan for recovery - it is a Plan for Triage, extirpation/extinction, loss of crucial brood rearing habitat, further headcutting and permanent loss of springs and meadow areas and a range of further ecological losses - all to enable high and unsustainable levels of grazing disturbance to continue, and the footprint of various energy, minerals, oil and gas or other development and disturbance to expand.

“Management for RCAs” (Table A-64 to A-70 in DEIS, Table D-8 in FEIS) is supposed to show what actions will occur. This contains many statements, but no mandatory measurable standards for livestock use that are vital to ensure protections and the FRH. There is no required grazing seasonal avoidance period – when redband trout are spawning, when CSF egg masses present, etc. See in contrast BLM Owyhee 68 permit various alternatives claiming to avoid conflicts. The lack is found in FEIS Table D-8, and FEIS A-111 with grazing impacts uncontrolled - so highly destructive impacts can occur.

This results in uncertainty over any claimed protections or mitigation measures. The FEIS's RCA and riparian system way of viewing streams comes from PACFish, InFish, and ICBEMP. Much of the background science was conducted on much larger more interconnected waters than the desert systems of the Jarbidge. Logging and roads were often primary threats in those systems and studies – and not grazing as in the Jarbidge. BLM must provide much more specific required guidance and annually measurable livestock grazing standards as triggers for livestock removal to limit chronic and cumulative livestock grazing degradation of riparian areas and aquatic species habitat quality and quantity. BLM must employ this and other measures to address and help buffer climate stress on aquatic systems and biota. Climate change stress is amplified by the adverse effects of livestock grazing See Steinfeld et al. 2006, Beschta et al. 20-12, 2014.

The inadequate Fisheries Objectives of the RMP under all alternatives rely on meager and arbitrary PFC, which lacks any standardized measurements. See Table ES-5 summarizing minimal baby steps towards PFC Yet the RCA Table stated in regards to PFC (DEIS at A-65 “Fish and Wildlife Restoration”) under FW-1 that “Management activities and land uses in RCAs shall be implemented to attain proper functioning condition as an initial step to move habitat conditions of streams, riparian areas and wetlands toward achieving aquatic and riparian management objectives”. BLM proposes 20 years - or even longer - just for its initial baby step.

The RMP's Fish Objective in Alt IV is “maintain or improve streams” referring to “70% of the miles of fish-bearing streams and their perennial tributaries are properly functioning”. DEIS at 2-62. Table ES5 of the FEIS claims Alt VI is the same as Alts III through VI for riparian veg objectives. So over 20 years of the RMP, it is ok with BLM if 30% of the streams remain highly degraded (not even in the minimal PFC), and nothing ever had to get better than the low bar PFC category. Does this also mean that some streams could actually decline? There was no requirement for the many miles of intermittent tributaries that characterize large areas of the redband trout and bull trout tributaries in southern Idaho and northern Nevada.

In the FEIS, this is worsened under Alt VI – because of the higher livestock disturbance load and even more lax management of extractive and other harmful uses. This will result in increased sedimentation, reduced sustainable perennial flows, accelerated watershed degradation, increased manure and livestock waste contamination, and the adverse cumulative impacts of all of this – such as the toxic algae blooms in Salmon Falls Reservoir.

Furthermore, BLM provides no commitment to improve or address the intermittent and ephemeral tributaries – many of which are suffering extensive headcutting destroying sage-grouse brood rearing habitats and delivering copious amounts of sediment downstream, reduced flows, deliver large volumes of sediment to downstream flowing waters during runoff, and are in these conditions specifically because of livestock degradation and associated desertification processes across the watersheds including upland areas and the tributary arteries. BLM must gauge how much potential has been

lost and the causes – to provide a baseline of understanding actions needed to recover and sustain perennial flows. BLM knows full well the critical importance of taking care of the tributaries in desert systems. In ESA watersheds, FWS in past consultations we have reviewed has often in the past provided detailed comments on sediment delivery, manure, and other pollutants delivered from these arteries and watershed slopes, as well as the effects of livestock, roading or other degradation in disrupting, reducing or even killing perennial flows. This appears to have been forgotten by BLM in the flawed FEIS. A SEIS must be prepared to address these serious concerns.

Water diversions and impacts of private land practices and degradation must also be fully analyzed. The degree and severity of threats to water flows, water quality, aquatic biota, impairment of recreational uses, and other info must be examined.

Areas that continue to be degraded might under some stretch of the imagination be permissible in an RMP in an environment with many very big streams with much higher typical perennial flow – i.e. better-watered landscapes. But this is unacceptable in the low flow, high runoff pulse Bruneau-Jarbidge and Salmon Falls systems of the high desert. These systems now face the added stress of climate change in affecting the livestock, roading and otherwise de-stabilized the severely grazed watersheds – spanning Humboldt-Toiyabe, Elko BLM and Jarbidge BLM managed lands.

The FEIS GOMAs actually allow many watershed conditions to worsen – especially across the tributaries – many of which become intermittent in summer due to chronic livestock degradation. This same kind of uncertain and unclear wording is used repeatedly in relation to the other public lands Values considered in the RMP. It is designed to ensure that only very limited change would occur – and in fact allows conditions to worsen. BLM cannot hope for slow, plodding change. Adverse change (such as erosion, downcutting, loss of flow potential and the ability to sustain fisheries) in degraded systems is not linear - major irreversible erosion and loss of sustainable perennial flows can occur very quickly in headcutting eroding systems.

Sage-grouse use water or rear broods in areas of streams in less steep canyons or more open reaches –which are precisely the areas that are livestock-accessible in the Jarbidge. The flawed FEIS GOMAs actually would allow sage-grouse brood rearing habitat to continue to be degraded and even decline and suffer further irreparable erosion, loss of areal extent of brood rearing habitats, and desiccated flows under the riparian management strategy.

There is nothing that ties together coherent and effective actions needed to stave off further declines (the highly uncertain references to adaptive management make matters even worse), and to promote large-scale restoration to conserve and recover species. This also appears to violate the promises of the agencies to rely on current and coherent ecological science under ICBEMP – and not just parrot ICBEMP terms or insert them in appendices with no clear path of forward action.

The non-perennial stream segments and springs, seeps and meadows largely forsaken by

the RMP are likely to be particularly important to sage-grouse, since many of these areas are not in steep canyons, and so they are used by sage-grouse for brood rearing and water. Recovery here would also better provide habitat for rare and declining nesting migratory birds, as well.

The limited and inadequate Alternatives Range fails to address the degree of threats facing the current highly fragmented habitats, degraded habitats, and very reduced fish and wildlife populations in the Jarbidge. See for example the similarity of the Rip Veg and several other Objectives in Table ES-5.

Some population information is provided on bull trout. Yet there is not an adequate current analysis that reveals how few bull trout currently are present in the entire DPS; the problems with connectivity between occupied reaches and ways to fix this including enhancing sustainable flows and water quality. BLM does not effectively examine the causes of low numbers such as excessive sedimentation from grazed and roaded watersheds or other factors, or losses of sustainable perennial flows, elevated water temperatures, etc. BLM must examine the degree and severity of the direct indirect and cumulative threats the DPS faces - from climate change to livestock and road-produced sediment. This is needed to present a coherent and coordinated set of actions to restore and recover populations and habitats, including critical habitats (which are much too limited in area for the DPS persistence and we believe must be expanded). A valid analysis of the cumulative impacts of roads, grazing, water developments, trailing, recent fire effects including Slide Rock and others etc. must be undertaken. Population viability and persistence must be examined under a range of alternatives. Large-scale changes must be made in the entire RMP before BLM can prepare a proper Biological Assessment, and FWS can adequately consult over this loose and uncertain RMP. The promises of Appendix FEIS Appendix D are not backed up by sufficient current baseline data and analysis. So their sufficiency cannot be gauged.

Actions to restore bull trout and quality habitat and connectivity with USFS lands in the upper Jarbidge and Bruneau systems should be a high priority of this RMP. This is necessary to recover populations, and must be fully examined in a range of alternatives.

The FEIS 3-52 states there are six populations of fluvial, migratory bull trout, yet there is no valid analysis of the current status of the habitats and populations, and the threats to the local populations and the DPS as a whole. Data is largely from 2005 and 2006 –prior to the large BLM and Forest lands fires that impacted headwater and downstream habitat, That data had already shown exceedances of temperature, and abundant sediment where agencies even bothered to look, and other significant problems. These are very likely much worse for bull trout as well as Columbia Basin redband trout (FEIS 3-54 to 55). That data is old, limited and from much the same era as the bull trout information, despite large-scale losses of shading vegetation, and watershed de-stabilization from fires, roading, and a high grazing disturbance load and continued harmful hot season grazing and other known deleterious grazing management methods, There is no analysis of whether any annual measurable standards have been made in a timely manner, and if they have - what the results may be. Thus, there is no basis for a proper current understanding

of the populations and the DPS habitats and viability.

DEIS 3-39 described Columbia River Basin bull trout – what happened to consideration of the **unique** DPS living at the southern periphery of the species' range? This does not appear to have been corrected in the FEIS.

The DEIS at 3-40 showed little movement of bull trout between the Jarbidge River and the East Fork. This amplifies concerns about the small and very vulnerable population in the East Fork, Dave Creek and Slide Creek – as well as the adverse effects of the Brackett Jim Bob pipeline de-watering and other water development concerns, especially now that large areas in the Wilderness in the Forest on the East Fork Jarbidge watershed burned.

Did BLM place any thermometers in the currently unoccupied reaches? It appears not. So BLM has no idea how high the temperatures are in the streams that are currently unfit for trout to live in. (DEIS 3-40). The FEIS lacks substantial analysis of the cumulative impacts of resuming grazing in burned watersheds, or of activities on the Forest Service lands that threaten the upstream portion of all these bull trout watersheds. The FEIS is silent on which sections of streams have lost beaver dams, and how has this impacted hydrology, perennial flows, and aquatic species persistence?

Various parts of the RMP, even covering the same topics, appear to be inconsistent and conflicting. FEIS Table D-1 provides bull trout habitat indicators. Table D-3 provides “HC Ratings and Indicators in a degraded Condition for Stream Reaches Containing Special Status Fish”. This table shows little degradation in some areas (date of data is not provided). Yet other Tables – using minimal PFC as a goal, showed problems in the DEIS – Example Table A-58 (East Fork Jarbidge segment a high priority for improvement). Yet the D-3 “netweavered” (Netweaver is some kind of model) Table showed fewer problems. It is really impossible to understand what the situation is, and how positive change will occur. It appears that BLM modeled and re-categorized until problems went away. In fact, in the FEIS, Table D-5 Riparian PFC Ratings does not have the PFC data provided for each reach. Neither does FEIS Table D-3. So they are useless for understanding the current degradation – a full understanding of which must be the basis for development a suitable range of alternatives.

BLM is paralyzed and unable to control grazing impacts caused by politically powerful permittees that it even refuses under Alt IV and now VI to prevent destructive sediment-producing cattle trailing and hillslope erosion caused by Brackett trailing across the East Fork Jarbidge River through bull trout critical habitat, redband trout habitats, and a campground/recreation site– when in fact **there is a road and bridge** that the cattle could readily be herded across. Significant loss of the unstable, cattle-trampled banks apparently will continue for the next 20 years. Specific Alt MAs allow such herding to occur for the next 20 years!

The ARMs section discusses Watershed Analysis, and Monitoring and Adaptive Management. No information on the results of any watershed analysis is provided. No valid watershed NEPA analysis can be conducted until BLM provides much more

information on soils, soil erosion, microbiotic crusts, intermittent and ephemeral drainages, sideslope stability and cover, and vegetative conditions in watersheds. This is necessary so that the degree and severity of risks associated with continued grazing or other allocations under the FEIS RMP can be understood.

The monitoring section provides no basis for any required protective or corrective actions to occur, required timely scheduled monitoring to understand thresholds/adverse changes or prevent further losses, or specific triggered actions such as removal of livestock, five years or more of rest, etc. Understanding what kind of “adaptive” action will occur is impossible in the morass of the RMP. Essentially – nothing, really, is required to occur.

BLM in the DEIS referred to a 1997 (now 16 year old Watershed Analysis) that the BLM couldn't be bothered to update (see now FEIS A-118 to A-119). This analysis pre-dated Bull Trout ESA listing for the Jarbidge DPS. The reference to this document highlights the need for the BLM to analyze cumulative impacts of livestock grazing – caused by the same BLM lands permittee herds that also graze on the shared Forest watershed. These herds, and this same very small number of permittees has a large-scale disturbance and degradation footprint that affects populations of bull trout, redband trout, as well as sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and other wildlife over a huge land area in this region.

Affected important, sensitive and ESA-listed populations on the Forest are inter-connected and shared with BLM lands. BLM must examine the impacts and use levels of Forest grazing, livestock facilities such as the many pipelines, fence densities in grazed sagebrush lands, fire effects, inter-connected roading and use and other activities. It must address all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts. No modern day NEPA analysis of grazing impacts has occurred on the Forest. The Forest prepared a general programmatic “Rangeland EIS”. It was based on a grazing pamphlet and other industry-centered management paradigms (Dietz and others). It collected ecological information, and tried to set up an uncertain “adaptive management” monitoring scheme on top of the gray literature range claims. That EIS has been withdrawn for many years - due to serious flaws in analysis.

The Forest has also pursued piecemeal livestock facilities, with further industrialization of sagebrush habitats, and shifting of impacts onto already degraded intermittent stream areas and critical sage-grouse habitats. Piecemeal water developments have occurred in bull trout and redband trout watersheds under DNAs and CEs. Eight miles of new fence sliced through many sagebrush habitats under a CE—despite the Forest grazed areas and sage-grouse habitats already having a heavy load and high density of fencing just like the BLM lands do. A large-scale fire occurred in the Forest in 2008, the Slide Rock fire. This also altered the Baseline for what had been thought to be a secure bull trout population in the Wilderness. However, now this bull trout population is exposed to significant bank erosion sedimentation, and long stretches with little shading of waters. Thus, the Baseline changed - including the Baseline in upstream watersheds of the BLM RMP area. The very same cattle herds that move back and forth - and where exceedance of Forest standards, if the Forest actually applies management is to trigger livestock removal – which means movement onto or through the BLM lands. The BLM failed to consider and

update its analysis in the FEIS.

DEIS Volume 3, A-47 showed that the Time Frame for change or actions (like maintain or improve 70% to PFC ...) was the life of plan --- **20 years!** There are no milestones to be met at five years (BLM used to say that PFC would be attained in five years in most instances), ten years, etc. There is no analysis to show that this slow pace will sustain viable populations of native biota, or if this relatively low goal of improvement is even attainable under a series of near-status quo disturbance alternatives, especially with the added stressor of climate change. There is no real analysis of the adverse impacts of climate change, the timing and severity of grazing disturbances on BLM and Forest lands, roading impacts and other direct, indirect or cumulative impacts that may impede progress or attainment. Nor of climate change (higher temperatures, less perennial flow more violent runoff, increased cheatgrass, etc.), including taking into account the abject failure of the FEIS to address and buffer climate change effects on watersheds and native biota and other uses of the public lands.

DEIS Volume 2, 4-95 showed that there is no real difference in impacts on aquatic species between Alternatives 1, 4 and 5 - without any scientific analysis and real basis for understanding why these alternatives were structured in this manner. This now continues with the FEIS. See FEIS 2-399-402, with effects of Alt VI being indecipherable but largely allowing even worse conditions based on minimal PFC than the other Alts.

In efforts to downplay any removal/reduction of livestock - BLM falsely claimed that “the increased emphasis on passive restoration could result in fewer short-term impacts to water quality and slower rates of recovery for 303d listed streams of the other alternatives”. BLM used its own ridiculous and purposeful construction of ALT V that omits any active restoration so that the claim can be made that Alt V would be worse than Alt IV! It is a set-up to bias outcomes towards the Preferred Alternative, and these type of schemes continue in the FEIS.

So, the BLM essentially claims that recovery - if livestock were removed – would be slower than if BLM took bulldozers in a stream and bulldozed some rocks on to a portion of a bank (active restoration) - while at the same time continuing to allow cattle to trample banks and fish redds without mandatory measurable standards of use. BLM minimizing fair analysis of the effectiveness of passive recovery is typical of the extreme livestock industry bias that pervades all aspects of the analysis in the FEIS RMP. All of these analyses must be redone – and based on ecological science and industry accountability, not the desires of ranchers and range staff to maintain status quo or higher amounts of degradation so that a tiny number of ranchers are not inconvenienced.

Appendix D describes pool frequency, width, depth, temperatures, and conditions for functioning. Yet there is no clear management path in the FEIS to attain or make real progress on these desired conditions.

Thus, the FEIS and its alternatives are not sufficient to provide effective conservation and recovery for the Jarbidge bull trout DPS. We Protest the RMP failings as described above.

Herbicide/Pesticide Use Concerns – SEIS Is Required

We Protest the inadequate baseline, analysis and alternatives related to herbicide and pesticide use – including amounts and types of herbicides under the FEIS alternatives, and their direct indirect and cumulative effects –including drift, degradates, breakdown products, residues, contamination of soils and water, effects on human health and TES species, etc.

Since BLM proposes extreme levels of use of grazing disturbance (fuels, TNR, gross overstocking in the proposed Livestock AUM allocation) and herbicide “tools”, there must be a detailed analysis of potential serious effects to aquatic species, and non-target upland species as well, and certain, clear and effective minimization and mitigation measures. This includes cumulative effects.

The very high level of livestock use and harmful allocations are likely to greatly increase herbicide use, drift, contamination, and adverse impacts to non-target species. Where and when has BLM sprayed herbicides in the past? Please provide mapping and science-based analysis of impacts to native biota and effectiveness (or lack thereof). Please do the same for post-fire “treatments”. There has been very little success in preventing cheatgrass, despite Oust, Plateau and their ilk having doused Jarbidge lands. Rabbitbrush has been eliminated in many areas, as well – and prevented from resprouting. We have repeatedly observed non-target perennials and even shrubs killed or weakened by BLM herbicide use including in the Jarbidge. We are very concerned that BLM’s industry-biased FEIS alternatives and massive treatments over-emphasize and rely extensively on unassessed and unquantified chemical use – with likely very significant adverse impacts not just to upland species but also aquatic species as runoff occurs. A Supplemental EIS must be prepared on the issue of the amount of herbicide use the Proposed Action will spawn, and the adverse effects to the environment this will cause. How much herbicide will be used? Where? Which herbicide or combination? What are the potential effects – including based on all the new science since the long-outdated 2007 assessments (which themselves were based on older data). For example, how will LEPA or other rare plant pollinators be harmed? Sagebrush recovery? Bird eggs and nests? Water quality and native amphibians and fish? Given the extreme amount of weed-promoting disturbance that the FEIS Proposed Action would inflict, BLM must prepare an update to its Weed/Veg Treatment EIS.

BLM has failed to provide reasoned and detailed analysis of the success of any of its post-fire or other herbiciding in controlling cheatgrass or other weeds in the Jarbidge, and failed to map and analyze effectiveness and outcomes.

In addition, where and when has APHIS sprayed grasshoppers and Mormon crickets? Which watersheds? How has this increased? How do current degraded land conditions in the JFO contribute to expanded rancher claims of native insect “problems”? What chemicals are used and what are the effects – not only to aquatic biota including through drift, but also to the critical insect supply for sage-grouse, Columbia sharp-tailed grouse,

migratory birds, etc.?

Much more detailed information is necessary to understand impacts on all upland species, as well as aquatic species – including Snake River white sturgeon, Shoshone sculpin, and rare aquatic invertebrates?

We Protest the lack of much more detailed analysis of direct indirect and cumulative impacts.

Alternatives, Planning Actions, and Restoration Flaws

BLM never provides a clear plan for conservation, and application of both passive and active restoration under a range of science-based alternatives that comply with FLPMA, the ESA, its own special status species policies, and its own Conservation Plans for sagebrush species. BLM must balance both in ecologically sensitive alternatives to conserve and restore sage-grouse, LEPA and other critical habitats. A careful and coherent combination of both forms of restoration must be used to recover sage-grouse or to protect any of the important Values/Resources of the public lands in the RMP. A SEIS is essential.

In Scoping, WWP submitted an Alternative in a format/template style that BLM required at the time. We submitted many comments that relied on both active and passive restoration and a conservation-centered management paradigm. Yet our concerns were not fully considered in the limited and industry-centered near-status quo alternatives of the flawed and inadequate DEIS. We had wrongly believed that BLM understood the severe conflicts with sage-grouse and other native species persistence, watershed health, etc. that current land uses posed, and the inability of the Jarbidge lands to withstand new threats from more development and intensive use, and would act to properly protect resources, **We were wrong**. The AMS showed clearly that there were severe problems, and wildlife, native plant communities, etc. faced a crisis in the Jarbidge. The ink was scarcely dry on the AMS when BLM began back-pedaling. The data on which the AMS was based pre-dated the Murphy Fire. Now we have a FEIS that is a throwback to a grazing-take-all mindset, and worse in many ways than the existing 1980s RMP.

At the time we tried to submit an Alternative, BLM made us follow the sparse Alternative framework that Jarbidge BLM had provided. BLM then sent one request for clarification that seemed designed to further limit and whittle down an already exceedingly sparse framework. Then, BLM did not even deign to analyze WWP's Alternative as an Alternative, and asked for no further clarification. We were not allowed not even attend the various Team meetings. BLM provided no requests for any expansion of the alternative, or development of the MAs or other components that it went on to use in the DEIS. During this time period, WWP repeatedly sought to meet with BLM staff to discuss ACECs and other components of this Alternative, but BLM would not allow this. Thus, BLM violated the Settlement as well as slammed the door on a reasonable range of alternatives to address the threats facing sage-grouse and other native biota across the Jarbidge lands and waters.

The interaction with BLM related to the RMP were as follows:

A general Scoping Meeting; Several meetings with Attorneys and the livestock industry present where BLM told us some of what was occurring with the RMP. During and following these meetings, WWP expressed concerns about the direction the RMP appeared to be going, its lack of effectiveness and a cohesive strategy and alternative for sage-grouse perpetuation, the confusion of the vegetation info and FRCC, and many other issues. We expressed these concerns both in the meetings and in follow-up e-mails. The RMP process continued to change for the worse.

BLM's version of collaboration was to shutter itself and an anonymous Team behind closed doors, and develop an RMP with a range of alternatives that appear based on a mindset /false assumptions that there is endless time to waste before any meaningful conservation measures for sage-grouse and other imperiled or depleted Jarbidge public lands values and resources occur.

The range and nature of the alternatives appear to be largely a throwback to some rosy 1980s period when sagebrush was abundant, sage-grouse and other wildlife populations were much more numerous, cheatgrass was very limited, recreational use was minimal, and grazing conflicts were of little concern.

Throughout the FEIS process, BLM never showed if it met any objectives of its old plan. BLM must clearly explain and map all the allocations and GOMAs (or their equivalent) of its old RMP, and show the public what has been met, and what has not been met. It must explain what occurred in a SEIS. This is necessary to take a hard look at the No Action alternative, as well. BLM must include a detailed analysis of fish, wildlife, habitat and population, soils, vegetation, watershed, water quality, recreation and all other goals, objectives, MAs or the equivalent of the old Plan and demonstrate how they were or were not met, and provide causal factors for these failures.

The FEIS has a greatly inadequate evaluation of the No Action alternative. The Old Plan in some elements related to sage-grouse and some other wildlife species actually provides more conservation requirements than the very harmful uncertain and loose FEIS Proposed Action.

There is no adequate analysis of the shortcomings of the No Action Alternative, and since many parts of most of the "new" alternatives are very similar to what is occurring now - or even more harmful - this must be revealed and analyzed in detail.

BLM must provide data on the actual use and utilization that has been occurring in each pasture under various stocking levels and the timeliness and methods for any utilization monitoring, effects of TNR use, native residual grass height that has remained under grazing schemes, the degree of cheatgrass and other weed advance under the level and manner of livestock use, how minimal the rest for fire rehabs has been and the minimal recovery standards applied before grazing was again imposed, microbotic crust losses or

degradation, forb recovery or losses, failed or poorly recovered fire and other rehab efforts and their locations, etc. The degree and severity of impacts of existing uses on habitats and species suffering declines must be clearly laid out – so a reader can understand how the new RMP would change matters – if at all. A SEIS must be prepared to do this.

We Protest the FEIS failure to address all of these serious concerns.

FEIS Monitoring, Implementation, Mitigation Deficiencies

The FEIS Monitoring and Implementation strategy (and woefully deficient mitigation) are inadequate to ensure compliance with the FRH, conservation, enhancement and restoration of GRSG and other rare and important species habitats, etc. See FEIS Sect 2.92-392-395. LUPs are supposed to establish intervals for monitoring. This relies on PFC, and that it will use MIM to support this. Actions will occur “as available”. There is no certainty of actions occurring, or progress being made. There is no certainty that further extirpation and loss will be prevented.

There is no clear effective Plan with clear monitoring requirements and milestones laid out for conserving sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, redband trout, LEPA, and monitoring to ensure this occurs. There are no annual, periodic or other milestones for moving toward goals/objectives/MAs.

We Protest these FEIS deficiencies.

Additional FEIS Water Quality Problems

Under this Plan, BLM has no obligation to do water quality monitoring. This runs counter to the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health (FRH). A full evaluation of shortcomings and limitations of MIM methods must be provided. BLM must monitor for *E. coli* and other bacteria on a required and specific schedule associated with livestock and other use impacts.

BLM must identify all causes of exceedances, and examine all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts - including activities on private lands.

Specific measurable annual standards of grazing, browse, and trampling use must be applied to all riparian areas. If at any time during period of grazing use, these standards are met, livestock must be removed from the area.

The RMP refers to the Idaho Pollution Abatement plan – and does not explain that this is entirely voluntary. It lists BMPs. But a list of BMPs does not show how management would occur, and how BLM would achieve significant positive change. BLM must explain how it is going to meet these standards and lay out a clear plan to do so.

The DEIS stated that it would “Consider new water developments and water development

projects” where impacts could be mitigated, and this continues in the FEIS. Where does data ever show impacts of water developments can be mitigated? Where and how has this ever been done in the Jarbidge? How does BLM make up for reduced natural spring flows from developments? Or the impacts of the severe compaction and plant community degradation associated with placing troughs in upland habitats?

Please provide a full and detailed analysis of how effective BLM has been in mitigating water development effects on ecological processes, sage-grouse habitats and populations, pygmy rabbit habitats and populations, and other important biota in the JFO. BLM can’t even act to make the ranchers remove unlawful water developments that have sprung up across the landscape – let alone somehow “mitigate”. How does BLM take cumulative impacts of developments into account when “mitigating”? There has never yet been a full and detailed analysis of the gigantic Footprint of the water developments - and all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts in the Jarbidge. The RMP lacks information on flows and changes inflows over time – despite extensive WWP comments on the need of for this essential information.

Even under the somewhat less destructive alternative, BLM’s analysis DEIS Chapter 4, 4-197 states “estimated use levels in the Sagebrush Sea ACEC would be 10% to 20%, less than in other alternatives”. Yet BLM provides no information on the levels of use that have been occurring in riparian areas at present. BLM proposes to continue livestock grazing in large areas of the ACEC. BLM plans on applying no mandatory annual measurable standards of use to riparian areas – why else would it use some vague reference to upland utilization as the linchpin of its riparian impacts analysis? How does BLM plan to live up to the claims of 10 to 20% utilization – including for riparian areas? There is no certain and clear path laid out in the RMP, and no mandatory measurable standards of use. We fear that BLM will apply no mandatory requirements – and will instead rely on even more barbed wire fence mazes that are damaging to native wildlife – and that serve only to shift and intensify livestock damage in other areas.

There is no commitment to significantly recover degraded ecological conditions and ensure water quality compliance with the Clean Water Act and FRH.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Worse Environmental Conditions Will Result from the FEIS – No Hard Look At Environmental Consequences of FEIS

The limited range of Alternatives takes a degraded status quo and perpetuates it, or lets it become worse, over time. What management actions are being taken now? The same laundry list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) – are what is occurring now, and is actually contributing to the ecological degradation? For example, salting/and the proliferation of supplement feeding that BLM has allowed now result in zones of intensive livestock trailing and slope disturbance in watersheds including in and near intermittent drainages. Each of the now several hundred or likely thousands of supplement sites are severely trampled and a site for weed infestation - especially

flammable cheatgrass- followed by outward spread and transport by livestock. Livestock industry trucks drive back and forth filling large tubs of the supplement that is now used in large amounts because of the depleted plant communities. Simplot and some other allotments on a near daily basis place substances in big plastic buckets – so this is tantamount to feeding and a symptom of lack of sustainable perennial forage to support livestock use. This equates to supplemental feeding. Ravens, and other nest predators, are attracted to the supplements and zones of severe livestock disturbance. Soil erosion and loss into drainages occurs. BLM has allowed the ranchers to incrementally convert the public lands into an intensive farm-like setting –with predictable flammable cheatgrass spread, and loss of critical habitat components through uncontrolled use of supplements that largely continues under the FEIS – with unassessed direct, indirect and cumulative adverse impacts.

We Protest this.

Visual Resource Index (VRI) and Visual Resource Management (VRM) Biases

DEIS at 3-61 described three steps in Ratings. A, B, C. From BLM’s verbal description of this in an RMP meeting, WWP learned that the Jarbidge BLM used an analysis method that interjected a strong bias against shrubsteppe habitats as having many visual values. The methodology that BLM described using has inherent bias against sage-steppe as a visually pleasant landscape, where visual intrusions are very evident over long distances. This nonsense continues in the FEIS. Since much of the JFO has no water and no “unusual” landforms – it was written off. BLM claims it relied on adjacent scenery, and Scarcity, and looked at modification. BLM ignores the fact it can use VRM to limit any further intrusions, and to aid in restoration and sage-grouse conservation efforts. BLM must use appropriate VRM standards to conserve, enhance and restore visually sensitive sage-grouse, too. We believe this must be done, and a greatly revised Visual analysis occur in a SEIS. See FEIS M-149 absurdly claiming Low sensitivity for visual resources, and M-148 claiming Low scenic quality for nearly every site outside the old WSA lands and the Jarbidge foothills – and this appears primarily based on the old RMP.

The first sentence in the DEIS RMP Visual discussion stated: “the Jarbidge ...is known for its unique geology of broad, gently rolling plateau lands with deeply incised rivers, which provide a variety of scenic values”. Yet in the flawed VRM process, BLM discarded the visual qualities of the vast rolling plateau areas. This of course was so that the visual categories in the range of deficient alternatives would allow all manner of harmful livestock facility, energy and other development to continue to occur.

BLM has a responsibility that scenic values are fully and fairly considered, before allowing uses that may have negative impacts. So BLM got around this by just writing off the scenic values over vast areas under ALL alternatives so that it wouldn’t have to protect the lands from existing and increased grazing industrialization, dustbowl-like scenes created by its proposed TNR and Fuels grazing, energy developments, and other intrusions. This is a throwback to pre-FLPMA days.

Since the broad rolling plateau over such a vast area is part of the unique landscape of the JFO – how can BLM then turn around and claim it has no visual appeal, and proceed to impose VRM III and IV over vast areas? The whole visual analysis must be redone, and the context must be taken into account, as well as the high sensitivity of wide open sagebrush landscapes and species like sage-grouse as well as recreational visitors -to visual intrusions. Cattle troughs stick out for vast distances, for example – a combination of the metal trough and broad weed zones typically surrounding them are blights on the landscape. The Air force Emitter and No Drop sites are visible for vast distances, intruding into scenic wild land settings.

There is a significant public concern for pleasing scenic quality and a growing appreciation for sweeping sagebrush landscapes, vast vistas with blue skies and clouds that appear to be almost touching the horizon, and cloud shadows moving across the rolling sagebrush plateau lands.

Visual intrusions in sagebrush habitats are increasingly known to adversely affect sensitive bird species. These include sage-grouse that may avoid tall objects or other visual intrusions. Plus ravens and other nest predators may visually key in on disruptions and contrasts/developments in the landscape as an aid in finding bird nests, for example. Visually disruptive structures in sagebrush habitats may also provide elevated perches for avian predators. See USFWS GRSG WBP Finding 2010, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011.

In order to sustain recreational uses, sage-grouse and other wildlife, it is essential that nearly all lands be managed as VRM I. But BLM assigned VRM 1 only to lands where a “management decision has been made” (whatever that means). There could be really degraded lands – but because a decision had been made – it receives high priority, even though the visual quality is not different from immediately adjacent lands? This makes no sense. How does a management decision per se change the Visual Quality – say from I to IV? This just proves the point that VRM is used by BLM to manage to protect lands – or in the case of this EIS – to allow all manner of industrial development to occur over vast areas (as in Alt IV and VI, even in Alt V with vast areas Zoned III and IV in that Alt as a poison pill). See Maps FEIS M-41 through 48.

DEIS at 3-62 stated that scenic quality, sensitivity, and distance zone maps are used. Well, the sagebrush landscape is highly sensitive to disturbance. Disturbance would be visible over a significant distance – so rolling back the disturbance must be a priority for management. We refer BLM to the Lemhi LUP amendment, the Owyhee RMP, and other visual analyses that acted to protect lands, including some areas in a disturbed condition like the Silver City region, or all lands in two miles of main roads in the case of the Lemhi to prevent further intrusions in viewsheds for Lewis and Clark visitors – and not because of any particular “purity” or scenery in that spot. BLM certainly can use VRM to “Zone” lands to protect values from further degradation.

Plus, when BLM greatly revises the range of alternatives in a SEIS, and develops an actual science-based Plan to conserve sage-grouse in this RMP process, it will have to remove and reduce the existing visual disturbances of fences, pipelines and other

livestock infrastructure. This must be factored in to understand the proper visual designation under all alternatives.

BLM's shortchanging of the Visual Setting of the Jarbidge enables widespread continued destruction of visual settings, and thus further severe habitat intrusions and reductions in recreational activities. There is no analysis of how far transmission line, water tanks, etc. may be seen – to serve as a baseline for understanding effects, and the density of visual intrusions at present.

BLM will not be able to conserve and recover sage-grouse habitat under VRM III and VRM IV designations/allocations.

BLM can use VRM to “manage” lands. BLM has not even provided the public with its obviously flawed and biased Visual Report. It continues to be absent in the RMP FEIS appendices. We requested that BLM redo its entire Visual analysis with staff from the DC office and credible retired agency recreation personnel. The excuses in writing off large areas of the landscape here remind us of how BLM's old Idaho Wilderness Inventories cast aside nearly all sagebrush lands – through BLM slapping labels of “monotony” or “no visitor group screening” on sagebrush landscapes - millions of acres of desert wild lands were discarded from WSA consideration. The FEIS is a throwback to those days.

WWP provided BLM with an Alternative fit into BLM's limited spreadsheet framework. We proposed VRM 1. This was ignored. Some of the alternatives would even allow large ACEC areas to be managed under VRM III - as in Alt. V, as poison pills to bias the agency's rigged alternatives comparisons.

The bottom line is that BLM's range of alternatives, and the VRM Categories applied to vast land areas, show that BLM applies little value to sagebrush steppe – either in daylight or for darkness of night skies.

We Protest BLM forsaking necessary sound visual studies, analysis suitable for sagebrush landscapes, and forsaking more protective designations in the flawed FEIS, as described above.

Noise Measures, Dark Night Skies Measures Are Insufficient to Protect Recreational Values and Uses, Wildlife Habitats and Populations, and Other Resources

Science related to sage-grouse and other native wildlife increasingly show sensitivity to noise and other disturbances. BLM ignored Scoping and other information we submitted on the need to fully consider these concerns, and also the recreational value of quiet and darkness of night skies free of light pollution on public lands. BLM must include much more protective measures in the RMP to address these issues, conserve sage-grouse, migrating birds (see for example information on lights causing communication tower collisions by migrating birds) and provide for habitat security needs of many important and sensitive species – as well as enjoyable wild land recreation. The loose uncertain

measures of the FEIS are greatly insufficient.

We Protest these deficiencies.

FEIS Grazing Flaws - RMP's Over-Allocation and Broad AUM Range Uncertainty Promote Continued Conflict

BLM artificially constrained analysis of grazing effects and alternatives development. FEIS 4-661 shows that BLM only considered two factors as “Indicators” in its analysis of livestock grazing effects: Availability of Forage and Restrictions on infrastructure. This ignores the serious habitat **disturbance** and chronic degradation caused by grazing in sage-grouse and other sensitive species habitats (nest and egg disturbance, increasing mesopredators due to carrion, artificial upland water, etc.). It ignores the adverse impacts of livestock grazing and the RMP allocation on the quality and composition of the habitat for sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, riparian species, migratory birds, bighorn sheep, and a host of other values of the public lands. See Braun 1998, Connelly et al. 2000, Connelly et al. 2004, Braun 2006, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, Manier et al. 2013.

FEIS Table 4-322 is labeled Acres and Forage Available for Livestock by Alt. This is based on conjecture - with a wide uncertain bloated AUM range. It is related to forage only (no matter how low quality and how much supplement may need to be fed to keep the cows alive or how many weeds and sensitive species losses eking out this “forage” causes), ignoring the many serious conflicts of grazing disturbance with TES species needs, recreational uses and enjoyment including in Wilderness, and general hiking and camping as well. This approach is the RCI and Simplot EAs, *déjà vu*.

DEIS Table 4-282 at 4-595, “Forage Available for Livestock Grazing Due to Veg Treatments by Alternatives” showed how the Fuels treatments were really forage treatments in disguise. The AUM potential ranges are great. This Table also serves to show that three of the alternatives would potentially increase grazing (I II, III). It provides a basis for understanding that the complicated and obtuse Fuels discussions and “tools in the toolbox” for Fuels are aimed at very significantly INCREASING stocking rates. Alt VI is based on this flawed scheme.

In fact, what the RMP trumpets as an Alternative to address Fuels concerns, Alternative III (much of the worst parts again show up in Alt VI) would make a bad situation even worse – by increasing the very type of communities that burn with great frequency in the Jarbidge – the densely planted perennial exotic grass and other coarse grasses devoid of shrubs. III would greatly increase grazing using Fuels as an excuse. Example: Long Butte fire 2010, followed by a similar huge fire in 2012 which a mere two years later burned the same lands in the opposite direction –through vast areas of BLM’s so-called “fuelbreak” dense cwg and fire rehab seedings.

This Table also provides broad AUM ranges that will promote conflict, constant rancher pushes for TNR, and more facilities and vast acreages of dense coarse grass seedings.

BLM must set a specific number.

DEIS at 2-139, Alt IV. Allocates forage in broad and unspecific ways under no clear method and this is continued in the FEIS, as discussed below. LG-IV-A-2 allocates 75% to 85% native perennial grass to watershed and wildlife; 70 to 80% non-native perennial grass to watershed and wildlife. In having a broad range, BLM is maximizing uncertainty and enabling a certain outcome and relentless conflict.

BLM allows spring grazing – where utilization measurements that the whole forage estimation is based on do not properly track the amount of use because grass is continuously growing and being r-grazed. Spring grazing poses severe conflicts with nesting sage-grouse (see Braun 2006), pygmy rabbits with kits in shallow natal burrows, nesting migratory birds, and other concerns. Such serious species need conflicts are not taken into account in this paper allocation of “forage” for the long gone 800 lb. calf-less cow. Spring grazing also poses severe threats to the health of native plants, and is one of the reasons that native species are so depleted in Jarbidge understories. See Anderson 1991, BLM Tech. Bull., Manier et al. 2013. Would removal of spring grazing reduce livestock stocking by 25% or much more?

BLM cannot properly allocate vegetation production unless it incorporates ALL of the necessary information into determining carrying capacity and suitability, including conflicts with sustainability of native vegetation composition, function, and structure and sage-grouse and other rare species needs. BLM’s Table doesn’t take into account the range of actions needed to provide for sage-grouse and other rare species - habitat security, space, timing, removal of harmful fences/water developments, etc. Or to protect bull trout, redband trout and other watersheds.

Under these simplistic forage-only analyses, will there be double, triple livestock numbers in the fall – if spring and winter grazing are limited? If so, how will this impact resources?

BLM must manage the habitats – not chop up its sage-grouse analysis based on existing barbed wire. But this is exactly what it will do if Planning is left to allotment-level actions.

FEIS Table 4-323 shows 125,000 annual acres, 60,000 non-native understory – but is this based on the old 2006 ESI? If so, the non-native understory has expanded. What is the baseline, and the amount of cheatgrass that triggers its detection here? BLM must provide current and adequate mapping of cheatgrass, which is known to be expanding greatly in the Owyhee uplands. See Peterson 2006, for example, also across arid sagebrush lands see Comer et al. 2012, Reisner Diss. 2010, Reisner et al. 2013. The percentage composition BLM used is also not provided. We Protest the lack of current valid baseline info on cheatgrass and other exotic understory species. We are very concerned BLM may have reverted back to the old RCI or Simplot “forage” estimates and flawed methodologies.

Under Alt 6, the non-native understory would INCREASE. See Table 4-329. It is impossible to understand how BLM arrives at the claimed changes in non-native grasses, and the range of assumptions that were used it is also not revealed of highly flawed NRCS Ecosites with often wildly inflated production levels in idealized or modeled communities were used. The Idaho NRCS Ecosite models are fraught with scientific flaws – including use of woefully short unsupportable fire and disturbance intervals used to develop models.

Further it appears that the forage allocations are based on ZERO rest from grazing disturbance. Under these assumptions, would every pasture be grazed every year and stocked to the gills?

BLM rigs alternatives comparisons. BLM artificially manipulates suppression acres to make Alt VI seem better than Alts 1-IV. See FEIS Table 4-680. There is no reason on earth that full suppression would not be maximized in Alt IV, for example. A SEIS must be prepared that does not attempt to artificially rig alternatives so BLM can twist analyses to try to claim that a high and harmful grazing stocking alternative (VI) is “better” for grouse or wildlife than Alt IV for example. We Protest the FEIS forage data and analysis flaws, and Protest the failure of BLM to present a reasonable range of science-based alternatives, rather than sneaking around trying to set things up so it can warp analysis to favor the livestock industry and extractive interests.

Please review WWP comments on GRSB ID-SW MT GRSB DEIS and NE NV-CA GRSB DEIS as support for these concerns. Also Manier et al, 2013.

We Protest the harmful FEIS actions as described above.

Sage Grouse Needs Must Be Basis for any Grazing or Other Allocations and Alternatives - and The FEIS Fails to Do This

BLM must prepare a coherent Plan to conserve habitats and populations. It must prioritize areas and clearly identify what must be done to preserve and restore habitats. This must then be incorporated into determining carrying capacity, capability, conflicts and suitability for any continued livestock use. This then must form the basis of any allocation. The RMP fails to do this. We Protest this.

Slickspot Peppergrass Needs Must Be Basis for Any Grazing Allocations and Alternatives – and the FEIS Fails to do This

Alt IV was supposed to address slickspot peppergrass concerns. We asked why BLM chose Alternative IV A over IV B. BLM stated that it chose 4-A (the smaller size)--- because BLM didn't want to change pasture fences! This has nothing to do with conserving species (now listed as Threatened) - and everything to do with maximizing the status quo for politically powerful ranchers. BLM must remove grazing and trampling disturbance from all slickspot peppergrass habitats – the species was not listed at the time this effort to slice away habitats occurred and will be in the near future. We incorporate

our comments on the 2014 FWS Proposed Listing Rule and the Proposed rule into this Protest.

BLM has not conducted a necessary Habitat and Population analysis to ensure viability of slickspot peppergrass through preservation of habitats and restoration of degraded or fragmented areas of potential habitat.

BLM must provide detailed mapping of all potential habitat, as well as concrete plans for habitat conservation and effective and certain restoration – and this includes grazing removal and livestock facility de-commissioning and some road removals in the affected slickspot and other TES species areas.

BLM must tie existing occupied habitat areas together and re-connect habitats. It must provide for expansive pollinator habitat as well, and constrain livestock grazing, herbicide impacts and other adverse pollinator plant actions. How can BLM maximize continued existence and recovery? An expanded range of alternatives must be provided in a SEIS. We Protest BLMs failure to use current science and make reasonable changes and cuts in livestock use. For example, since this RMP began long ago, the issue of harvester ant LEPA seed predation has arisen. Harvester ants thrive in livestock-disturbed landscapes, and these impacts are unassessed in the FEIS, and will be exacerbated under Alt VI.

We Protest the great failure of the FEIS analysis and alternatives to effectively conserve LEPA habitats.

ADDITIONAL JARBIDGE RMP/FEIS PROTEST POINTS

More Serious Livestock Grazing FEIS Deficiencies and Conflicts

In its meager range of grazing and resource extraction maximization Alternatives, BLM appears to have forgotten the degraded conditions, severe adverse Footprint of livestock facilities and associated roading, increased cheatgrass, loss of microbiotic crusts, depletion of understories, simplified and limited sagebrush habitats as described in the 2007 Jarbidge AMS. The Murphy Fire then followed the AMS and now Long Butte and others have continued to destroy vast areas of habitats.

The old JRMP's use of a range of high AUMs (160,000 to 260,000) has been disastrous. It has resulted in constant tension with ranchers always pushing for more intensive grazing and more facilities, BLM placating the rancher grass greed with post-fire seeding rehab of dense large coarse grasses that have caused even more fires, as well as the TNR boondoggle.

The RMP Management Common to All Alternatives section (DEIS 2-125-2-126, now FEIS 2.8.3.1 and other similar sections across alternatives of the FEIS) contains numerous extremely harmful provisions, including:

The RMP fails to require that any required annual measurable standards of livestock use

be applied. The wording of LC-CA-MA-1 is “Implement **adaptive management** grazing use indicators to meet resource and special designation area objectives”. The, “grazing indicators include” – under which utilization, bank and soil surface alteration, and “other indicators” of unknown type. There is no binding requirement that any indicator be applied. We have been through the ever-shifting use of various terms (here in the Jarbidge it is now GICs) to avoid ever applying required standards. In the Owyhee there have been “AICs” and other acronyms. Plus, in its response to DEIS comments, BLM tries to backpedal from adaptive management. So it is impossible to understand just how lands would be managed in this inconsistent analysis.

There is no adequate framework applied for applying scientifically defensible adaptive management. Specific triggers, sideboards and required actions must be laid down, and concrete actions based on science that are certain to be effective must be required and applied – for example, 10 year closure of degraded riparian areas to bring about some recovery. Nothing in the RMP is specified as required. Ranchers will claim riparian trampling, conservative levels of upland use that provide 9 inches of nesting cover, and other controls on livestock use are “not feasible” – and under this flawed RMP, BLM will not be required to apply this. Under all Alternatives, standards in GOMAs must be mandatory, measurable and based on current ecological science. Specific actions must be laid out to be taken if use or other standards are not met.

BLM refers to GICS “grazing use indicators” and but these are not specified and are left up in the air. There is no certainty that any proper criteria will be applied and will be required to be met.

FEIS 2-363 provides a laundry list of an uncertain “toolbox”. The toolbox is really just typical elements of having cows and sheep on public lands - – with no certainty of what will be applied or required. See Manier et al. 2013 BER review of failed grazing systems in relation sage-grouse expose this list and the foreseeable use levels that will result for what they are – very harmful and demonstrated failing actions that will never effectively protect sage-grouse, watersheds, resource sustainability of the public lands in the Jarbidge.

There is no evidence that grazing in spring on shrubs improves browse. It destroys spring nesting habitat for sage-grouse by reducing sage cover. In the “common to alternatives” section –mule deer appear to be given more importance than sage-grouse. Mule deer can subsist in more degraded habitats than sage-grouse.

Big game habitat and restoration receive attention in FEIS Maps M-17 “Big Game Winter Range and Restoration Areas”. How was this defined?

There is only one map for sage-grouse, i.e. FEIS Map 25. This mapping omits considerable areas where the public has been promised sagebrush habitat restoration and large sums have been spent on it – but livestock grazing was rapidly re-imposed, thus ruining recovery chances. Millions of dollars in rehab have been ground to dust and wasted by the failure of BLM to control livestock use levels and provide adequate rest.

Despite the SSA, BLM has provided no mapping and coherent planning for conserving sage-grouse – yet has laid out mapping identifying habitats for both winter range and restoration for mule deer. BLM then uses this planning to overlay more restrictive mineral leasing, geothermal and other actions on mule deer habitats than for grouse.

BLM doesn't even provide mapping that identifies crucial seasonal habitats - such as winter habitats for sage-grouse –such as in the 71 Desert Brackett-grazed area where BLM has long sought to pretend that sage-grouse are not a very significant concern.

The objective for riparian areas is to “move toward objectives”- not even to ensure significant progress and to achieve goals and objectives. Even controls on trailing are qualified with an anything-goes “out”- using the terminology “**where practical**”. Such loose terms which make any promise optional pervade the entire FEIS and its BMPs and Appendices.

Range infrastructure: 2.8.3.1 continues the same harmful actions as at present. There is no limitation on salting and the thousands of supplement feeding sites that are accelerating habitat declines and weed invasions. Nothing here guarantees a single livestock facility will ever be removed.

In Alt III 2-135 under Fuels, in the DEIS BLM would modify pasture and allotment boundaries to concentrate livestock for fuels reductions – i.e. inflict extreme grazing disturbance that will promote flammable weeds and contribute to a further downward spiral and ecosystem unraveling in the JFO. Yet BLM staff told us that it relied on existing fence lines in its LEPA Proposals. So altering fences for a Threatened plant species is given lower priority than accommodating cattle for dust bowl fuels projects that are likely to result in even worse cheatgrass and flammable weed problems. This whole Alternative is a hopeless jumble of damaging actions, and like Alts II and VI is not a reasonable alternative.

FEIS ES-17-20 shows, in reality, little difference between land area allocations for grazing. See also FEIS ES-19.

Under the Preferred Alt IV and now VI, the canyons are closed because the cows can't access them. A small Inside Desert ACEC is closed. The Sagebrush Sea ACEC is NOT closed, and must be. No matter how high the degree of wildlife habitat and population sensitivity may be to livestock grazing disturbance, BLM imposes this disturbance almost everywhere – only avoiding the areas livestock cannot access like the deep canyons, the ineffective reference areas and some wildlife tracts.

Under the forage BLM has allocated vegetation without any reasoned consideration of impacts to soils and microbiotic crusts, and a specified plan and actions needed for maintenance and recovery. BLM has not shown that lands can recover when faced with continued grazing use in the face of cheatgrass and other weed expansion, or that restoration can be successful with high stocking rates. This must be demonstrated to ensure conservation of sage-grouse, bull trout watersheds, redband trout watersheds, and

other critical habitats and populations. There is no science-based analysis supporting the allocation acreage numbers.

BLM supposedly allocates fairly similar ranges of vegetation to watershed and wildlife in Alts. Yet these allocations do not ensure 9 inches residual nesting cover, protection of sage-grouse from nesting disturbance by livestock and management activity – i.e. habitat security, or recovery of understory forbs that produce essential insects for sage-grouse chicks, etc.

Our experience with BLM utilization measurements at cherry-picked sites and then only on some species shows that these levels are not typically reached – and in fact the measured utilization has often been lower. This is due to: Flaws and bias in how and where BLM measures utilization, the limited species that utilization is measured on, (see Catlin utilization critique), the failure of BLM to measure repeat utilization on species like small native Poas, the failure of BLM to adequately and timely measure utilization during periods when grasses are growing (fall green-up, early spring, spring). The result is that livestock eating green up typically consume much more than BLM ever measures. We are greatly concerned that BLM is setting up a system to allow what it has been allowing in Interim grazing – not accurately monitoring, ignoring the more depleted areas, and leaving the cows on the land until levels are nearly achieved – no matter how long that means they may remain. This is being done in part through artificial supplement feeding to maximize intense use and disturbance - thus promoting cheatgrass, bur buttercup and other weeds and destroying sage-grouse nesting shrub and grass cover characteristics -over large areas, as in the Brackett Antelope Springs allotment. The bottom line: BLM has been conducting the equivalent of **forage mining as the forage has become less and less palatable**. See WWP comments on recent year AGPs (on cd), and imposing maximizing grazing harm and disturbance on sensitive species and watersheds. BLM has also been allowing twice over grazing, and grazing during spring, so the utilization –on an additive and cumulative level – is actually MUCH greater than the amount BLM measures.

BLM provides a different level for exotic species – but fails to clarify if these levels will apply to entire pastures. Will this be based on a certain percentage of the pasture being exotics, or what basis will be used for determining non-native vs. native pasture? Or is BLM even planning to split use within the already tiny pastures? All sagebrush and restoration habitats including smaller areas must be protected – and not be sacrificed if the majority of the pasture is a seeding.

It's hard to understand how 100% of annual grass production could be allocated to watershed and wildlife – yet BLM claims it will be doing grazing to reduce fuels. And how does BLM plan to keep cows and sheep from eating forbs? Or browsing and breaking sagebrush – especially since trampling, eating and battering sage has contributed to the lack of fire recovery and the loss of necessary structural components for GRSG, pygmy rabbit and other species.

BLM claims it will do this all during the permit allocation process. But the way it would

be done must be specified in detail and with clarity here in the Land Use Plan, and not just scattershot BMPs and empty promises made. The more murky and uncertain the RMP, the more each permit process will be subject to even more political meddling – which has long been rife in the Jarbidge.

These allocations do not adequately provide for significantly reduced allocations through removal of exotic grass seedings, greatly increased sagebrush cover, and other measures essential to conserve sage-grouse.

BLM also allocates 100% of shrub and forb production to wildlife and watershed – yet cows consume significant amounts of shrubs as well as forbs in the JFO. How will BLM prevent cattle from consuming/breaking these - other than by removing use entirely?

BLM may never even reduce AUMs in association with restoration, or for conservation of grouse and other values of the public lands. LG-IV-A-3 “forage available for livestock use would likely change as the RMP is implemented, although allocation percentages would remain the same” FEIS 2-363. The RMP punts to changes in AUMs in the future that would be determined after monitoring (which is inadequate, spotty and uses cherry-picked lower impact sites) and site-specific NEPA analysis through future permit renewal processes”. It also appears that the AUM cuts seen in DEIS Table 4-282 would only occur if vegetation treatments are conducted. If there is no money for veg treatments – will there be no cuts? Is this also the case with the FEIS? This is the strategy the SRBOPA RMP relied on to avoid cutting AUMs in the RMP or allocations. The RMP pretended to be doing something, and in reality on the ground nothing has changed, See for example, Fossil Butte grazing permit renewal. With TNR, it is highly likely use will be intensified in the areas not treated.

Where in the RMP FEIS are stocking rate reductions specified if no or limited restoration occurs? We Commented on the DEIS as follows, and these concerns are even greater under the worse actions of the FEIS (see Section 2.8.3, 2.8.3.1 Livestock Grazing FEIS 2-362 through 2-366):

LG-IV-MA-1. “Utilization would be determined on a case by case basis” to meet Riparian, Fish and Wildlife, other Objectives. Since these other objectives are highly uncertain and unclear, it is impossible to understand what levels would be applied.

LG-IV-MA-2 DEIS, FEIS LG-VI-MA-3 referred to Reserve Common Allotments. Instead of retiring livestock grazing permits so any sound investment in habitat and restoration can occur, BLM would sacrifice lands to continued grazing abuse. We strongly oppose these –and they take taxpayer welfare for public lands ranchers to a whole new level. The RMP even allows this harmful practice in intact native vegetation communities, on top of sage-grouse leks, across PPH, etc.

LG-VI-MA-7 FEIS would allow TNR nearly everywhere. In the extremely fragmented and burned JFO, all remnant sagebrush is critical –yet BLM bases imposition of large herds of livestock and even potential repeated grazing bouts in the same year – on barbed

wire configurations of its tiny pastures.

BLM has not provided detailed analysis of the impacts of previous TNR use in promoting cheatgrass, depletion of native communities, and cheatgrass-fueled fires with resultant dense coarse grass and cheatgrass interspace seedings. Again here – the pasture and barbed wire form the entire basis of how these terribly depleted habitats would be managed. Under this bizarre scheme, even occupied bull trout habitat, or LEPA habitat, might be subjected to TNR. BLM makes a complete mockery of the Settlement and all the efforts conservation groups have put into the Jarbidge. No Action is more protective than this travesty. Where has the most TNR been issued – and how does it relate to areas of most frequent fires? Please provide detailed mapping and analysis.

BLM allows TNR to be issued so that use can be taken up to the maximum amount allowed. We believe BLM will interpret allowable TNR use the same way it has been conducting “interim” grazing - by allowing livestock to make near-maximum use on one area of a pasture, then allowing them to remain and trying to lure them into any less grazed areas through supplement feeding, or water in troughs until that area, too, suffers high use. Thus there is no refugia or areas of better cover or habitat conditions for native species remaining.

The RCA, TNR, targeted grazing, etc. appear to be a reason BLM refuses to identify a real plan for restoration – such as fence removal, or water development removal. The more fences and water – the more exploitation for livestock can be maximized. The end result is no minimally grazed or less trampled soils and habitats. This intensive exploitation, as currently being conducted, explains the severe depletion of small animal communities – even in lands that still have some shrubs remaining. BLM clearly means to perpetuate this - and large areas of virtual biological wastelands that have resulted. The FEIS worsens and expands this.

DEIS LG-IV-MA-10 stated BLM will manage “for a variety of cover heights” for ground-nesting birds. It does not meet sage-grouse conservation requirements. BLM staff said they just couldn’t be tied down to any specifics – because – after all – different birds had different requirements. BLM will resort to any artifice to avoid applying necessary protections to conserve sage-grouse. This should be compared to FEIS 2-364, which makes only vague reference to tweaking utilization levels in an unknown and uncertain manner.

This is followed by LG-IV-MA-11. “Follow BLM guidelines for managing greater sage-grouse habitats - BLM then refers to the state plan and local working group plans. This is a ticket for further ecological disaster, The LWGs are rancher and industry-dominated entities fraught with politics, self-serving financial interests, and do not provide sound management for public lands. A *Times-News* article stated the LWG couldn’t even agree on comments on the RMP –yet somehow BLM is supposed to default to the LWG in conserving its crashing population of sage grouse? In the FEIS Alt. VI, sage-grouse needs are scarcely mentioned and considered at all. See Sec 2.8.3.1.

The LWG (ranchers) have built even more livestock /cattle water sources stock ponds – West Nile breeding sites – under a claim that sage-grouse would benefit. The LWG has acted to extend harmful facilities on private and state lands as well as more sage destruction, and not grouse conservation.

BLM must apply mandatory measurable standards of use to provide 9 inch herbaceous nesting cover for sage-grouse across occupied habitats to all permits as a provision of the RMP. It must reduce livestock impacts to understory diversity and shrub canopy complexity. For many native bunchgrasses, essentially no grazing use can be made and this standard achieved until long-term rest has occurred.

Other provisions of this DEIS Preferred Alternative and now the FEIS Proposed Action in section 2.8.3 section allow livestock grazing to occur in mule deer winter habitats (including burned lands where deer may face maximum stress), provide no limit on winter grazing in SG habitats, don't even identify sage-grouse seasonal habitats, provide no limit on spring grazing in sage-grouse lekking and nesting habitats – and generally make a mockery of management to conserve sage-grouse, as was required under the SSA. Other species fare just as poorly.

There is no evidence that “targeted grazing” could effectively control flammable conditions during the situations when wildfirs burn, and not spawn even more cheatgrass and worse noxious weeds invasion. There is serious unaddressed risk that this is likely to cause a downward spiraling ecological degradation. Flammable cheatgrass increase, and further loss of biodiversity, would be the foreseeable consequences of this scheme. See Hempy-Mayer and Pyke for example. This would even allow the imposition of more “temporary” fencing and water hauling and harmful supplements that would promote forage mining – with no clear limits or bounds of damage to be inflicted soils, crust, desirable vegetation and the wildlife that inhabits portions of these lands, including migratory birds and raptors. “Targeted grazing” is more range jargon - highly uncertain, poorly defined, and there is no evidence that it is effective at anything other than further subsidizing a tiny number of politically connected livestock grazing operations.

Despite the extreme industrialization of the landscape Alt. VI allows even more temporary and permanent livestock infrastructure and habitat loss and fragmentation from in FEIS Section 2.8.3.1, and this is linked in part to the severe disturbances of forage treatments, fuels treatments, targeted grazing, TNR and all the other excuses for intensifying livestock degradation for financial gain of permittees.

WWP asked BLM Managers: Where is the “prescription” for livestock grazing in key and restored sage-grouse habitats? We were referred to this section, with its lists of loose and uncertain BMPs or occasional alternatives components strewn across the three volumes. Bottom line: There is no plan to conserve sage-grouse. Yet there is elaborate scheming – as shown in the Alt IV and the even worse Alt VI -Livestock grazing section – to conserve all and even increase- AUMs - impose more use through TNR, targeted grazing, or by classifying areas as grasslands following rehab or “restoration”.

This corresponds to the response WWP's Fite was provided with in the stilted formal blm RMP briefing meetings when this question was asked – How are you conserving sage grouse? In response, scattershot weak piecemeal provisions were pulled by BLM from across the bulky and confusing RMP. Nothing has been provided that laid out a clear and coherent Plan for sage-grouse conservation.

Alternative IV and the even worse alt VI will not clearly and effectively conserve sage-grouse habitats and populations.

Alternative V (2-143 to 2-145) is only somewhat better. It does not provide a grazing allocation that comports with the Alternative that WWP submitted, or that will do all that is necessary to conserve sage-grouse and pygmy rabbit, restore LEPA, and protect bull trout, redband trout and other rare and imperiled species, watersheds, and many diverse recreational uses and enjoyment of the public lands. Alternative V is not the Alternative that WWP submitted. Only 303,000 acres ES -19 -and this was reduced by 6000 acres from the Draft – why?) would not have chronic grazing disturbance. We do not trust BLM not to allow TNR or other use to occur even in the unallocated areas. It is unclear if that could occur using trumped up “fuels” or other subterfuges.

The range of “allocation” shows that 80 to 90% of “forage” would be allocated to wildlife. There is much more than forage “production” to be considered in making an allocation – like space and sagebrush complex structural cover. Animals need habitat security and space- freedom from disturbance to provide nesting, winter and other habitat security, the ability to move across the landscape and fulfill all a species habitat needs over the course of the year, providing a thriving diversity of native understory components, providing necessary shrub canopy and structural complexity, etc. There is no evidence provided that obsessing over “perennial forage” alone will achieve conservation of sage-grouse.

BLM must analyze an expanded range of alternatives in a SEIS, including removal of livestock from all lands in the Sagebrush Sea ACEC, and in areas identified as ACECs in the 2007 WWP Alternative that BLM did not adequately address.

All lands where restoration is undertaken must have livestock removed – to protect the public's very costly investment needed to conserve the species. This has not been done in the past, and weed proliferation, desertification and biodiversity losses have been the result. See Dobkin and Sauder 2004, Jarbidge AMS, BLM's small mammal studies, Jarbidge Bartels and other Pygmy Rabbit studies, and now the 2014 Arkle et al. study on failed rehab across BLM grazed lands.

BLM must also analyze a No Grazing Alternative for the entire Jarbidge FO – especially since it chose to analyze several near-status quo now more increased livestock grazing alternatives. The RMP alternatives fail to take into account and “allocate” based on removal of non-native perennial grasses to reduce coarse dense unpalatable fuel hazards, and to provide for recovery of the full component of native vegetation and healthy microbial crusts required to support sagebrush ecosystems, and sage-grouse.

Alternatives should also not “allocate” any annual grass to “watershed and wildlife” – it should act to restore these weedlands. Further, as the Catlin report critique demonstrates, BLM use measurement techniques fail to effectively detect the often severe degree of use that is occurring.

Again, we have no idea how BLM plans to keep cows from eating sagebrush, and breaking off shrubs - in its fantastical 100% non use level. Recent studies from the Bi-state Mono Basin region highlight the need for complex screening shrub cover in areas with deficient understories. Other recent studies across the GRSG range show this too. Yet the Jarbidge has some of the most simplified livestock-battered and reduced “see-through” big sagebrush communities we have ever seen – as in Poison Butte and Inside Desert southern areas including south of the Murphy-Rogerson road. This is due to livestock browse and breakage. It also slows recovery following fire as well, since growth is less, and seed stalks are eaten or broken – reducing reproductive potential.

BLM stated in the DEIS at 2-143: “the purpose of allocating vegetation is to determine the total AUMs available for livestock grazing”. We again stress that the huge livestock disturbance footprint and conflicts with TES species, recreation, etc, and the need for recovery of native components must be factored into any RMP grazing allocation – and it has not been. This is also necessary to comply with the SSA. BLM claimed that Allocation percentages are not the same as utilization, as the allocation is used to identify the total number of AUMs for livestock, while utilization identifies the amount of vegetation used by livestock in a specific area”. This is gibberish. It also divorces “forage” from all the other elements of “habitat” that sage-grouse and other species require.

The use of “forage” as the basis for allocating lands for grazing use shows that BLM has ignored a primary component of the RMP –i.e. to conserve sage-grouse. Grouse do not eat grass. They have complex habitat requirements, and enhancing and preserving those, and restoring large areas, must be the basis of making any cattle “forage” allocation. See Connelly et al. 2004, Knick and Connelly 2009 USGS *Studies in Avian Biology Sage-Grouse Monograph*.

In order to allocate lands or AUMs, or have any basis for understanding impacts of actions or alternatives, BLM must tie AUMs to mandatory annual measurable utilization caps, avoidance of spring grazing on top of nesting sage-grouse and other birds and wildlife during sensitive periods (see Braun 2006). BLM must have all of this info laid out to tie together all the components of an alternative.

BLM claims forage allocated would remain the same, though vegetation would change. What does this mean – that cows are always constant? There is great unassessed risk in this scheme.

This DEIS Pref Alt contained untenable MAs: 1, 4, 5, 6. While it is nice that mule deer might not have to deal with cows in the winter in highly degraded areas under Alt IV–sage-grouse would have to deal with them under this RMP. In MA 7 –bighorn sheep needs must be analyzed beyond the pasture confinements, 8 has no requirement for

“diversity”, etc. This must be clarified as referring to native species diversity. MA 10 – the nebulous “targeted grazing” - is a wide open category for any and all kinds of extreme grazing disturbance and loss of native vegetation components, forbs, microbotic crusts, and soil health and function. In the FEIS Alt VI, even many of these meager measures are lacking.

Range Infrastructure: BLM still continues all manner of projects, allows the weed-proliferation supplemental feeding to continue and enables expanded new temporary and other water and fencing sites.

While the RMP mentions “remove fences that are not needed”, it appears that hardly any fences would be removed since grazing would continue over > 4/5 of the FO under the most protective Alt (V), and much of the land area would be wide open to additional “temporary” or other fencing under the murky fuels proposals.

BLM fails to even consider the fundamental principles of an actual science-based carrying capacity and suitability analysis in its obsession with its never-explained and complicated “forage” machinations and allocation.

BLM must specify that areas are closed. They must be Unavailable under all circumstances. Sage-grouse need 9 inches of residual cover and abundant structurally complex sagebrush, and an absence of cheatgrass.

The FEIS Livestock facility MAs will only exacerbate sage-grouse and other wildlife declines. BLM must focus on removing spring developments, and other facilities – not on building even more. How many springs remain undeveloped? What restoration actions are needed?

Reference to a 6 inch residual cover was buried in the midst of BMPs at A-81 in the DEIS, and there is no requirement that even this inadequate measure be applied to all sage-grouse habitats and to recover seeded areas. We cannot find it in the FEIS. BLM makes reference to trivial 4 inches in the FEIS when discussing its useless and ineffective sagebrush Zone which is used in part as an excuse to not designate ACECs.

Throughout the RMP, it is unclear if “sagebrush” habitats or communities would be suddenly removed from that category with a fire, or if many of the recently burned areas are now considered by BLM to no longer be sagebrush habitats and thus not managed for sage-grouse or other sagebrush-dependent species. This indeed appears to be the case. BLM must recover and manage as sagebrush habitats all lands where sagebrush was present at the time of the 1987 RMP. In the laundry list of BMPs -“Upland” does not even ban supplements in sagebrush habitat.

We Protest this welter of FEIS deficiencies.

More RMP Alternatives Deficiencies and Concerns

Jarbidge lands are highly altered, degraded and fragmented. Wildlife populations are reduced, and in many instances appear to be below the level of viability already. BLM after years of delay has issued a cookie cutter EIS that makes a sham of addressing a range of reasonable alternatives in the context of the Jarbidge's ecological setting and the stressors on the public lands and biota that inhabit these lands.

To be reasonable and science-based, all the Actions related to components of the environment within an Alternative should be **achievable, compatible with one another, and designed to meet the threats to, demands on, and challenges facing the public lands in the context of the current dire state of the collapsing sagebrush ecosystem of the Jarbidge**. The EIS has failed miserably.

WWP and other commentors provided BLM with extensive comments and scientific literature to demonstrate that ecological processes and native biota of the Jarbidge require extraordinary action to stop further losses. We provided extensive verbal comments, too - in the context of Settlement Group RMP Update meetings and other contacts over the past several years. WWP specifically requested to meet with resources specialists over the past several years to discuss our concerns about the RMP Alternatives and components. BLM did not allow this outside the industry-Attorney meetings. BLM's closed door blindered agency process - and it appears political pressure - produced a document that does not have a reasonable range of alternatives to address the greatly altered ecosystem. BLM continued on a rigid path, and produced an RMP where several Alternatives are deeply flawed, do not provide for the long-term benefit of the American people. These alternatives are fraught with internal conflict.

We Protest this.

BLM Never Used Its Own Past Failures to Develop a Reality and Science-Based RMP

The promises made to the public to protect wildlife habitats and populations, native vegetation communities, watersheds, recreational uses, etc. in the 1987 RMP were never met. Land conditions and populations of native biota spiraled downward over the past 25 years. BLM's own AMS showed that. Since the AMS, the situation has only worsened.

BLM must honestly address why this occurred, and employ a range of alternatives that forge a new direction in this current effort. It has not. The RMP fails to take a hard look at causal factors, and analyze the likelihood of being able to achieve the goals and outcomes to protect public lands and resources with current science and these stresses in mind.

There is great internal conflict Between Allocations, Goals, Objectives, and Promises of Restoration both within and between Alternatives. Doesn't an RMP have to "make sense" under NEPA? So that one part is not impossible to achieve with the others? Honest analysis of the feasibility and effectiveness of each alternative has not been provided. A SEIS must be prepared.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Artificial FRCC Categories, Models and Confusion Provide Little Basis for Managing Wild Sagebrush Lands – Fire/Disturbance Interval Science Is Changing

BLM's use of the FRCC 1,2,3 categories as a basis for credible land use planning in the context of the Jarbidge landscape imposes idealized models with highly uncertain and questionable inputs as the basis for long-term land management. With models, if garbage is put into the model, the output will be garbage. BLM never lays out the assumptions made in the FRCC, Fuels, and Vegetation Community modeling.

FRCC was first developed for forested large tree areas (like Ponderosa pine forests). Inputs/supposed science on which disturbance intervals are based are ever-changing, and they depend on whose research one believes. This is part of the input that is factored into FRCC. This is then used to claim that lands need to be further disturbed, or they will be outside a historical range of disturbance. Plus, lands in FRCC 1 or often FRCC 2, as BLM applies this loose, uncertain and ever-changing Fuel description system to sagebrush landscapes - typically have few shrubs and provide unsuitable habitat for nearly all native wildlife. As FRCC is typically applied by BLM, it is used to justify any and all manner of major disturbance to native plant communities. The models basically discriminate against the type of habitats in shortest supply for sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, etc. – i.e. mature and relatively dense canopy sagebrush communities with complex shrub structure and understories – because these communities take a long time to recover, and grazing often retards or precludes their full development.

For example, many “range” scientists, and the NRCS Ecosite and other unvetted models used by Idaho BLM, cling to erroneous short fire return/disturbance intervals, and ignore or underplay the role and importance of microbiotic crusts in healthy vegetation communities and full ecological function. Papers that short-cut ecology are produced to support the livestock industry and unsustainable grazing levels. Outcomes of these papers get plugged into the vegetation condition and disturbance “boxes” of the FRCC scheme *du jour*. It is quite likely that the fire disturbance interval used in preparation of this RMP is now already outdated. Please review Knick and Connelly *Studies in Avian Biology* (2009/2011), article by William Baker, and other Chapters where fire is discussed. See also Baker and Bukowski 2013. What fire disturbance intervals is the RMP FRCC analysis based on? Will BLM update this and provide detailed analysis of how it arrived at claimed disturbance intervals in analysis of an expanded range of alternatives.

Idaho BLM signed a ROD for an eastern Idaho Vegetation and Fuels EIS that includes Jarbidge lands that has woefully outdated and erroneous fire/disturbance intervals as its basis. BLM cannot rely on that greatly flawed document for “treatments” under this RMP. ALL inputs and assumptions into the models used must be clearly explained so the validity of the entire mammoth EIS Fuels and Veg sections - which of course feed into the bloated AUM allocations – can be determined.

BLM, while spending dozens of pages on FRCC, greatly ignores assessment of the on the ground predicted effects of Climate Change stress on Jarbidge lands, and fails to develop alternatives to buffer and minimize adverse impacts of climate change effects, including buffer disturbances to remaining sagebrush habitats and lands necessary for restoration for conservation and enhancement of sage-grouse and other TES species habitats and populations.

BLM must provide detailed analysis of how fire/disturbance and vegetation characteristics have changed since the FRCC analysis and alternatives development. BLM must provide a detailed Appendix that lays this all out, and mapping that shows the current 2014 FRCC Categories for the FO and explains in great detail how they were derived. We have seen agency-accepted fire/disturbance intervals be lengthened by 100% or more - just in the time this RMP has been in preparation. The dire status of sage-grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem with which its fate is so closely intertwined has resulted in much more critical examination of range scientists who BLM has relied on in the past - who wrongly claimed fires in ARTRWY and other sage communities known known to have very long fire return intervals were frequent – 50-75 years, or so in many sagebrush communities. See Knick

BLM does not adequately explain how FRCC applies to all the exotic crested wheatgrass or coarse cultivar and cheatgrass lands. BLM has not provided necessary info and analysis on how sparse and little-vegetated, as well as how structurally simplified and desertified lands would be if managed under FRCC 1 and 2. Lands would be nearly devoid of all species of sagebrush-dependent wildlife. What species would thrive under each FRCC Class? What species would face further habitat contraction and loss?

BLM points to its ever-changing planning handbook. Nothing in FLPMA, which should provide the over-arching basis for understanding Land Use Planning - refers to artificial, often arbitrary and ever-changing FRCC categories layered with complicated modeling as the basis for managing this landscape. Best available science must be used. But first, the public needs to be told WHAT science and assumptions BLM has used.

We have seen FRCC used even in highly fragmented and degraded areas to promote disturbance of remnant mature and old growth vegetation – through claiming the remnant veg is unhealthy, outside the “historic range of variability”, or otherwise in need of being radically disturbed by human intervention that kills or alters native vegetation to reach a “desired” state.

WWP Attached Comments on Pocatello RMP, and the WWP Appeal of Jarbidge BLM’s 2010 Long Butte Fire ESR and Rehab Plan to the DEIS comments. These were ignored. A SEIS is essential to address these serious ecological concerns.

We Protest the use of FRCC and other models with unknown and unexplained assumptions and inputs as the basis for the limited range of RMP alternatives.

We Protest the inadequate actions and analysis of the FEIS as described above.

Additional FRCC, Fuels, Modeling Concerns

In the FEIS, BLM has rigged various Alt. suppression allocations among alternatives to make alternatives with a bit less grazing seem bad for sage-grouse and other wildlife. See FEIS ES-5 and maps M-30 through 36. Questions abound. Why does Alt 2 show suppression primarily only in the WUI? This is not realistic in an RMP that is to conserve sage-grouse – and BLM knows it. This is an example of BLM drawing up fantasyland alternative components so it can claim it analyzed a range of alternatives – no matter how far removed from the current reality and the need for providing for sustainable and viable wildlife populations and habitats that they may be. Alt 2 is unreasonable in its entirety.

FEIS Alt V suppression must be applied to all alternatives (see Map M-35). If this is feasible in V it is feasible under all Alts. It is alarming that BLM would allow the greatly intermingled grass areas to not be suppressed –because those fires will take out the sage that still is present – and this is just what has happened time after time in the Jarbidge.

At some point as this RMP process dragged on and on without a EIS being produced, it appears that the RMP agency planning process became pretty much an exercise in “modeling” idealized alternatives tied to bulky lists of BMPs, with little foundation in reality. Planning appears to have become a game of sorts, unmoored from the need to conserve, enhance, restore, sustain and protect the public land values including GRSG and other TES species habitats and populations, and the wide range of public recreational uses of this landscape.

Why does BLM even bother relying on the FRCC in this way in such a drastically altered landscape? Since FRCC requires a certain percentage of vegetation communities to be in the arbitrary and ever-changing Ideal “disturbed” states, to develop a range of Alternatives based on FRCC results in BLM considering many actions that everyone knows it will never adopt, and that are not realistic in the Jarbidge over the next 20 years.

How can BLM conserve sage-grouse with such limited suppression in the Proposed Alternative? Major efforts are right now under No Action made to suppress fires – yet the FEIS pretends otherwise. Please be honest. BLM needs to provide info based on what really is occurring now and what actually would occur in the next 20 years. We strongly object to BLM relying on the added layer of “VMAs” that chop the Jarbidge lands into sections from north to south - rather than on protection of all native communities in this planning effort. The artificial VMA break-down is then used to sacrifice areas to different levels of destructive management under the artificial FRCC classes and the other components of the RMP.

BLM needs to protect and restore sagebrush habitats – not lump remaining sagebrush, rabbitbrush or native Poa grassland areas into various contrived categories, throw some jargon about resiliency on top of them, and then use this to degrade them through “intensive” Fuels or “targeted” grazing or other actions. See Connelly 2013.

We suggested that the entire FRCC section be removed, and BLM under vegetation, wildlife, etc. have a goal of suppression across all alternatives, with protection of all existing and recovering native communities, surrounded by a five mile buffer, being the highest priority to conserve and enhance sage-grouse habitats. This is a reasonable plan to serve as the basis for conservation efforts and compliance with the SSA and FLPMA.

Just how feasible is it to suppress fire with water in wild lands? This makes little sense. This appears to be an effort for ranchers to expand pipe systems and intensify grazing use even further under cover of fire/fuels suppression.

Fuel treatments have not been shown to be effective in the Jarbidge in the past. All fuels treatments that reduce or simplify native vegetation should be greatly restricted. Fuels concerns have been used to excuse/justify manipulation of native shrubs and trees to promote livestock forage – and often weedy flammable annual grasses thrive in the aftermath – thus exacerbating wildfire concerns.

We strongly oppose use of exotic weedy species like forage kochia, or crested wheat grass, or any others - in fuelbreaks.

There are large irrigated meadows/pasture by Three Creek, as well as large irrigated areas near Rogerson – which form fuelbreaks much more substantial and effective than anything BLM could do. Mapping and analysis must factor in what is actually present on these lands - so the public can understand how limited risk is here in many of these areas. Why isn't the first thing – and the overwhelming emphasis of the RMP - maximizing the retention of all components of native vegetation communities”?

Under any component of the discussion of Fuels, a full and science-based analysis of the impacts of livestock grazing in spreading flammable cheatgrass must be incorporated, and actions taken to significantly reduce livestock disturbances and promote microbial crusts.

“NEPA procedures must insure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. . . . Accurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA.” 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1(b) (emphasis added). NEPA’s emphasis on “the importance of coherent and comprehensive up-front environmental analysis [] ensure[s] informed decision making to the end that the agency will not act on incomplete information, only to regret its decision after it is too late to correct.” Blue Mtns. Biodiversity Project v. Blackwood, 161 F.3d 1208, 1216 (9th Cir. 1998) (emphasis added).

Please provide full and detailed analysis of the effects of using small statured native plants such as Poa and yarrow vs. use of exotics, and place management emphasis on healing and recovering microbial crusts in interspaces to prevent cheatgrass and other annual weed invasions.

BLM under all alternatives must consider large-scale removal of cwg/swg and other large statured coarse and unpalatable flammable grasses. These should be replaced with small native Poa, yarrow and the like. The livestock grazing, facility, and all other components of the RMP must mesh with this essential removal of disastrous post-fire and other livestock forage-based seedings. Rather than weed and methane-promoting grazing, any fuelbreaks can be mowed in this immensely roaded and often flat landscape.

BLM has not shown that any Fuelbreaks it has planted or constructed over all the years in the Jarbidge have been effective. Before BLM disturbs and destroys native plants, or plants even more exotics as fuelbreaks, detailed analysis of the effectiveness of past fuel and seeding projects must be provided. There is no action alternative that would not result in massive habitat disturbance from Fuelbreaks and a battery of other “treatments”.

Alt V allows Fuelbreaks along designated roads and primitive roads. This means that there could be hundreds or even thousands of miles of fuelbreaks of unknown width—drastically adding to the negative Footprint and habitat fragmentation of the road network in the Jarbidge. See Map 56, FEIS at 57 that shows the appalling number and density of roads in the JFO. The other alternatives appear to virtually turn the entire landscape into a giant fuelbreak – sacrificing all other values.

BLM has planted several hundred thousand acres of crested wheatgrass in the Jarbidge – which it has repeatedly claimed served as a fuelbreak. That was and is not true, and the public was misled. The more cwg, and artificially dense grass in general – the more frequent the fires have been. Lands become more desertified, and dry out earlier because there is nothing to shade the ground, there is no wind break of any kind near ground level, and the fire season is prolonged. BLM has seeded its hundreds of thousands of acres of “fuelbreaks” much too densely. See WWP Long Butte fire appeal, and RMP mapping of areas of frequent recent fires.

The fuelbreak action that we support is replacement of large-statured coarse exotic and cultivar grasses with small native Poas and yarrow, while disturbing no native shrub communities. This must be considered in an expanded range of alternatives that rely on REMOVAL of the vast coarse over-sized densely planted grasslands as a Fuels and habitat action. Simply replace flammable and other exotics with small statured natives. This was, after all, the recommendation of former BLM Managers on a tour at the outset of the RMP process. BLM conveniently buried that finding, and refuses to provide alternatives that significantly reduce the coarse tall dense grass seedings and weedlands.

We Protest BLM’s failure to fully analyze these serious concerns, provide a proper baseline of information, and learn from its past mistakes – such as the vast existing cwg fuelbreak seeding – that is reality is the CAUSE of many frequent fires. We Protest all of these FEIS analysis and alternatives deficiencies.

More RMP FEIS Vegetation Concerns

BLM complicates the vegetation section (FEIS ES-6 to ES-7.and “Vegetation

Communities” and “Wildland Fire Ecology and Management” portions of the RMP across all Alts.). The vegetation totals became different due to the Long Butte fire. Have they been updated?

BLM must consider an alternative that removes livestock to improve lands across the Field Office through natural plant succession in native community areas. It must reduce non-native perennial communities so that they comprise less than 1/3 of their present area. Fuelbreak actions would replace seeded coarse dense exotic or coarse cultivars grasses with small-statured native Poas and yarrow or other short forbs. Seeded Fuelbreak areas would receive no grazing use, to maximize microbiotic crust recovery, and prevent cheatgrass and other weed expansion. Fuelbreaks will be based on - at a minimum - existing pasture fences. The FEIS fails to do this.

Native shrub recovery must be allowed in these areas to help further moderate recovery. Over the life of the Plan, with the high livestock disturbance burden, and livestock trampling, injuring and retarding any rehab actions, high densities of recovering shrubs in these fuelbreak areas are not likely. Braun 2006, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011.

BLM includes unproven and unscientific rancher grazing schemes as the basis of its Vegetation and Fuels in Alternative II, III and now VI.

The RMP would allow a greater burden of fencing to be imposed following fires. In the already densely fenced JFO, there is no valid reason for this. BLM has failed to provide detailed mapping and analysis of all existing fences that were placed in piecemeal fashion following fires since the 1987 RMP. Carving off unburned lands for continued intensive use is precisely what BLM has done in the past post-fire. It has only served to lead to further degradation of remaining unburned lands.

There is no clarity provided on what will comprise a native plant community. Will cwg with some sagebrush be treated as non-native? Cwg and rabbitbrush? Mottled and mixed communities currently abound here. That is one of the flaws with past veg studies – LM selected more “pure” areas – leaving the weedier sites out of monitoring and baseline data collection, including the ESI at times. We are alarmed that the RMP treats Poa communities as expendable for TNR and other severe cheatgrass-causing grazing disturbances.

The EIS’s Alt V – which is supposed to be an environmentally “friendly” alternative – would retain vast areas of exotic seedings, and annuals and non-native understory. See FEIS Table Table ES-1, ES-6 and 7. BLM purposefully rigs this by claiming there would be no active restoration – such as seeding sage or ripping out cwg under that Alt. It is done to make the seriously flawed other Alts seem more desirable, and rig the sage-gorse benefit comparison by alternative. See Table ES-1, pages ES-6 through 9.

We strongly oppose the use of VMA segregation schemes to sacrifice habitats.

Why in the world would BLM want to manage for a “native grassland” – of 130,000

acres in VMA B- unless it was giving overwhelming weight to ranchers over sage-grouse and other imperiled species habitat needs? This is not a reasonable alternative. Or for other vast grassland acreages elsewhere in the other VMAs across the flawed Alts.? The goal should be to **recover native shrubs in as many areas as possible** – so if a fire does occur, relative losses will not be as great. This is NOT a prairie –it is supposed to be shrubsteppe and some salt desert shrub. This rigged Alternative scheme and artificial segregation into VMAs and then breaking that down into a miscellany of percentages treated vs. retained - all appears to be part of BLM’s trying to impose an artificial FRCC to benefit ranchers and fit veg into various confusing acronym categories so it can continue to act in every possible way except that which would effectively conserve sage-grouse and other TES species.

This elaborate focus on Veg acres is also part of covering up the immense and damaging continued livestock disturbance footprint and series of harmful actions that would continue.

We fear the reason **BLM is proposing to manage for grasslands** is because - as shrub cover increases in grazed landscapes - lands may have less cattle forage grass productivity. We note this is not the case in ungrazed areas where both shrubs and grass increase– as studies at INEL (Anderson and Holte, Anderson and Inouye) found. But it has been shown in past RCI and other heavily grazed Jarbidge landscape studies to be so.

With its elaborate veg percentages BLM tries to impose a “farm” mentality on public wild lands. The problem is – wild land systems subject to drought, flood, fire, insects including sage defoliators and army cutworms that may kill grass, and all manner of human degradation do not respond like an irrigated plowed field. This also ignores that communities in greatly manipulated landscapes like this are often mottled and mixed, too.

BLM has not provided clarity on how it categorized lands into VSGs. What specific data inputs were used? Detailed mapping and analysis must be provided so that this process can be understood. This still has not been done in the FEIS, and a SEIS must be prepared.

One or two fires could greatly change acreages. **It is far simpler to set a goal of managing for native species and expanding native habitats and connectivity - and maximizing native shrubs while minimizing invasive species.** The confusing range of Veg allocations seems designed to cause continuing conflict over the next 20 years.

We Protest all of these deficiencies.

VMA Segregation Adds to Confusion and Fails to Meet Requirements to Conserve Sage-Grouse

BLM fails to provide adequate detailed mapping, analysis and ecological science for understanding the complexities of its segregation of areas of the FO into yet another category – the VMA. This segregation appears to have very little to do with conserving and recovering sagebrush dependent species with viable and thriving populations. It

appears to have everything to do with maintaining chronic livestock grazing disturbance and high stocking rates over 4/5 or more of the FO. BLM overlays FRCC and other actions on top of this in its series of industry-centered alternatives.

BLM appears to be clinging to some hope that it can “conserve” sage-grouse by focusing its efforts in large part on only some portions of the land area, primarily VMA D – 20% or less of the FO. Why else would BLM propose GOMAs as it does? Why else would BLM propose under its DEIS Preferred Alternative to only designate a small sagebrush ACEC area and now in the FEIS gut even the existing bighorn alternative, and to allow all manner of development and extractive use and destruction of natural resources to occur over the great majority of the FO under all alternatives – in defiance of all current ecological science? See USFWS WBP Finding for GRSG, Knick and Connelly (2009/2011).

Sage-grouse and other sagebrush wildlife need to be able to fully occupy and thrive across much larger areas of the JFO to sustain viable populations. What part of “sage-grouse are a landscape species” does the BLM not understand? Under its Proposed Action, BLM would even be able to further manipulate and destroy remaining native sagebrush communities. This, of course it to benefit ranchers – and even recent Wyoming research and other shows no real positive effects for sage-grouse of sagebrush removal.

Yet is well-documented, and has been well-known for the past several years, that the removal of livestock grazing from Hart Mountain and the Steens in Oregon promoted rapid passive recovery of sagebrush habitats and thriving populations of dependent species.

BLM refers to monitoring microbiotic crusts – but this appears to be in relation to reference areas. BLM establishes no annual required monitoring protocol for livestock trampling impacts to microbiotic crusts – so that further damage to these depleted crucial elements of sagebrush ecosystems can be protected and recovered.

At DEIS at 4-145 (and this continues in the FEIS), we learned than BLM’s definitions and predictions of “mid-seral” are based on categorizing mid-seral as **5-25%** sagebrush canopy cover. Yet sage-grouse require at a minimum 15% cover, and it is increasingly known that especially in depleted areas - much higher canopy cover is required – as shown by Mono Lake/Bi-state and other recent sage-grouse research. Sage-grouse typically nest in the densest sage in an area – so why would BLM impose such a limited canopy cover? It appears to be so BLM could thin lands to levels as low as 5% for livestock forage.

There is a huge difference between 5% and 25% sagebrush cover. In the past, BLM refused to consider 5% sagebrush canopy cover as the basis for management as sagebrush habitats. Now, when it is to BLM’s advantage to paint it’s deeply flawed and limited range of alternatives in a favorable light – we are suddenly told y BLM that 5% is “mid-seral” sagebrush habitat. BLM Must fully assess the prolonged time periods it may take for sage to achieve these levels of cover, and how grazing hinders or precludes recovery.

This prediction is also wildly optimistic – as BLM provides no mandatory measurable standards of sagebrush breakage or trampling of seedlings, and no required mandatory measurable standards of use to prevent continued advances of cheatgrass in understories. Cheatgrass chokes the ground surface and prevents sagebrush seedling establishment. BLM allows near-non-stop grazing for the Simplot and various Brackett and Guerry operations that dominate nearly the entire JFO south of Saylor Creek. Since many areas are so depleted, and winter grazing occurs, too, livestock are often forced to eat whatever is sticking up above the snow. Witness the severe depletion of the four-wing saltbush and sagebrush wildlife and rehab plantings in portions of Poison Creek, 71 Desert, and Inside Desert.

BLM makes no commitment to remove livestock grazing from areas it would restore—either permanently or for 10 years so that natural recovery can be jump-started and taxpayer investments in restoration actions be protected.

Over the years, we have documented the high levels of use to sagebrush in Brackett and other allotments – where seedlings and young plants following fires remain broken and browsed by livestock for many years – slowing growth, recolonization, and recovery. Domestic sheep devour sagebrush, as well – and cattle in depleted chronically grazed lands –especially the vast coarse seeding areas of the JFO seek any relief from the coarse unpalatable large grasses BLM insists in continuing to use. In many areas including remaining sagebrush habitats, domestic sheep are run on top of cattle – grazing the same lands.

It is impossible to understand how these percent ranges were derived – as there is no supporting science or research to understand where this extremely broad 5-25% mid-seral range came from.

At a minimum, all burned areas where BLM in the past has promised in fire rehab efforts that sagebrush must recover or be restored, and should be identified for recovery here. These must be delineated in a SEIS, and a clear plan developed.

VMA A actions continue to promote grass seedings and this is not a reasonable alternative. VMA B and VMA C Actions continue intensive livestock grazing in native shrub and grass areas. This fails to recover vast areas of native and perennial “grasslands”.

In the DEIS, 4-146 VMA C proposed “assisted succession” – i.e. further fragmentation and destruction of shrubs in sagebrush communities in order to attempt to get some forb or grass growth. This appears to still be in the FEIS under 2-118 UV-II-MA-8 – allowing treatment of native shrub lands. “to increase late seral grasses”. Alt VI – FEIS 2-3339, also allows this invasive disturbance treatment to produce “late seral grasses” aka cattle forage. These flawed actions are arbitrary and are repeated across the VMAs and alternatives. Many research projects have shown this is a waste – and will only lead to further losses. This includes pygmy rabbit studies in Utah, and a very large study of various methods of sagebrush destruction in Wyoming. See Hess and Beck 2010, Beck et al. 2012, Jones et al. 2013. BLM must replace any part of the RMP where it would use “assisted succession” to destroy or alter native shrub communities (including rabbitbrush

which is successional to sagebrush and serves to moderate site conditions and provide at least some structural complexity and site moderation in the vast burned and intensively grazed and trampled areas especially of the central and south-central Jarbidge) with “removal of livestock grazing disturbance to promote forb, microbial crusts, and understory recovery”. It is unclear if this has been done in the FEIS, as the discussion of seral stages is so sprawling and nonsensical. In any one pasture, there could be numerous seral stages, weedlands, etc. – a legacy of the severe past grazing, harmful methods of fire rehab, purposeful past treatment and extreme grazing, facility and roading footprint.

It is not possible to understand what is supposed to occur under various alternatives – given statements like VMA C for Alt II, UV-III-MA-9. Actions refer to whole other confusing sections of the RMP – the confusing noxious weeds and invasive plants section, and wildland fire ecology model scheme sections. There is no clarity what many of the various Alt provisions actually mean- example IV-II-MA-10 means. Would BLM “treat” one part of 50 % of all pastures – or the entire land area referred to with 50%?

UV-II-G-1 is incompatible with sage-grouse conservation. UV-II-MA-2 and MA-VI in occupied sage-grouse habitat are not reasonable, given the overwhelming amount of cwg already present. Nor is UV-II-MA-3. BLM might as well just call Alt II the Feedlot Alt in the FEIS. Many of the goals are meaningless – like not treating canyon walls, as the FEIS essentially does here (2.4.2.5, for example).

Under Alt II it seems protecting forage and interfaces from burning up is the priority –as it focuses a lot on VMA A. Isn't that the case? This alternative and others over-emphasize herbicide use without analyzing adverse effects, drift, harm to non-target species, soil contamination, etc.– while continuing to inflict severe livestock grazing disturbances on public lands, including damaging “targeted grazing”, and even “prescribed fire”. The degree and severity of risks with the herbicide use are not adequately examined in the EIS. BLM cannot rely on the now-dated and deficient 17 States Veg Treatment Weed EIS. The Oust herbicide drift disaster in Idaho and its outcomes, and much other new information, have demonstrated serious deficiencies with that complicated document. This is especially the case because of wind, wind-blown soil, and other drift in the vast depleted lands of the JFO that currently lack many natural windbreaks, and the dust bowl-like conditions that the Proposed Action would generate under targeted grazing, fuels treatments, etc. and the higher grazing allocation.

BLM cannot rely on the PER report that accompanied the Veg/Weed EIS to coer analysis of herbicide use in combination with the massive treatment scheme of the FEIS. No NEPA was ever conducted on that document. What NEPA coverage does BLM believe it will have for its welter of fuels and veg treatments? The RMP in its present form certainly is not adequate. A SEIS must be prepared.

Alt III does not conserve sage-grouse and instead primarily conserves cattle and sheep grazing, and it is not a viable alternative.

Management of lands, and the discussion under Alt IV, is also a morass of uncertainty.

Here, VMA A: Only 25% of the vast exotic grass seedings (many of these post-fire rehab where cwg was supposed to be a placeholder” for sagebrush establishment) would be restored. This same problem plagues the other alternatives. It is important to restore native seedings in areas **across** the sagebrush habitats of the north to whatever degree is necessary to recover the recently occupied leks for sage-grouse and other sagebrush dependent species – like loggerhead shrike, Brewer’s sparrow, sage sparrow, sage thrasher) use here. BLM forsakes removal of the coarse unpalatable grasses in UV-IV-MA-3, and others across Alternatives.

UV-IV-MA-5 allows further destruction of sagebrush, even though abundant studies now show this is ineffective. See Hess and Beck 2010, Jones et al. 2013.

Removal of livestock and allowing required mandatory measurable standards of use, significant rest or passive recovery is not even a fundamental part (MA) of Alternative IV and certainly not of the FEIS Proposed Action, either.

How can BLM hope to “restore the resiliency of ecosystem structure and function, and reduce fragmentation of habitat for sage-grouse and other native species” – if it will not admit the very significant - and in the case of the Jarbidge severe – adverse effects of grazing on ecosystem structure, function, and resiliency? See Fleischner 1994. There is no emphasis on recovery of microbiotic crusts, as there are no measurable standards to limit chronic grazing disturbance, no goals for percent recovery, no goals to protect remnant better conditions areas. etc. These concerns apply to all of the VMAs and alternatives in the FEIS.

VMA B is nearly 2/5 of the land area of the FO, and it is a large portion of the land area essential to recover for a viable and inter-connected population of sage-grouse to thrive and be conserved. There is no current accurate baseline identifying areas of annuals, non-native perennials, etc. It is impossible to understand where the percentages came from, how they may relate to existing infrastructure, etc. Promises of restoration will never occur unless there is a large-scale and systematic planned rollback of livestock facilities, livestock use, and intensity of use.

Alt IV and VI might even allow native shrub lands to be “treated” – and sagebrush or rabbitbrush killed to promote grass and forbs –even though 20% or less of the lands in this VMA now are native shrubs. What is the basis for defining shrub lands? What canopy cover or other values? Are whole pastures to be managed on the basis of the “majority” species?

There is no certainty that these actions would conserve, enhance and restore sage-grouse habitats and populations. Plus BLM refers to “additional vegetation treatments” in Noxious Weeds and Fire sections. This means vast areas could be “treated” with fuelbreaks – and more coarse unpalatable or non-native species seeded. There is no adequate mapping and analysis that shows what all of this treatment would really look like, where it could occur, if it would be meaningful or effective at recovering sage-grouse – or how soon it might in reality harm or even extirpate native species in the

various artificial “VMAs”.

There is no valid economic analysis factored into these uncertain and highly risky alternatives - to show the cost of active vs. passive restoration (removal of livestock, closure of jeep trails, etc) here. There is no valid economic analysis to show the cost of cheatgrass herbiciding, fencing, etc. if treatments are subjected to continued livestock grazing – or how much grazing use will slow or retard any recovery or rehab. This is on top of the abject failure of the EIS to assess the alternative uses forgone from imposing large-scale grazing disturbance under the limited FEIS alternatives.

An overlay of native vegetation, Critical and Key sage-grouse and other wildlife habitats, and restoration-focused lands should also be provided as a basis for BLM developing a set of alternatives that remove developments and restore habitats on an orderly and scheduled basis where removal is important to achieve wild lands and wildlife habitat restoration goals.

BLM must face the reality that funding is going to be a significant problem. How much does it cost BLM just to administer the grazing permits? To deal with damage caused by livestock? How much do taxpayers lose on this annually? Over the life of the Plan?

How much do taxpayers spend on routine weed control, livestock facility road maintenance, herbicides, post-fire seedings of livestock-depleted lands? How much less would taxpayers spend if livestock use on the southern 2/3 of the Jarbidge FO were phased out over the life of the Plan? What is the economic value of the uses and values of public lands that are lost or foregone due to the severe existing depletion of much of the FO? What are the losses expected to be over the life of the Plan? BLM has failed to address these pertinent economic issues we raised in comments.

BLM uses endless artifices to avoid livestock removal or long-term rest to promote recovery and retention of all vegetative growth of native forbs so that seeds can develop and mature. Allowing natural processes to occur without grazing impacts maximizes native local ecotype seed production, and natural no-cost passive recovery and restoration.

In order to allow a reader to even begin to understand what any of the VMA veg/treatment planning means, BLM must provide **current** Baseline mapping showing where and how it categorizes the underlying communities on top of which the VMA is imposed. At present – where are all exotic annual grasslands? Perennial exotic grasslands? Native “grasslands” (early seral communities)? How many of these areas had BLM seeded with sagebrush in the past? Promised the public that crested wheatgrass would be a “place holder” for shrub recovery? Promised the public that sagebrush would be recovered? Review of Map M-9 FEIS Existing Veg shows it over-emphasizes “non-native understories” in some areas – like Antelope Springs to benefit Brackett grazers there, while minimizing “non-native” in other areas. WWP repeatedly commented on how BLM used cwg having been seeded long ago (even though many areas now have relatively little cwg present – like in Antelope Springs) in some allotments to sacrifice pastures of high importance to sage-grouse in the AGPs. The RMP continues this. There

appears to be no valid mapping of just what constitutes a non-native understory, and where these areas are located.

Where in FEIS Map M-9 has sagebrush been seeded in the past 12 years? Where are there now sagebrush seedlings? How will BLM effectively recover all the areas where sagebrush has been re-seeded? BLM must provide monitoring and analysis of the success (or failure) of the Murphy Fire rehab, and other rehabs,\.

In viewing Maps 9 and 10 (Vol. 3) we are greatly concerned that BLM categorizes lands on Browns Bench as non-native understory – with an apparently different criteria being used than in other areas. We cannot understand how BLM actually decided what was and was not a “non-native understory” for management purposes, and setting up its whole elaborate VMA Veg, FRCC, Forage and other schemes. This must be clearly defined, as so much of the FO has been herbicided, disced, railed, burned and seeded with exotics in some composition. It is hard to understand how BLM has separated out these often blended communities.

WE had specifically commented on this regarding the DEIS. There is much more non-native understory than BLM admits to in Map 9 of the FEIS – including cwg and iwg. Plus BLM places coarse cultivars in with Natives. BLM also appears to not have mapped important mixed rabbitbrush and sage communities as native shrubland. In M-9, as in Brackett Juniper Butte, portions of Inside desert and other areas.

BLM in seedings continues to use large coarse exotics in many seedings with some native species thrown in. But with minimal post-fire rest, it is often the exotics that thrive, dominate and out-compete natives, especially local ecotype natives. Native species are often destroyed in the plowing-style seeding techniques. BLM must clarify whether seedings where sagebrush and some other natives were seeded are located. Where in these sagebrush seedings is the plant community now dominated by large exotic grasses – if these are considered native or non-native seedings? How are plant communities on the ground really delineated and defined –and how are they then fed into the morass of VMA, FRCC, Fuelbreaks, Forage allocations, and the rest of the confusion of the livestock-industry centered RMP FEIS?

Why is there no mapping and science-based analysis that shows where and how vegetation will be managed and restored to conserve sage-grouse habitats and populations and other sagebrush-dependent species? Why isn't this the foremost part, and the basis of all alternatives, in the RMP?

The NTT Report describes careful delineation of environmental risk and use of current science:

The National Greater Sage- Grouse Planning

Strategy Charter charged the NTT to serve as a scientific and technical forum to:

- Understand current scientific knowledge related to the greater sage- grouse.*
- Provide specialized sources of expertise not otherwise available.*

- *Provide innovative scientific perspectives concerning management approaches for the greater sage- grouse.*
- **Provide assurance that relevant science is considered, reasonably interpreted, and accurately presented; and that uncertainties and risks are acknowledged and documented.**
- *Provide science and technical assistance to the Regional Management Team (RMT) and Regional Interdisciplinary Team (RIDT), on request.*
- **Articulate conservation objectives for the greater sage- grouse in measurable terms to guide overall planning.**
Identify science- based management considerations for the greater sage- grouse (e.g., conservation measures) that are necessary to promote sustainable sage- grouse populations, and which focus on the threats (75 FR 13910) in each of the management zones. While BLM will claim its mish mash and scattershot confusion of fuels projects, various treatments dealing with fire are based on high science of some kind– BLM greatly ignores the role of grazing disturbance in causing flammable cheatgrass which promotes fires as well as retards post-fire recovery. Billings 1994, Reisner et al. 2013. The very high grazing allocations, uncapped and unknown amounts of TNR use, and energy, roading, infrastructure and development impacts of the FEIS, and BLM’s abject abandonment of ACECs ad integrated management in Alt VI defy current science, BLM planning requirements, guidance and legal mandates.

The FEIS analysis woefully fails to comply with the requirements of a valid current sage-grouse and sagebrush ecosystem analysis. A SEIS must be prepared to rectify this, and turn around the manner in which BLM has ignored the full range of management concerns and the paradigms of the NTT and IMs. Jarbidge BLM cannot continue to live in past and sacrifice lands to such a high degree to the livestock industry and other harmful uses.

Why is there no mapping of sage-grouse seasonal habitats in the RMP? Or of PPH/PGH? Or all occupied habitats? Why has PPH and PGH mapping been ignored, and full consideration of the provisions for these habitats in a reasonable range of alternatives? How can a Plan to conserve sage-grouse be developed without this? This mapping and analysis must include adjacent Burley and Bruneau lands, as well as the Forest Service and Elko BLM lands to the south affecting the local and regional populations. What are the cumulative impacts of fire, fences, water developments, treatments, energy developments, etc. on this landscape that is used by the Jarbidge grouse?

Plus, the twisted and contorted justifications for BLM’s severely flawed Alt VI and other livestock and pro-development alternatives in Tables like the “Comparison of Alternatives” FEIS shows the lack of BLM concern about sage-grouse and current sage-grouse science. BLM goes to great lengths to try to rig the alternatives and comparisons. See 2.10.1, Table 2.6 and Table 2.7 Comparison of Environmental Consequences. Reality

is contorted and current science such as the NTT ignored - as BLM tries to make its abysmal Proposed Action look less catastrophic for sage-grouse (and riparian/wetland fish, wildlife, sensitive species, etc.) and other all natural resources.

Alt IV MA-21 (applies to all VMAs and now Alt VI too) states “the first priority to improve would be VMA D” is not defined. Since the preceding MAs for Alt IV under the VMA category NEVER mention removal of livestock, but do indeed specify “treating” shrublands (MA 23) in grouse habitat, it is clear that “improve” may mean thin and/or destroy more sagebrush - even though current ecological science shows this will not help sage-grouse. This would mean even more habitat fragmentation in the only less fragmented landscape. See Braun 1998, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, Hess and Beck 2010, Neck et al. 2012, Bukowski and Baker 2013, Jones et al. 2013. There is no analysis of the cumulative impacts of grazing and further sagebrush habitat loss under this so-called “restoration”. Then after more sagebrush is destroyed, BLM would consider treatments to expand and connect habitats in VMA C.

BLM is likely to have limited funding, for any of the claimed restoration so how much will actually change across the Jarbidge FO? It may even further fragment VMA D (even though are many seedings that need to be restored. There are also severely depleted sagebrush communities that are in dire need of rest in Browns Bench and elsewhere. BLM might dabble in some seeding in unidentified parts of VMA C.

UV-IV-MA-28 of FEIS states that BLM will assess microbiotic crusts and manage to move them towards potential by modifying grazing. It already is required to do this under the FRH. The sad fact that several alternatives do not even require this shows that these alternatives do not have any legal validity, and appear to have been developed to set a “low bar” to better enable selection of a very poor Preferred Alternative that will hasten sage-grouse extirpation and extinction. There is no mandatory trampling or other standard to limit grazing disturbance, no milestones, and no concrete information provided on how this would be achieved. There is no comparison provided on predicted recovery with or without grazing, or mapping of the conditions of the crusts from the information BLM already has on hand.

How depleted are crusts? Where? What season of use may cause more significant harm to crusts? Since fire kills or reduces crusts, and they can take many years to recover, BLM in the much-burned Jarbidge landscape must apply annual measurable standards for trampling in upland habitats. This can be done with transects. The desirable crust communities and percent cover must be defined, and measurable standards put in place to achieve this, BLM has Technical and other references that address crusts. BLM can and must competently establish monitoring frameworks/methods and required standards.

BLM must establish a real plan for this now – since it is allocating lands for grazing use and grazing disturbance loads. If crust recovery would be only minimal with grazing – isn’t now the time to close the lands – or plan for significant rest to jump start recovery? If BLM is going to keep cattle and sheep out of lekking and nesting habitat, that means that drier summer-early fall periods are likely to have maximum cattle numbers. Crusts

suffer very severe harm if trampled when very dry – and also high impacts occur when they are very wet once fall rains and freeze-thaw winter conditions occur, and throughout spring. To meet a goal of recovery, all of these impacts must be examined in detail and a clear plan, measurable standards, and required monitoring laid out.

Since the RMP was unfortunately developed to a significant part on the grazing desires of the local Working Group, which is dominated by ranchers, the threat of destructive mowing, chopping, hacking, rotobeating, crushing, herbiciding and other “treatments” and even more livestock facility development to try to futilely promote grass and forbs in lands that continue to be grazed will likely be pre-eminent.

This is made clear, where the “restoration toolbox” is chemical, seeding and planting, an unknown and scientifically unsubstantiated category called “targeted grazing”, and prescribed fire”.

There is not even a requirement to use only native species in restoration. We have communicated with BLM many times with concern about their continued use of exotics mixed in with large-sized coarse native cultivars. BLM refuses to use small statured native species to quell fire spread naturally. We have raised serious concerns about local native ecotypes being harmed by use of these large coarse grass cultivars - that sometimes are not even the same species as the natives they are substituted for. Recent pollinator studies in the Great Basin show there may be significant impacts from use of aberrant and non-local plant material. Instead, the FEIS provides all kinds of excuses for BLM to never have to use native species. There is no emphasis on local native ecotypes.

We do not support the construction of all the new fences with the scattered reference areas – and any reference areas, at a minimum, must use existing fencing. In all of Alt IV and VI, there is no MA for removal of grazing from currently grazed areas anywhere other than reference areas. The “Toolbox” to restore or “treat” does not include removal of grazing.

Alt V appears to rely on the FRCC’s contrived “historic” vegetation communities. Just what BLM believes this to be in 2014 is not defined. There is no assurance that anything will be achieved, or significant progress be made. BLM is only required to “move toward” *“historic veg communities by sustaining, improving, or increasing native plant communities that provide habitat for sage-grouse or other special status species”*. The word “or” means all that BLM needs to do is pretty much continue the current level of loss/degradation.

Under all VMAS, BLM must specify that removal of grazing through passive restoration to be applied to areas of native shrublands to allow healing of understories, as well as native grasslands and all treated or restored areas where there is risk of cheatgrass increases and/or dominance. Active restoration in native grasslands should involve planting locally adapted ecotypes of native shrubs, and other native species ecotypes.

The limited MAs are designed to not significantly alter the vast wastelands of exotic

seedlings very much. BLM often would not even try to restore all “native grasslands” - whatever these are, and often coarse pseudo-native cultivars are claimed to be native such as Secar bbwg. BLM must rely on local ecotypes only.

We support DEIS Alt V, VMA B, Goal IV which is to “restore 50% of sagebrush sea annual communities”. In DEIS Alt V MAs BLM would “treat 67% of non-native perennials to introduce shrubs - we requested that BLM add the following: “remove significant acreages of large non-native perennials and re-seed with natives to produce natural composition, function, and structure”. The FEIS does not appear to provide an alternative to effectively do so. Alt VI does not do so. Why wouldn't BLM aim to restore all native grassland – as it is the easiest grass community to try to recover native biodiversity.

We support native shrubland not being a target of active restoration except for inter-seeding shrubs. BLM's disturbance-oriented “toolbox” maximizes risk of disturbance-related weeds. We are concerned that there is no specific mention of removing or greatly reducing livestock grazing **to promote passive restoration**. Full consideration of additional stress placed on grazed communities with predicted climate change effects must be presented. Passive restoration, i.e. reducing disturbance, aids in buffering sagebrush vegetation communities from the many stress of climate change. These include increased cheatgrass risk, hotter temperatures, more rapid and erosive runoff events, less precip falling as snow, more erratic weather and weather extremes, etc. Sec. Order 3289A1 requires BLM address actions to prevent and mitigate climate change effects, But instead of developing a suitable range of alternatives to mitigate these effects, BLM increases the likelihood of adverse effects of climate change by increasing livestock disturbance, gutting ACECs which enable integrated and priority management to prevent natural resources from environmental harm, provides minimal actions to recover damaged riparian areas, forsakes protective annual measurable use standards to limit annual grazing harms and ensure progress is being made under the FRH, etc. See Steinfeld et al. 2006, Beschta et al. 2012, 2014, Comer et al. 2012, Manier et al. 2013. BLM has failed to describe in detail how its actions will reverse the depletion and desertification trajectory in the JFO that feed into and worsen climate change effects. For example, cheatgrass is known to be advancing in hotter, drier sites. See Peterson (2007), Great Basin Ecoregional analysis, now the Comer et al. 2012 REA.

BLM must specify in detail what “managed treatments” means in WSAs/Wilderness. What would be a “Minimum” of treatment? The FEIS Alt VI greatly lacks measures to protect wilderness and wild land values from the adverse effects of grazing disturbance, and combined treatment effects on natural and biological values and impairment of recreational uses and enjoyment.

BLM should focus on restoring shrubs to ALL “native grassland” communities. The intense livestock grazing in the Jarbidge is retarding and hindering recovery through loss of shrub seedlings, battering and breakage of both young and mature shrubs. It is reducing seed production and shrub recovery rates, and now promoting cheatgrass in interspaces.

BLM must clarify what it means by unvegetated areas – as mapping shows lands burned in the aftermath of Murphy Fire were classified by BLM as unvegetated. Does this mean that following future fires, sagebrush and local native ecotype perennials will not be seeded?

It is unclear how BLM's reference to weed and fire ecology sections will play into/be overlaid with actions related to Vegetation. Since these RMP sections lack adequate consideration of buffering and mitigation measures for climate change adverse effects and grazing-caused desertification effects. Even more uncertainty is added. See also Protest discussions of the uncertainty, confusion and changing nature of FRCC and agency inputs in modeling of historical disturbance intervals.

At times, the EIS limits treatments in non-native vegetation communities to ensure that the crested wheatgrass/swg or forage kochia weed can't be removed! Why is care being taken in non-native communities - compared to less care under the RMP in native grass areas?

FEIS 2-286, MA-21 actually makes sense – and should be the foundation of all alternatives, phrased as **“focus restoration treatments [DELETE “for each VMA”] on habitat for sage-grouse or other special status species”**. BLM must revise this VMA segregation of the FO - and get rid of the artificial VMA categories that draw arbitrary lines across the FO. This is meaningless to sage-grouse and other wildlife in the Jarbidge – where research has long shown that birds move all over the landscape especially the more fragmented that the landscape is. See Commons-Kemner (circa 2003), recent USAF research, and other studies up to the present – including recent IDFG Progress Reports.

There is no analysis of management actions that will be taken for microbiotic crusts. BLM must apply a concrete plan and direction with mandatory measurable use standard. We remind BLM that healthy microbiotic crusts in the sagebrush matrix as well as on the surface of slickspots help prevent weed invasion into the matrix and slickspots.

There is no adequate analysis of the effectiveness of various “tools” – and the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of one form of “treatment” or “Tool” vs. the other. This is more indication that under Alt IV removal of grazing is not going to be a BLM “tool”.

We Protest all of these deficiencies and unresolved conflicts.

More Grazing Section Concerns

FEIS “Impacts” analysis for various Resources is greatly inadequate to address the broad range of adverse ecological impacts to sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, loggerhead shrike, and many other important and sensitive species – across all alternatives. BLM provides only limited citations to support its various vegetation, fuels, fire and other FEIS sections in Alt VI and elsewhere.

BLM resorted to a study on raptors in the Great Plains (an entirely different ecosystem that evolved with large herds of hoofed animals – bison) to try to claim that the small mammal prey base for the ferruginous hawk is not affected by grazing. BLM forgot about its own series of Klott and others small mammal and small animal surveys/inventories where BLM itself found that vast areas were devoid of nearly all wildlife except weedy deer mice. This kind of incomplete, biased presentation of information must be greatly revised and a new range of alternatives developed that are based on ecological reality.

The FEIS Section 4.3.7.3 sage-grouse and other TES species discussions and alternatives analysis fails to provide sufficient detailed current scientific information and analysis, including in the specific context of the Jarbidge, so that a reasoned understanding of the degree and severity of threats and causal factors can be obtained by a reader. It is impossible to properly analyze direct, indirect and cumulative effects of BLM actions under the limited and industry-subservient alternatives.

We are greatly concerned that BLM relies on “transplants” of rare species – rather than protection of functioning systems and native species populations that are viable. FEIS 4-423.

FEIS 4-423 shows BLM relied on the 2007 Jarbidge LWG GRSG mapping – that selectively cut out habitat for important permittees.

BLM ignores PPH and PGH, and instead describes 988,000 acres of sage-grouse “management area” with no legally binding protections of any kind, and with a mere 305,000 acres of key habitat, This appears to deviate sharply from the ID GRSG conservation plan of 2006.

FEIS table 4-164 contains observations of species in habitats that no longer exist (example, pygmy rabbit, sage-grouse lek sites in several areas). It is unclear what the time frame of the info is for sage-grouse and several other wildlife species. BLM must assess, and has failed to do so, the dramatic range contractions that have occurred since the 1980s RMP.

BLM even tries to make excuses for inflicting very harmful spring grazing on native bunchgrasses during the active and critical growing periods (4-402). This practice has long known to result in significant depletion to native grasses and forbs,

In DEIS at 4-403, and FEIS 4-436 under No action, BLM states “**at 20% use, residual herbaceous heights of the same grasses are near or exceed the nesting cover requirements**”. But this was nonsense – because Sandberg bluegrass, Stipa, Idaho fescue, etc at 20% use do not meet or exceed the 9 inch residual cover requirements. Plus chronically grazed grasses - no matter the species – tend to grow to less than optimum height. It is also uncertain what BLM is using as a “required” height here – is it 6 inches (listed in laundry BMP list), is it 5 inches? 7 inches? Is it 9 inches, as is required? Or is it the 4” vaguely referenced in relation to the ineffective sage-grouse management zone?

Will BLM apply this on an allotment by allotment, pasture by pasture, or within pasture basis? What if the pasture has a blend of grasses – as so many in the JFO do? It is impossible to tell, or predict outcomes.

However, what is certain in the FEIS is that the extremely high 800 lbs/AUM stocking allocations are based on much greater use.

FEIS 4-436 presents a confusing discussion of utilization and residual cover heights. This is confounded even more by FEIS 4-440 reference to this section. It is unclear what is occurring. We also note that in earlier discussions of grazing, BLM ignores Mack and Thompson 1982, and the Anderson 1991 BLM Tech Bulletin describing how harmful grazing during active and critical growing periods is. BLM proposes to select Alt VI, which “Overall” ranks as only 4th most beneficial of 6 Alts. - among an appallingly deficient range of alternatives for wildlife habitats and populations.

In DEIS 4-403 and FEIS 4-436 to 4-437: What does BLM mean that “the No Action alternative does not have specific utilization levels”? BLM claims that use ranges from less than 20% to more than 50% “in pastures” – Native? Exotic? Blended? It then claims that native grasses at 20% use somehow meet requirements. This provides less than a single page of analysis of livestock grazing impacts. It ignores the fact that BLM regulations allow it to change harmful management – including prohibiting trailing through rare species habitat – immediately. BLM does not need fencing to do this. It can require that herding avoid the area.

EIS Alt II would only apply sage-grouse standards to “allotments with greater than 50% native plant communities”. This is a non-starter (because of the highly fragmented Jarbidge landscape, and the history of the Jarbidge range staff in rigging pasture categories to benefit ranchers having fewer constraints). This is not a valid alternative for an RMP in the context of the woefully altered Jarbidge. BLM has not analyzed a reasonable range of alternatives.

BLM claims that April-June grass growth will result in acceptable nesting conditions, Connelly said **residual cover** – not hypothetical new growth. Grouse are gray and brown --- not green. Residual dried grass cover conceals nesting birds. There will not be adequate early nesting cover, and grazing while birds are nesting heightens nest and egg damage, predation and even includes egg eating by cows. USFWS WBP GRSG Finding, recent Curlew Coates et al. USGS Report.

The FEIS Proposed Action would issue massive amounts of TNR, uncertain targeted grazing, and increase range infrastructure – all these are also non-starters for any alternative in an RMP that must conserve, enhance and restore sagebrush habitats and biota.

In DEIS 4-405. Alt. 3. BLM claimed Alt III (based on fire and resource objectives) impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. High stocking under No Action, similar to Alt 1, has been a complete disaster in preventing fires, In fact, under Alt 1 –and chronic

grazing disturbance promoting flammable cheatgrass, relentless BLM post-fire “rehab” of coarse palatable densely planted grasses, minimal rest and overstocking - the Jarbidge has been conflagration central. This also is not a viable alternative for an RMP that is to conserve sage-grouse. This predicts 30-40% utilization. The discussion of these generalized utilization percentages is highly uncertain and even more muddled in the FEIS. See Catlin critique of BLM utilization. Also, just how does utilization NOW compare to that predicted? And WHAT level of utilization does BLM believe will prevent fires?

Reducing livestock utilization levels doesn't reduce other types of livestock impacts – as we described in comments on the DEIS: Utilization does not address trailing impacts on top of rare species.

This analysis of impacts is a disappointment, and violates BLM Conservation Plans for sage-grouse and other sagebrush species, the NTT IMs, is a violation of FLPMA, and a violation of the SSA.

We Protest these inadequacies as described above.

FEIS Lumps Rare and Other Species Into Guilds/Groups for Generic Analysis and Minimization of Consideration of Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Impacts to Important and Rare Biota

It is inappropriate for BLM to rely on lumping so many important species, often with specific and differing habitat needs, into “guilds”. BLM cannot comply with its sensitive species policy, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act with such cursory analysis.

BLM never analyzes an alternative that would not inflict very high amounts of grazing disturbance. BLM just lumps the whole Field Office together and conducts minimal analysis of the grazing impacts on sensitive plant and animal species (FEIS 4.3.7), and other fish and wildlife (FEIS 4.3.6). Many disturbance and habitat impairment direct, indirect and cumulative harms are swept under the rug.

There is no vegetation-specific, pasture specific, “targeted grazing” impacts, “fuels” impacts or allotment-specific analysis for the various alternative impacts to individual species habitats and populations - or how treatments combined with continued grazing disturbance and potential developments – may affect population viability. This must be undertaken in a SEIS - including across a reasonable range of alternatives.

BLM FEIS rare plants 4-335 devotes a mere vague paragraph to livestock disturbance and other impacts to rare plants. This serves as no basis for making comparisons between the various defective alternatives – where 97% 94%, 96%, 96%, 90% 79% and 96% (FEIS 4-336 to 340) of the land area would be “available” for livestock grazing. The same concerns apply to all elements of the environment and uses analyzed in relation to sensitive plant and animal species in FEIS Section 4.3.7. This includes 4.3.7.2 Special Status Fish and Invertebrates, with flawed assumptions based in significant part on

arbitrary – see for example FEIS 4-235 where BLM continues to insist that improving PFC would improve HC. This section also shows that bull trout habitat surveys did not even include the entire reach, and habitat was approximated over large areas. It is crazy for BLM to apply arbitrary and minimal PFC to Snake River snails and rare amphibian populations as well. PFC says nothing about whether any water flows are actually still present, losses in flows, and the full extent of degradation and risk of continued disturbance to the persistence and stability of the riparian and aquatic system and its ability to support aquatic and other biota. FEIS 4-355 also shows there is no firm commitment to do anything - as “*any stream in an impaired condition would be identified for restoration or improvement within the limits of BLM discretion*”. This allows BLM a huge out.

The FEIS is particularly deficient in relation to limiting adverse grazing disturbance and other impacts to springs, seeps and stream systems including their ability to support sustainable perennial flows in the face of climate change, throughout Section 4.3.7.2. This threatens crucial sage-grouse brood rearing habitats.

Special Status Wildlife throughout FEIS 4.3.7.3 fare similarly to rare plants and aquatic species. The Indicators ignore disturbance effects of grazing and other harmful activities, lumping species into “wildlife groups”. With the limited range of alternatives, parameters like ‘changes in upland acres’ and one Alt vs. the other are largely meaningless. Since the EIS rejects nearly all ACECs, there is no guarantee that species needs will ever be addressed in any coordinate manner, or that they will not suffer irreparable harm.

Despite FEIS alternatives imposing a massive livestock and facility footprint, the limited analysis of livestock grazing in the FEIS (example 4-434 and 4-435), BLM relies on a hand full of cherry-picked old references – ignoring even information it had assembled in the Jarbidge AMS baseline analyses of adverse effects and scientific literature of grazing and other land use activities and disturbances to wildlife across the Jarbidge.

There is no explanation for how the extremely limited information in the FEIS was arrived at – for example, FEIS Table 4-168 “Selected Special Status Wildlife Habitat Components ...” 91 occupied leks, 91 “other” leks – WHAT is this category???, 26 unoccupied. This does not appear to accurately reflect the current state of sage-grouse or other wildlife in the Jarbidge. Also – is BLM claiming it plans to build a very long stringer fence to fence a mere 22,000 acres for bighorn sheep – what is meant by this comparison? This Table reflects the presentation of information throughout all parts of the EIS – much of it is old, or based on presentation of only cherry-picked info presented in a biased light, or has no underlying basis for understanding data origins and analysis leading to rosy predictions.

BLM cannot arbitrarily segregate endangered Bruneau dunes tiger beetles into a “different” sensitive species category. This is another attempt at segregation to avoid addressing impacts of commodity and industrial uses on species. It is counter to requirements for conserving native wildlife violates FLPMA, and the FRH. Several recent papers by Fothergill and others demonstrate the extreme rarity and imperilment of

this species. In fact, BLM's whole strategy in the RMP – as clearly illustrated with the tiger beetle - is designed to push species to the brink of extinction or drive them extinct altogether– not proactively work to conserve them.

BLM elevates big game to special mention –but does not do the same for sage-grouse. Ex: 4-287-4-295. Why do big game receive more analysis than sage-grouse?

The use of Indicators, Guilds, etc.to lump species serve to masks and omit key concerns, threats, species-specific needs critical to conserving habitats and viable populations, and ensuring the species thrive and recover.

4-247 admits that restored habitat may take more than two decades function similarly to intact habitat – shrubsteppe, mountain mahogany mountain, aspen.

BLM in the DEIS claimed “for analysis purpose, all treatments would be implemented in five years”. It is very difficult to believe BLM will act with anything like this much speed. Very significant grazing cuts must be made under a new and expanded range of alternatives. Yet it appears that BLM is going to try to tie cuts to treatments/restoration. See DEIS Chapter 4, Table 4-282. It is unclear if this same assumption is carried forward in the FEIS.

Why does BLM admit that human disturbance can cause displacement and temporal or spatial habitat fragmentation or abandonment – but not list and describe livestock grazing disturbance, displacement, etc.? BLM cannot rely on claims that “all species within a guild react similarly to disturbances or habitat changes” – especially with the broad range of species with quite variable habitat needs it lumps in its guilds.

It is impossible to conduct analysis when BLM heaps an entire other list of assumptions (which we believe are deeply flawed as they relate to vegetation) into the same list. See DEIS at 4-247. This all results in a situation so confusing no clear understanding or analysis can occur.

Even with the big game “guild” – different species have different critical seasonal habitats and biological needs. BLM must analyze all of this. For example, the Jarbidge AMS emphasized the serious adverse effects of the extreme fence density in the Jarbidge on antelope. Research in the Owyhee has shown that bighorn sheep move out of areas when cattle are moved in – yet BLM fails to address this serious adverse impact of the very high levels of Simplot and Brackett grazing that occur in the Jarbidge bighorn sheep habitats, including the ACEC that BLM proposes to gut in its severely flawed Alt VI.

The No action Alt for wildlife has more certainty than the morass of a Preferred Alt in the DEIS and now the appalling FEIS Proposed Action would. No Action directs BLM to establish shrubs on winter range - if shrubs comprise less than 30% weight.

BLM's various Wildlife Trends Tables are not based on adequate baseline and supporting info and analysis for anyone to understand if the directions and predicted changes are

accurate. For example –the fuels actions in Alt II, III and VI could well result in a large-scale loss of habitat.

The broad guild/group categories lumping species that often have very specific needs are inappropriate in the Jarbidge – where such vast areas have very few native species present due to the severe ecological degradation, and protection of remaining native biodiversity is critical.

Mountain lions are native predators – lumping them in with big game (FEIS 3-28) masks their biological role, life history requirements and relegates them to a “commodity” rather than an animal that serves a critical role in predator-prey relations. There is great public concern over the anti-predator attitude and censorship of biologists in state game agencies under the current Commissions of both IDFG and NDOW. BLM must not parrot the current anti-predator attitudes.

3-23. It is impossible to believe that IDFG has no data on mule deer. BLM forgets how dire the situation is for pronghorn – as shown in the AMS. Now with more fires, and alternatives that would impose even more fencing, and maintain near-status quo use (allocations and TNR) there is no clear path for protection of big game species and their habitats.

How specifically is BLM reducing livestock competition with elk? Deer? Pronghorn Antelope? Sage-grouse? This includes fawning and wintering habitats.

BLM constantly downplays the importance of rabbitbrush because the Jarbidge ranchers do not like it– ignoring that this species provides functions of moderating micro-site climate, produces blooms that are alive with native insects that are a critical part of biodiversity, and it provides winter and other food in a greatly depleted environment. The desire of the Brackett and a few other ranchers to destroy through herbicide the rabbitbrush of the Jarbidge must be prohibited in the RMP, but the FEIS fails to do so.

Aspen communities comprise so little of the JFO. Across the west they are now recognized to be greatly threatened by new diseases and climate change. Grazing exacerbates aspen health problems and understory condition. Mechanical browsing or trampling injury wounds trees and promotes fungal infections. Given all the stresses on aspen, and the importance of the avian and other wildlife associated with them, removal of livestock grazing stress from all aspen communities is critical to ensure they are conserved and sustained in the Jarbidge.

DEIS 3-26 to 3-27. BLM’s simplistic Table of a sagebrush guild/group greatly obscures the differences in sagebrush habitat characteristics that various species rely on. Example: mountain big sagebrush vs. Wyoming big sagebrush –and differences between green-tailed towhee and loggerhead shrike habitats. Now in FEIS 3-63, BLM merely presents a Table showing large declines in Brewer’s sparrow and sage thrasher, and sampling at only a single area. Loggerhead shrike require tall complex shrub structure, sage sparrow continuous sagebrush cover, and each of these species has different specific requirements.

See Rich 1977, Vaner Haegen WA State sage-steppe species habitat needs summaries, Dobkin and Sauder 2004. This fails to reflect the status of yellow-billed cuckoo. Why isn't willow flycatcher in the riparian group? Given the woefully deficient riparian measures of the RMP, the native amphibians including western toad, Woodhouse toad, northern leopard frog and Columbia spotted frog, among others, are in serious trouble.

It also appears that the sensitive animal species list in the RMP at 3-57 and 3-58 is not current. Sage thrasher, Brewer's sparrow and sage sparrow are current Idaho BLM sensitive species, for example. It has many species listed as NV only, and this is just not correct. What about Idaho especially since BLM seeks to shunt the important Nevada-managed lands to Elko, for equally poor and deficient, plus inefficient, management oversight.

What similarities do mourning dove and nightsnake have? Lists do not even have white-tailed jackrabbit, pygmy rabbit or other declining or imperiled species on it. In the Draft which formed the framework of the RMP effort, BLM appears to give the same deference to deer mouse, and place this extremely weedy species on a par with other much more scarce animals. BLM lumps sandhill crane (meadow/wetland/marsh vegetation) and yellow-breasted chat (requires dense and expansive riparian shrubs and trees), ignoring the very specific habitat differences of these 2 - and all the other species - in FEIS 3-65. This provides no basis for informed analysis and development of alternatives.

This appears to be being done to bias the BLM analyses based on guilds/lumped species lists - even though the species in any list often have very different and specific needs from one another. BLM's small mammal and other animal inventories found large-scale absence of nearly all native species over large areas, representing large-scale losses in biodiversity. So by BLM placing the one species that was abundant - the disturbance-related deer mouse, which is a species that thrives in a devastated landscape - in its Sagebrush guild in the draft, BLM biased RMP alternatives, analyses, and predicted outcomes about impacts of the industry-centered alternatives to more rosy outcomes. The FEIS guilds/lists have been tweaked somewhat, and species like badger are nowhere to be found - especially missing are sagebrush species.

Burrowing owls occupy sagebrush communities, too - they are not only grassland species. Why is Brewer's blackbird in the grassland guild? Who in the world prepared these lists? It looks like BLM was trying to make it appear that the vast grass and weedlands provided for a range of native species - and bias analysis in favor of its deficient alternative.

These lists fail to take into account elevational changes, and vegetation change with elevation.

Why are golden eagles in a canyonland guild, but not a sagebrush guild? Yes, they nest in canyons -but require vast areas of sagebrush inhabited by jackrabbits to flourish. These lists of guilds are supposed to form the basis for analysis - but they suffer severe omissions and problems. The RMP is woefully lacking in honest detail and analysis of

the loss of many of these species across vast areas of the JFO.

BLM cannot claim just because a couple species in a guild might be present, that lands are meeting requirements for biodiversity and species habitats.

BLM's guilds are so broad that they lump species with greatly different habitat together – and generalists with specialists - spotted sandpipers and long-tailed vole. Like all the other laundry lists of the RMP, these seem designed to mask valid analysis of impacts.

FEIS at 3-31 admits that **less than 1% of the FO should be grassland, where shrub cover is less than 2%, yet 33% was mapped as grassland**. It appears that this percentage of **33% does not reflect the current reality** – and does not adequately take into account the aftermath of the Murphy Fire. If it does not, then the percentage is **likely 60-70% or more???** Map 10 shows around 33% non-native perennial, and perennial and annual grassland. This map has nearly one-third of the FO shown as Unvegetated – i.e. the Murphy Complex. If a reader closely scrutinizes the following Map, Map 10 (Page M-11), the Projected 2012 Vegetation, it appears that 60-70% of the FO is grassland.

Mountain mahogany avian species would be much at risk for wind farm development – since so much of the remaining mahogany habitat is in the Foothills area. BLM in all instances must analyze impacts to species of its allocations/alternatives.

So the question is: WHAT was the entire RMP development of alternatives and analysis of impacts throughout the RMP based on in regards to vegetation and wildlife/sensitive species? Was it based percentage on DEIS Grassland – Map 9 (Page M-10), or Map 10 (Page M-11), the projected 2012 cover that reflects grass and vast shrubless expanses? On 33% grassland cover – or 60-70% grassland cover? Is it based on deer mice being key components of sagebrush guilds? How was this all then carried forward in the glib assumptions of the FEIS that the massive disturbance burden of Alt VI could somehow result in sustainable wildlife habitats and populations?

Why were deer mice in sagebrush guilds only – when they are the primary species that thrives in grass monocultures? These flaws in EIS development are so fundamental that they must be purposeful – to water down recognition of adverse outcomes from the RMP's DEIS preferred and FEIS proposed action and other commodity and industry-oriented alternatives.

BLM's DEIS lumped sagebrush species together that were not combined in Wisdom ICBEMP analyses. In fact, salt desert and lower elevation sagebrush species were analyzed separately from other sagebrush species. BLM erroneously claimed that "limited information is available" for special status wildlife (including sage-grouse that are lumped in with the guild). This is not true, and has not been corrected in the FEIS. There are many studies available especially for some species (sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit), and numerous studies on loggerhead shrike and other migratory bird species, as well as raptors. Further, the whole reason that BLM is supposed to be conducting an EIS is to determine how to conserve species. A SEIS must be prepared.

The statement in the DEIS was that 1,277,000 acres historically contained sagebrush, and “currently 463,000 acres of sagebrush steppe remain”. How much less is that now – following more fires? Some of the areas that BLM has mapped as Native shrubland in M-11 in the DEIS have very little sagebrush or other shrubs.

BLM uses old and outdated information on sage-grouse nesting in relation to leks - it is known that grouse including in the Jarbidge – may move considerable distances to nest, and roam over vast distances in the course of the year –such as up to higher elevations on the HT Forest in summer and for brood rearing, and exhibit a degree of nest site fidelity.

DEIS 3-44 underplayed the crisis facing sage-grouse and sagebrush species. **“Between 1983 and 2006, active leks ... declined from 152 to 39 due to habitat change”**. What are the numbers of birds on the remaining leks? What has been the fate and trend of those 39 leks? How are they dispersed spatially? Please provide mapping. This is now followed by the FEIS minimal information in 3-60 to 3-61. BLM refers to the WAFWA management zone, but fails to address the local and regional populations. How can there have been 463,000 acres of sagebrush steppe in 2006-2007, and now the FEIS states key habitat is approximately 311,000 acres? BLM does not even consider all leks to be in key habitat. Why?

BLM references briefly the Garton et al. analysis, but has failed to conduct its own analysis up to the present using the same techniques to understand the plight of the local and regional populations. Garton et al. was based on 2007 and prior lek counts, so do not reflect the large-scale recent changes post-Murphy and as very heavy extensive grazing disturbance has continued. See WWP comments on recent AGPs to understand the severity of grazing disturbance, repeated grazing, additive and cumulative grazing the totality of which is never measured especially with spring grazing, etc.

How can the habitat security of lekking, nesting, brood rearing and wintering sage-grouse be maximized? This is a question that the EIS and its alternatives have not adequately assessed. This cannot be answered until BLM does what the SSA requires it to do - conduct a detailed site-specific analysis of the current habitat conditions and population status of sage-grouse across the JFO – taking into full account the degree and severity of losses and degradation across the FO and surrounding lands – as well as severe losses in other portions of the biome. Then it must develop effective conservation measures under a greatly reduced livestock stocking, infrastructure and roading load and footprint.

BLM in this section devotes a single paragraph to sage-grouse. This serves as no basis for conducting a valid analysis of any of the alternatives, or for understanding threats, developing a viable plan to conserve the species, etc. The section on Habitat fragmentation (3-48) is minimal. There is no current science applied on the severity of losses to persistence of a viable population. It provides no overlay of all the threats tied to the land areas of the JFO so that proper sage-grouse conservation planning and alternative development can occur

BLM must radically revise its analysis of sage-grouse and all rare and declining species, and develop a range of alternatives that would honestly act to conserve sage-grouse and other wildlife, rare plants, aquatic species, recreational uses, clean air and clean water, and other values of the public lands.

FEIS 4-167 Table is not based on a hard look or critical analysis of the serious adverse effects and risks of fuelbreak and all the other proposed cattle forage treatment weed infestation under the massive grazing and other disturbance loads the Proposed Action would impose. FEIS 4-430 claims there will magically be increased suitable habitat due to “restoration”. But this ignores the devastating impact of the livestock grazing disturbance load to be imposed, along with the livestock infrastructure, vast livestock-linked road network, and the whole range of other development and disturbance that could be inflicted – including in these very same “treated” areas under the flawed RMP.

The FEIS analyses are divorced from the grim reality that BLM cannot maintain the massive livestock grazing load and many ways to intensify grazing even more, plus impose all the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of development and energy intrusions - and provide for sustainable wildlife, sensitive species, watershed, clean perennial water flow, or a host of other sustainable uses in the Jarbidge.

FEIS admits 4-461 that ACECs “can help reduce human disturbance, reduce route density, and seasonally restrict land use authorizations” and that “these actions influence wildlife habitat, habitat use and populations”. Yet Alt VI casts aside any sage-grouse and LEPA ACECs, and guts the bighorn sheep ACEC. There is no solid protection whatsoever provided by the so-called “sage-grouse management area” (see FEIS 4-470). Alt VI is in most instances WORSE than status quo management across this landscape. The so-called grouse “management area” would suffer from an immense disturbance footprint due to: extremely high and uncertain levels of grazing based on “forage” and not the welter of other grazing disturbance impacts; greatly inadequate loose and minimal vegetation non-binding criteria. 4 inches is mentioned and is not sufficient to provide necessary residual cover for sage-grouse. It would not allow recovery of the severely damaged forbs and native understory. It would not prevent the major disturbances of imposing extensive spring and other periods of grazing in sage-grouse and other sensitive species crucial habitats. There is no basis (other than rigged analysis and alternatives with poison pills) for the BLM claim that “overall Alt VI would provide the second most benefit to special status species at the landscape scale”. This statement demonstrates the inadequate range of alternatives, too!

Jarbidge BLM has purposefully developed a series of near-status quo – or worse – harmful alternatives, and has purposefully structured alternatives that would reduce livestock or designate ACECs that have “poison pill” components. BLM rigs the structure of the alternatives and its analysis to make its flawed “comparisons” favor the agency industry-centered alternative *du jour*. Gregg et al. 1994, Fleischner 1994,

Connelly et al. 2000, Belsky and Gelbard 2000, Connelly et al. 2004, Braun 2006, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, Manier et al. 2013, Beschta et al. 2012, 2014.

BLM lays out very low bars – like Alts. II and III – to try to make an ecologically terrible outcome under Alt IV (DEIS) and now Alt VI (FEIS)– a close relative of Alt II, III seem meagerly beneficial. In comparing effects, BLM repeatedly ranks Alternatives (and the alternatives with somewhat more favorable provisions are also rigged with poison pills). So if an alternative is rated third most beneficial for one factor or another – and the range of alternatives is very similar and all continue to impose very high burdens of grazing almost everywhere, high levels of extractive uses, and massive fuels/forage “treatments”, then the comparison becomes largely meaningless. BLM has violated NEPA and the SSA, and failed to consider a reasonable range of alternatives. Alternatives are the heart of the NEPA process.

Again, sage-grouse need significant grass and shrub cover for protection from predators, particularly during nesting season, and females will preferentially choose nesting sites based on these qualities (Hagen et al. 2007, p. 46). The reduction of grass heights due to livestock grazing in sage-grouse nesting and brood-rearing areas has been shown to negatively affect nesting success when cover is reduced below the 18 cm (7 in.) needed for predation avoidance (Gregg *et al.* 1994, p. 165). In heavily fragmented and intensively grazed landscapes like the Jarbidge with its very small pastures and heavy fence densities, mesopredators and nest and egg predators are abundant –due to the attraction and subsidies of dead livestock and carrion, afterbirth, artificial upland water developments, supplement that is required to keep the cows alive in the depleted ranges, frequent human disturbance, etc. See Boarman and other papers discussing the need to reduce and minimize raven and other subsidies, The FEIS has ignore all of this – yet at the same time the greedy local livestock interests promote predator killing and/or poisoning. See also USFWS Gunnison grouse Finding describing how livestock grazing and infrastructure promote predation.

BLM’s FEIS and alternatives lack any adequate plan to control predation through regulation of livestock use and subsidies associated with the immense footprint of grazing in the Jarbidge.

BLM’s Special Status Species Policy, BLM Manual, Section 6840, requires that BLM managers “**obtain and use the best available information deemed necessary to evaluate the status of special status species in areas affected by land use plans . . .**” Policy at 6840.22A. BLM has a 2004 National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy, which BLM adopted “to guide future actions for conserving sage-grouse and associated sage-brush habitats,” and “help BLM ensure that it successfully incorporates sage-grouse conservation measures into all of its ongoing programs and activities.”

We Protest the FEIS inadequacies and harmful actions as described above.

Recent BLM Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance Ignored in RMP FEIS and Alternatives

Under the National Sage-grouse Planning Strategy initiated in 2011, designed to avoid sage-grouse being listed under the ESA, BLM is in the process of amending its Resource Management Plans across the sage-grouse range to include additional conservation measures for sage-grouse. *See* 76 Fed. Reg. 77009 (Dec. 7, 2011) (Notice of Intent to Prepare EISs). *See* WWP comments in inadequacy of this BLM EIS Planning to date.

As part of this process, the Dept. of Interior convened its “Sage-grouse National Technical Team” of experts to review the best available science and make recommendations for sage-grouse conservation measures. On December 21, 2011, BLM’s National Technical Team released its “Report on National Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Measures.” (“NTT Report”). The NTT Report established the following overriding “goal”: “**Maintain and/or increase sage-grouse abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which populations depend in cooperation with other conservation partners.**” *Id.*

To serve this goal, the NTT Report stated that BLM “will strive to maintain or increase current distribution and abundance of sage-grouse on BLM administered lands in support of the range-wide goals.” *Id.* According to the NTT Report, BLM has also adopted a “new paradigm” for sage-grouse management:

*Through the establishment of the National Sage-grouse Planning Strategy, BLM has committed to a **new paradigm** in managing the sagebrush landscape. . . . Land uses, habitat treatments, and anthropogenic disturbances will need to be managed below thresholds necessary to conserve not only local sage-grouse populations, but sagebrush communities and landscapes as well. Management priorities will need to be shifted and balanced to **maximize benefits to sage-grouse habitats and populations in priority habitats.** *Id.* at 6-7 (emphases added).*

The NTT Report contains specific management recommendations on Range Management and Monitoring of Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats, among other things. NTT report at 14, 28.

BLM subsequently issued IM 2012-043 on Dec. 27, 2011 in order to implement the NTT report in “**ongoing proposed authorizations and activities that affect the Greater Sage-grouse . . . and its habitat**” while the national sage-grouse planning process is underway. The report explains that BLM new paradigm will emphasize: *1) Protection of unfragmented habitats; 2) Minimization of habitat loss and fragmentation; and 3) Management of habitats to maintain, enhance, or restore conditions that meet Greater Sage-Grouse life history needs.* *Id.* at 1. It identifies two categories of habitat, “preliminary priority habitats” (PPH) and “preliminary general habitat” (PGH). *Id.* PPH “comprises areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable Greater Sage-Grouse populations,” including “breeding, late brood-rearing, and winter concentration areas.” *Id.* PGH includes “areas of occupied seasonal or year-round habitat outside of priority habitat.” *Id.*

Because sage-grouse is now a candidate species for ESA listing, that Policy directs BLM to

“ensure that actions requiring authorization or approval by [BLM] are consistent with the conservation needs of special status species and do not contribute to the need to list any special status species . . . under the provisions of the ESA.” *Id.*, § 6840.02 (emphasis added). Likewise, among the “guiding principles” of BLM’s 2004 National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy is that “**BLM use the best available science and other relevant information to develop conservation efforts for sage-grouse and sagebrush habitats.**” (emphasis added).

The NTT report contains sections on Range Management and Monitoring. And the specific provisions counsel against the exact type of actions authorized here.

For grazing, the NTT report states:

- “Implement management actions ([including] grazing decisions . . .) to **modify grazing management to meet seasonal sage-grouse habitat requirements** (Connelly et al. 2011c). Consider singly, or in combination, changes in: 1) Season of timing of use; 2) Numbers of livestock (includes temporary **non-use** or livestock removal); 3) Distribution of livestock use; 4) Intensity of use; and 5) Type of livestock . . .” NTT report at 15 (emphasis added).

The RMP has no real analysis range and controls on harmful seasons and manner of livestock use, as required by the NTT and IMs. It increases stocking even potentially above above actual use, lacks any rest or non-use except in tiny or inaccessible areas, and would impose massive and unknown amounts of concentrated TNR and other harmful use without mandatory measurable controls.

It would increase use in inadequately assessed and mitigated ways in important seasonal habitats by relying on livestock “forage” as the overwhelming basis for allocations, the same and even more of a facility burden, harmful and/or ineffective rotation and other schemes (see Manier et al. 2013), and no plan for removal of livestock and significant rest periods so any taxpayer investment in claimed “restoration” actions could take place, not be destroyed. See Arkle 2014 report on failed fire rehab.

BLM is to: Evaluate **existing** structural range improvements . . . to make sure they **conserve, enhance or restore sage-grouse habitat.**” *Id.* at 17 (emphasis added).

BLM has not done this. It did not carefully assess the impacts of the existing battery of projects on important seasonal habitats, on extending predation, West Nile, depletion of forbs, bunchgrasses, sagebrush cover, and in promoting disturbance of grouse habitats by cattle – thus promoting predation of nests, eggs and adult birds. See Jarbidge AMS, USFWS GRSG WBP Finding.

The GRSG WBP Finding repeatedly noted the risk and threat posed by habitat fragmentation, and a series of overlapping threats affecting populations. BLM in the FEIS certainly never adequately addressed this –including the cumulative impacts of all the disturbances under the high habitat disturbance load of the alternative allocations, plus the severe degradation on surrounding BLM Elko, Burley and HT Forest, state, and private lands. Small maps don't adequately show roads. Fragmentation for grouse use and seasonal habitats is not addressed in any detail that allows understanding of the actual

impacts to sage-grouse seasonal habitats and crucial habitat components. BLM also never examined how the battery of activities and projects on neighboring allotments may impact the important seasonal habitats there, and thus the population.

BLM rigged alternatives with poison pills, and often used red herrings to minimize the benefits of any reduced grazing, and rejected analysis of No Grazing with a flawed and minimal analysis.

The IM 2012-043 carries through the NTT concerns. *See, e.g.*, IM 2012-043 at p. 5 (Grazing Permit/Leases Issuance/Grazing Management) (“Evaluate the potential risk to Greater Sage-Grouse and its habitats from **existing structural range improvements**. Address those structural range improvements identified as posing a risk **during the renewal process**.”)

BLM did not adequately evaluate the overall and cumulative risk posed by the EIS alternative actions to important seasonal habitats. It did not evaluate risk of construction disturbance and impacts. It did not evaluate the depletion and disturbance risks posed by the projects, These include:

Risk of habitat declines in quality (from chronic depletion of native vegetation -grass, forbs, sage cover) and soils and microbiotic crusts (including the extreme livestock disturbance load promoting weeds) that will extend 1-2 miles outward from upland artificial water sources for example. And these water sources may proliferate -both temporarily and permanently under the RMP’s intensive grazing, targeted grazing, fuels grazing, TNR, sacrifice area “Reserve Common Allotments”, etc.

Risk posed by elevated predator perches in the midst of treeless sage expanses;

Risk of significant increases in avian predators, and mesopredators from existing facilities and potential expansion, and poor an uncontrolled management practices that promote nest and egg predation, along with inadequate protective residual grass and structurally intact sagebrush cover.

Risk of additional habitat fragmentation under the RMP’s grazing, incessant “treatment”, TNR, targeted grazing and fuelbreaks, plus infrastructure, energy development, transmission, mining, ROWs (including the many Air Force ROWs), immense road footprint, etc. would cause.

Risk posed by cumulative effects of grazing schemes, plus facilities in disturbing sage-grouse during sensitive nesting and brood rearing periods (and also adversely affecting many other sensitive species migratory birds, big game, etc.) while facilities extend chronic depletion degrading their habitats.

Since BLM did not do this, it cannot have carefully examined risk to the local population (undergoing serious decline with area of occupied leks shrinking/range contraction in the local area and across the region, and declining neighboring populations as well. There are

few leks left over vast land areas, many of the leks have very low numbers of birds, lek routes with few birds have been abandoned thus artificially inflating the numbers counted in some more recent surveys.

The FEIS lacks a careful, hard look at the conflicts posed by existing facilities to leks, nesting areas, wintering habitats, or other areas. Like all parts of the RMP, the various Tables in the FEIS related to sage-grouse and other wildlife often do not provide sufficient environmental context to understand how numbers were arrived at, or if much of the area examined was actually used or usable by sage-grouse. Thus, BLM never really examines risks posed by existing or expanded facilities and management, or both combined.

In the case of West Nile, BLM never takes a hard look at the areas where the massive load of leaking pipelines, stagnant water troughs, vile stagnant stock ponds and other livestock facilities, plus 1000 plus pound cattle trampling disturbance causing deep stagnant water hoof depressions - will promote conditions suitable for mosquitoes and/or place waters in the midst of areas that currently do not have any surface water. It never examines the role of facilities and grazing during nesting periods coupled with lack of necessary residual cover in sagebrush habitats in dramatically increasing nest and egg predation, with predated eggs observed by WWP during site visits.

BLM refuses to consider large blocks of livestock-free nesting habitats across allotments in spring to provide habitat security. There are no real controls on carrion, supplements, artificial water sources, etc. luring nest and egg predators into the areas where sage-grouse are attempting to nest. WWP Jarbidge overflights observe only small numbers of ravens in areas of land where cattle were not present, but large numbers in areas being grazed. BLM has refused to require reasonable limitations on livestock use and management practices - as the abusive ranchers clamor for ecosystem disruptive predator killing rather than cleaning up their act.

Timely and pertinent monitoring methods are necessary to understand impacts of RMP actions on sagebrush habitats, and the need for significant change and mitigation measures. Yet the RMP proposes only spotty, meager and minimal monitoring at cherry-picked sites. As the NNT describes: "Sage-grouse select habitats at multiple scales across large landscapes . . . , which monitoring strategies for sage-grouse habitats must reflect. . . . At the project level, a truly effective monitoring strategy will include measures as to how plant communities respond, how that relates to structural and other sage-grouse habitat requirements, and how sage-grouse populations respond demographically. Quantitative data for habitat measurements should be collected that are sensitive to the land use change being proposed, [and] monitoring must occur over the proper time frames to evaluate temporal variation of important components of sage-grouse habitats". *Id.* at 29 (citing literature).

"Furthermore, the **BLM National Technical Team report (USDI-BLM, 2012)** recommends, "*Managing livestock grazing to maintain residual cover of herbaceous vegetation so as to reduce predation during nesting may be the most beneficial for sage-grouse populations ...*" and "*Within priority sage-grouse habitat, incorporate sage-grouse habitat objectives and management considerations into all BLM grazing allotments through AMPs or permit renewals.*" EA at 22. The RMP must lay a clear plan and

effective foundation for this all by clear, required management actions in the RMP to efficiently guide permit renewals.

The FEIS and limited near-status quo alternatives including the appalling Alt VI certainly do not follow the BLM's own sage-grouse guidance. Indeed, they do the opposite. Instead of modifying grazing to meet seasonal habitat requirements, BLM maintains and/or worsens status quo grazing practices, including spring grazing in lek and nesting habitat, twice-over grazing, with no discussion of why the guidance is being ignored. BLM under the loose and uncertain TNR and other provisions may radically increase the number of livestock actually being grazed and/or increase concentrated use. BLM may authorize multiple new livestock projects such as fences and troughs in sage-grouse habitat, despite the blatant lack of benefit to sage-grouse habitat. No analysis is given to whether modifications are needed to preserve the continuity of riparian areas. There is no current science-based discussion of how the FEIS alternatives will “conserve, enhance, and restore” sage-grouse habitat. Of course, they will not do so. Nor does BLM evaluate the risks to sage-grouse or their habitat from **existing** range projects so it can plan to alter and remove harmful facilities and minimize habitat fragmentation while reducing the heavy grazing disturbance caused by facilities.

The FEIS violates NEPA, the SSA and BLM's own often-repeated conservation promises for sage-grouse including the NTT, and the sensitive species policy by failing to assess a reasonable range of alternatives, and by failing to take a hard look at all the serious adverse direct indirect and cumulative effects (based on current science) of the meager range of alternatives it does consider. Braun 2006, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, USFWS GRSW WBP Finding, Resiner et al. 2013, Beschta et al. 2012, 2014, Manier et al. 2013. NEPA requires accurate scientific analysis, and that the agency disclose and discuss responsible opposing views and take a hard look at all environmental consequences of the proposed action.

The FEIS cumulative impacts analyses are greatly deficient. Example FEIS pages 4-471-4-486 series of Tables and paragraphs, and throughout the RMP. BLM merely presents lists of leks in some areas in Tables, uses 2011 and prior info, fails to actually assess and take a hard look at threats to the local, regional and other populations, and rate and severity of population declines and predicted further losses.

As WWP described in our comments on the ID and NV BLM GRSW DEIS, BLM must analyze population trends and trajectories by transparently updating analysis similar to that of Garton et al. in Knick and Connelly 2009/2011. The Garton analysis only used 2007 and prior data – and thus did not reflect the massive effects of the Murphy and other recent fires including across Nevada (see Espinosa and Phenix 2008, for example) and continued high levels of grazing in the Jarbidge and across much of the region. See WWP GRSW Comments on cd.

There is also an alarming recent trend by state agencies, and then BLM is pressured to follow suit, to minimize habitat protections and reduce high priority/key/crucial habitat areas – at the same time as threats are mounting. This of course makes no sense – but in

reality habitat is being mapped away. BLM must fully assess the threat that the regional and range-wide mapping efforts pose.

BLM ignores full assessment of the population implications of contraction of land area with occupied leks, the losses of leks, the much more intensive agency counting efforts resulting in much higher percentage of birds being counted thus inflating population estimates for relative comparisons over time, etc.

The BLM fails to analyze the proposed grazing burden and heavy burden of other energy, minerals, ROWs, transportation, etc. burden on all aspects of breeding, winter and summer and other important seasonal habitats.

BLM analyzed no alternatives that require measurable levels of livestock use as Terms and Conditions of Permits, i.e. there is no alternative that ensures that any riparian and upland livestock use levels are actually met, and not chronically exceeded - thus causing further irreparable harm and loss to sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

BLM analyzed no alternatives that removed grazing disturbance (and all the problems it brings – from cows eating eggs, flushing birds from nest resulting in increased predation, stripping nesting cover, impairing quality and health of native vegetation during active and critical growing period use, etc.) during the spring sage-grouse and other sensitive species nesting/birthing/young bearing and early brood rearing/young rearing periods.

BLM did not analyze a reasonable range of alternatives for removal of livestock from areas of considerable conflict with sage-grouse or other sensitive species or resource depletion/damage needs, while continuing use on others - to provide for passive restoration while grazing continued with conservative and effective measurable standards in others.

Similarly, there is no analysis of the bighorn population and habitats - merely land ownership and some infrastructure figures –without relating the latter to habitat conditions. If BLM is so concerned about infrastructure and bighorns, then why is cogent analysis of the effects of infrastructure – say on sage-grouse as well not provided – such as the extreme water development, road and fence network? Why is there no real analysis of the degree of habitat loss, lack of connectivity, the quality and quantity of habitats, the extent and percent of cheatgrass in understories or dominating the landscape across the affected local and regional GRSG and other wildlife populations spanning Elko BLM, HT Forest, Burley BLM lands?

FEIS Table 4-97. This Table highlights out the failure and refusal of BLM to develop any real conservation alternatives for effective conservation of rare species and minimizing risks to their survival. Because of subterfuges in claiming that Alt V would have less shrub recovery because BLM purposefully structure Alt V to have no shrub planting (active restoration) and just passive restoration. If BLM were to just include a “plant shrubs” provision in Alt V, and the direction of the change arrow would change! BLM has purposefully constructed Alternatives to bias the outcome towards the abysmal Alt.

IV that will not conserve sage-grouse.

BLM has provided no substantial science-based analysis to show that it will be able to effectively control wildfire – especially with high numbers of livestock continuing to promote flammable cheatgrass.

We vainly turned to the Impacts from Livestock grazing section, referred to here, to understand the referenced “targeted grazing”. We found minimal analysis. See Manier et al. 2013 debunking range rosy claims of various grazing systems.

We Protest all of these deficiencies for the reasons described above.

Special Status Plants

FEIS 3.3.7.1. omits critical baseline information and analysis of the actual status of habitats and populations of these species. How degraded are habitats? How much of the habitat for all of these species is at risk to cheatgrass invasion under the grazing disturbance and other allocations of the RMP? With no controls on trampling which promotes invasive annuals? How will the range of alternatives and each alternative aggravate conditions – and increase risk? BLM must provide greatly updated mapping and analysis to properly depict potential and occupied habitat, habitats critical for restoration, and clear and effective recovery planning in a greatly revised alternative range.

The RMP, in its basically ignoring ecological conditions related to understanding soil integrity and health provides no basis for valid understanding of impacts to alternatives and the GOMAs to rare plants. See FEIS Table 3-29, for the large number of rare plants “potentially” occurring. Table 3-30 shows how limited BLM data actually is, FEIS 3-47 shows that data is not current and that BLM fails to provide a proper baseline for the RMP analysis.

There is no adequate basis for understanding the impacts of the severe grazing pressures under many parts of the range of alternatives on pollinators for native plants – including life stages in soils, and their dispersion across the landscape. In such a forb-depleted area, native pollinators become a significant concern. Why does BLM put out an RMP in late 2010 that has 2008 plant status? BLM could have readily revised this information, too.

Why is there no mapping that shows the location and dispersion of these rare plant species in the FO? The location of potential vs. occupied habitat? The presence of cheatgrass in understories at various percentages? What percentage of habitats for each species are currently occupied?

We Protest these the above deficiencies for the reasons described above.

Slickspot Peppergrass Minimal Analysis

Despite all the efforts made to try to conserve slickspot peppergrass by WWP and others, BLM merely lists this species and the VMAs in Table 3-31, and does not identify the various HIP/Habitat Integrity ratings applied to the Element Occurrences. It does not even discuss population vigor, habitat quality, causes of degradation - see FEIS Table 3-30. claims population vigor “fair” and habitat quality Fair. This, of course, is counter to all the information habitat degradation affecting specific Element Occurrences. Greatly revised and detailed analysis of LEPA Habitats and threats to EOs and populations must be provided in a greatly revised RMP so that proper threat analysis, development of a valid range of science-based alternative mitigation measures, and full transparent analysis of the livestock, roading, treatment, fuels, targeted grazing and other proposals on slickspot peppergrass and its habitats can be undertaken. See WWP Comments on Proposed Listing Rule on cd.

We Protest the failure to properly assess slickspot habitats and populations and undertake necessary conservation planning and protections.

Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plants

BLM ignores the large advance of cheatgrass that was documented including into understories of sagebrush communities based on the ESI before the Murphy Fire. This is evidence that the levels and manner of grazing use, and the extremely high facility footprint was having a significant negative impact to ecological processes. BLM Ignores the comprehensive studies by Reisner showing that livestock grazing disturbance causes cheatgrass. Reisner dissertation 2010, Reisner et al. 2013.

BLM must provide detailed mapping and analysis fully examining cheatgrass composition in understories, and areas “at risk” of cheatgrass increase or dominance under a new range of much more conservation-oriented alternatives. Under the situation as shown in the AMS, now followed by massive wildfire, proposing several commodity-oriented alternatives is ecological madness. A SEIS must be prepared that properly presents cheatgrass expansion and risk data and analysis.

The RMP provides a shallow and greatly inadequate analysis of the vectors and causes of weeds. In the JFO where cows outnumber wild horses by much over a thousand or more to one, mentioning horses and livestock to an equal degree is just not informative. But this is typical of BLM analysis that is overwhelmingly blind to livestock impacts. See <http://www.peer.org/news/news-releases/2014/09/16/blm-weighs-wild-horse-impact-much-more-heavily-than-cattle/> .

This section doesn't even mention the severe impacts of livestock trampling in damaging microbiotic crusts, and priming lands for weed invasion. It ignores the now immense footprint of supplement feeding in livestock-depleted lands - that creates thousands of new disturbance zones and weed infestation sites.

There is no commitment to practicing Integrated Weed Management, which must be a cornerstone of conserving native species – especially in the face of climate change and

increased weed risk. Instead, BLM's "tools" are overwhelmingly herbicides. BLM will never be able to control weed spread and battle cheatgrass or other weeds until it:

- Removes or seriously curtails livestock trampling disturbance;
- Prevents movement of livestock from infested areas (pastures, allotments, private lands) into uninfested sites;
 - Removes grazing or other disturbance in "at risk" areas until native understories recover - which is still possible in the middle to higher elevation areas);
 - Protects the public's tremendous investment in rehab actions by preventing livestock damage and resting lands until much more adequate recovery of composition, function and structure occurs
- Prohibits livestock use of infested areas until invasive species/noxious weeds have been controlled and eliminated.

BLM has failed to develop alternatives and allocations based on Integrated Weed Principles to protect sage-grouse and other habitats from grave weed threats. This must be done in a SEIS. Instead of doing this – BLM seeks to impose even more extreme levels of targeted grazing, TNR, and other disturbance that will only serve to exacerbate ecological problems, promote more weeds, and result in likely intensified herbicide use, drift, and harm plus increased frequent fire danger in many areas.

Threats analysis must provide much more information on the impacts of livestock grazing and trampling and limit upland trampling, and the full range of threats so that all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of alternatives and management actions can be understood.

We Protest the FEIS due to the deficiencies described above.

EIS Fire/Fuels Background, Confusion, Lack of Science and Risk Analysis Remains

The foundation of the RMP, as shown in DEIS 3-52, shows that in the whole RMP development of alternatives and RMP structure, BLM still obsessed over "fire fulfilling its role in the ecosystem and accomplishing resource objectives". The presentation of information appeared designed to minimize the severe effects of the fires (except when useful to BLM to impose massive grazing and fuels treatments to promote forage grass) – and cover over the disaster that BLM's post-fire seedings have caused by promoting large and repetitive fires. (See DEIS Table 3-31, VMA A and B), WWP Lone Butte Fire Appeal. These are the areas where many of the harmful dense fire-promoting cwg and other seedings are found - and such seedings we have been repeatedly told are essentially huge fuelbreaks. Of course, they are not, but BLM has justified planting more dense seedings and planting dense over-sized pseudo-native cultivars by saying they are.

Detailed and honest ecological analysis of the ineffectiveness of the existing fuelbreaks, and the crested wheatgrass billed as fuelbreaks and the failure of coarse large grasses to control fires must be understood. Please describe in detail just what FRCC existed in the lands of the Lone Butte fire, and where pre-fire. The Clover Fire? Seeding areas of the

Murphy fire?

We have discussed the biases of applying FRCC in the Jarbidge in the Fire Appeal submitted with comments on the DEIS. We highlighted 3-53 stating that “FRCC is delineated as the departure from the historic fire regime”. Then, “Departure from HFR is based on comparison of current fire return interval and fire severity to the historical fire return interval and fire severity”. So – in the case of the Jarbidge where credible science would show fire may have burned on the average every 200 years or longer – BLM must specify what the interval is that it used in the models underlying the EIS. If we super-impose “fire severity” on this – based on what is actually on the ground – we get lower fire severity than in grass than sagebrush communities. However, the model appears to imply that the severity is based on PNC - and whatever in the world a “VSG” is. Then, “HFR in the planning area was determined based on potential vegetation. HFR is further defined in the LANDFIRE models used to describe the planning area’s HFR. Table 3-34 assigns the potential natural vegetation groups ... from the LANDFIRE model to an HFR, PNC (based on information from SSURGO) and a VSG. This is even further complicated by BLM reference to “HFT definitions defined in the cohesive strategy. This is even crazier in 2014, as all of this FRCC modeling was done many years ago now, is likely based on incorrect fire return intervals, idealized super-grassy Ecosites and other confusion. The whole FRCC process was designed to model timber country - not greatly altered coarse seedings, mottled landscapes that are a mix of some exotics in the understory and some sage and rabbitbrush, sagebrush communities, annual grasslands. BLM has not clarified the underlying data inputs for this elaborate modeling relied upon in the FEIS for massive veg treatments, underlying targeted grazing, TNR, ancillary herbicide use, and a host of linked adverse impacts associated with these activities.

Complex FRCC and other veg models of the RMP EIS with ever-changing inputs do not promote sagebrush and sage-grouse conservation. In the FEIS, BLM in using the model, plugs in idealized inputs - to promote livestock grazing in the name of “fuels”, TNR, etc. – so instead of the process being aimed at any fire protection it really is aimed at protecting livestock use.

There is little evidence that the arbitrary categories of the FEIS, models and diagrams have real relevance to understanding fires, controlling fires, or protecting sage-grouse habitat in the Jarbidge. These figures are based on uninterrupted idealized succession processes – something that just does not occur anymore in the JFO with coarse grass seedings combined with livestock disturbance and other “treatments” that retard succession. BLM’s artificial division of the FO into the VMAs adds yet another arbitrary and artificial category to this all.

S-Class must be clarified– “which had more influence” in the JFO? Does this mean that the coarse woody grasses have burned more frequently - time after time? That is the reality of what has occurred. Does BLM consider cwg and swg “successional”?

DEIS 3-55 stated that fuel models do not account for fire return intervals, changes in landscape patterns, or length of fire season. BLM has failed to specify what does in the

FEIS. It appears that the Lone Butte Fire burned a great big hole in the FRCC and Fuels modeling in Table 3-36, page 3-56? There, the VMAs (northernmost Jarbidge), had 0 acres with an extreme rate of spread rating. Yet the Lone Butte fire burned at extreme spread - nearly 300,000 acres in primarily just two days. This exposes the serious flaws in the models the entire FEIS is based upon. VMA A and VMA B had very large acreages in very high, and high categories. Yet these are the very areas with vast expanses of cwg and recent dense BLM fire seedings. So what the retired BLM Managers, WWP and others have been saying is true- the dense seedings in the JFO are a disaster. The Murphy Fire was a singular extreme event. Such events will likely be impossible to stop -unless square miles are bladed off.

BLM never explains what the complicated system actually means. In DEIS Fire 4-470, crucial information was omitted. For example, why doesn't BLM have "number of fires" (not just human-caused) as an Indicator? Perhaps because it would highlight the frequent, repeated and large fires in the northern FO.

On top of the jumble for the fire discussion from DEIS and FEIS Chapter 3, BLM in Chapter 4 imposes the jumble of uncertainty from livestock grazing, rec, travel, and claims "impacts from management in the Veg Communities and noxious weeds and invasive plants sections were captured in wildland fire ecology". BLM then proceeds to conduct its flawed alternative analyses based in part on the artificial VMA categories.

DEIS 4-472 stated that "estimated utilization levels of non-native veg were compared between the alternatives". What is the basis for understanding utilization levels under any alternative? We asked that BLM provide details and these were not provided in the FEIS.

Plus, the FEIS Response to Comments (A-479) adds even more confusion to how utilization and production was factored into the grazing allocation (at 800 lbs. per AUM). BLM states that percentages were for allocations of forage and not annual use. BLM stated: "it was assumed that higher utilization levels in non-native vegetation would have an immediate effect in decreasing fire size" - and cited the Murphy Fire Report (Launchbaugh et al. 2008). Unfortunately, **that is not what the Murphy report said.** That report - and Steve Bunting in the BLM Press Conference - admitted that **only under the cool, calm prescribed fire conditions does his MODELING of grazing use levels show any effect on fire behavior.** These are not the conditions when wildfires naturally burn. Thus, BLM's use of the Murphy Fire Report, in support of its massive fuels/forage treatment and grazing disturbance intensification scheme, is not valid.

Throughout the RMP process, BLM has never identified the degree and severity of grazing, fuelbreak and other disturbance that it believes would be required to effectively stop fires under the actual, real world conditions when wildfires burn. How much land? Where? What would be growing on it? What wildlife could survive in it? How might this massive series of often overlaid and additive and cumulative disturbances increase habitat fragmentation? Thus, it has no basis for the elaborate modeling schemes it has concocted to justify status quo, increased and TNR grazing.

It appears that BLM's entire basis for analyzing fuels, the high levels of grazing and extreme number of treatments of Alt III and targeted grazing in Alts IV and FEIS VI is based in large part on the assumption that wildfires in the Jarbidge burn under the cool, calm spring or fall temperatures and moisture conditions of prescribed fires!

BLM's misleading and incorrect use of the Murphy Fire report is inexcusable. It is being done to promote very high and harmful levels of grazing use continue in the JFO, to the detriment of all other uses of the public lands.

In the development of the limited range of Alts, BLM assumed that recreational use won't increase over the next 20 years. DEIS 4-472 – this further illustrates the flawed foundation of the entire RMP, and the need for a SEIS.

BLM cannot simplistically claim that limiting travel to roads alone is going to reduce fires. Very little OHV off-road use occurs except the hill outcrops, Yahoo area, etc. in small sections of the north. There are so many roads over much of the area (many thousands of miles)– there is no need. What is most important here, and BLM refuses to deal with it, is limiting flammable cheatgrass and other weeds that invade road and roadside disturbances, and the infestations that spread cross country due to grazing impacts.

We Protest all of these RMP EIS deficiencies for the reasons described above.

FEIS Land Use Allocations/Authorizations

BLM has still failed to provide the basis for coming up with and then analyzing the Land Use Authorizations. These include ROWS, oil and gas, geothermal, military activity, etc.? Wouldn't large-scale oil and gas development increase flammable cheatgrass and likelihood of explosions and other lightning-cheatgrass and/or human-caused fires? So shouldn't BLM prohibit oil and gas development in all remaining sagebrush habitats and recovery/restoration habitats to protect the habitat? Likewise for geothermal, military activity, etc.

In fact, BLM's own NTT report found universally NEGATIVE effects of Oil and Gas, and also:

The primary potential risks to sage grouse from energy and mineral development are:

- 1) Direct disturbance, displacement, or mortality of grouse.*
- 2) Direct loss of habitat, or loss of effective habitat through fragmentation and reduced habitat patch size and quality.*
- 3) Cumulative landscape-level impacts (Bergquist et al. 2007, Walston et al. 2009, Naugle et al. 2011). There is strong evidence from the literature to support that surface disturbing energy or mineral development within priority sage grouse habitats is not consistent with a goal to maintain or increase populations or distribution. None of the published science reports a positive influence of development on sage grouse populations or habitats. Breeding populations are*

severely reduced at well pad densities commonly permitted (Holloran 2005, Walker et al. 2007a). Magnitude of losses varies from one field to another, but findings suggest that impacts are universally negative and typically severe.

The NTT also recommended “**Disturbance Thresholds**”. Note in the highly fragmented Jarbidge we do not believe these thresholds are sufficient. The habitats and populations are at the point where they can withstand no additional disturbance. However, we stress that BLM rejects its own science in its greatly deficient Alternatives, BMPs, SOPs, etc. The thresholds are as follows:

Disturbance thresholds recommended by the NTT include:

- *3% surface disturbance cap*
- *one well per section cap*
- *4-mile no surface occupancy buffers*
- *noise limited to less than 10 decibels above 20-24 dBA.*

The NTT and IM were released in late 2011-early 2012. Now, there is even more evidence from the disastrous BLM land oil and gas development in WY, MT, UT, CO to show that more protective measures are needed, in fact, the BLMs own China mountain DEIS for wind recommended a five mile minimum buffer from development disturbance.

There is no way to examine the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of RMP FEIS actions and understand outcomes of any alternative until BLM develops an RMP based on current ecological and conservation science, and presents all of this forthrightly, plainly. BLM must develop an RMP based on conserving sagebrush and sage-grouse habitats and populations, using current grazing, energy and other science. For example, see WWP’s comments on ID/SW MT and NV/E CA GRSG EIS processes, Manier et al. 2013, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011 *Studies in Avian Biology*.

Artificially segregating habitat and analysis into VMAs meaningless to sage-grouse serves no purpose other than to complicate matters – and provide a basis for inflicting large-scale TNR and destructive grazing levels in the “sacrifice” areas –like A, B, most of C and some of D areas.

Direct, Indirect, Cumulative impacts analyses and Alts comparisons in a series of EIS Tables are just not based on valid assumptions BLM’s misinterpretation of the Murphy Fire report claims that grazing could somehow stop fires. How effective would any of this be at stopping the “perfect storm” of the Murphy Fire? DEIS 4-473 to 4-478, same assumptions carried forward in the FEIS.

How severe would grazing use have to be, and at what level of utilization, across all vegetation communities to achieve the outcomes predicted by BLM? 80% or 90% use of cwg? Or of Cheatgrass? How much soil erosion in wind and water would occur? How might this actually increase fire risk in following years? How might this turn the lands into a weed wasteland? Where specifically would these acts occur, and how much would this cause fragmentation, impairment and loss of sage-grouse and other sensitive

species habitats? What will the effects be on rare and sensitive species?

BLM somehow came up with 916,000 acres "Improved" – and claimed it is more than any alternative. This type of analysis – with unknown inputs underlying the RMP data and analysis, continues in the FEIS. BLM must provide all acreages, livestock stocking rates, use levels, treatments, changes in cheatgrass predicted over 20 years under all the complicated morass of Alt IV and now the FEIS Alt VI and others. What does "improved" mean? Rosy outcomes are not based on a serious assessment of ecological risk of imposing the combined massive treatment and massive grazing and infrastructure scheme.

What are the climate conditions (humidity, wind speed, fuel moisture, etc.) that are used in the predicted "rate of spread"? What percent cheatgrass is in all the communities here? What is the vegetation that BLM assumes is in the Fuelbreak? Regarding the EIS "S-Class similarity" – that is partially related to whether shrubs are present – in a "successional stage". BLM artificially cuts out any shrub planting/active restoration from Alt V to elevate Alt IV over V (and now VI in the FEIS). So it is the artificial and industry-serving constraints that BLM throws in to various alternatives for no apparent reason that allows BLM to manipulate numbers and Alternatives Comparisons any way it wants. This represents another example of arbitrary rigging of the EIS to make industry alternatives appear better for the environment.

How does BLM factor in the important effects of passive restoration in inhibiting cheatgrass spread and dominance? What would be the impacts of a No Grazing Alternative? Or no Grazing of the WWP-proposed Sagebrush Sea Alternative? A SEIS must be prepared to take a hard look at these issues, and assess this in a fair, balanced and science-based manner. It is also necessary to balance competing uses, and minimize harm and conflicts between competing uses of the public lands.

We Protest the failure to address these FEIS concerns for the reasons described above.

FEIS Transportation/Recreation

We Protest the following:

DEIS 4-639 phrasing indicates BLM foresees increased recreational use. Yet BLM elsewhere claimed in some of the most important wild recreation areas there would not be an increase. 4-643, Table 4-302.

BLM knows it will never adopt a route density change increase as shown for Alt II – an increase over 1,161,000 acres. This is just done to make Alt. IV look better (through having other a really wretched alternatives, and represents rigging of alternatives. How does BLM factor Oil and Gas, Geothermal, wind and other ROWs and industrial uses into the massive road network under the industry-friendly range of expanded development alternatives of the RMP?

BLM has failed to adequately restrict snowmobile use in sage-grouse, big game and other

habitats. These areas should be closed to snowmobile use. Snowmobiles must be restricted to roads. Not only is wildlife disturbed, shrubs may be broken off and crushed. Pygmy rabbit snow burrows may be collapsed

BLM must limit rancher use of motorized vehicles to ensure habitat security and limit disturbance and weed spread, plus to allow roading to be properly rehabbed and removed. Ranchers have horses. A large-scale reduction in road density could readily be achieved – with roads closed and rehabbed to limit weed spread.

In Alt V, BLM does not adequately lay out a plan to close roads associated with livestock facilities, supplement artificial feeding, etc in lands where grazing would not occur. Plus, it does not identify a protocol for terminating unnecessary roads in grazed areas if ranchers were required to rely more on horses and herding to distribute livestock rather than fences and supplements.

Alt VI FEIS is greatly flawed, imposes continued large-scale roading disturbance across sensitive species habitats and fragile eroding watersheds. BLM has failed to properly:

Evaluate and disclose motorized and non-motorized recreational resource and opportunity information to the public. BLM does not even know the number of miles of routes – and in fact admits that it may be twice that shown in the impossible to see clearly RMP mapping.

- Miles of roads, routes, and trails. BLM admits that at present it does not even know - and in fact it may be double the number that the agency has inventoried.
- The different uses allowed on roads, routes, and trails.
- The current and expected future use by motorized and non-motorized users on roads, routes, and trails.
- Amount of cross-country opportunity available to motorized and non-motorized users.
- Scientific Basis for the analysis.

Until BLM openly admits the full-scale adverse impacts of the massive livestock facility system and the battery of unnecessary roading in use (often two tracks running on BOTH sides of a fence, for example) and develops a range of alternatives to greatly rollback the facility footprint on sage-grouse, big game and other species habitats, it cannot develop a modern day travel plan that sufficiently protects Jarbidge natural resources. See FWS WBP Finding for GRSG.

We Protest the FEIS for the reasons described above.

FEIS Actions Will Trammel and Impair Wilderness and Wild Lands Natural and Other Values

Lands “released” in the Owyhee Initiative should be managed as roadless, and incorporated into ACECs or other protections, and the FEIS fails to do this. There is so little wild land left in the Jarbidge that this is essential. Much more detailed analysis of adverse effects of all RMP Alternatives and actions on the thin and narrow Wilderness areas must be provided.

We Protest the failure to analyze the adverse footprint of the immense livestock load and other disturbances under Alt VI and all FEIS alternatives on Wilderness values and integrity – including natural and biological values, primitive and unconfined recreation, solitude and other vital values. The degree to which the RMP allocations and lax and uncertain management threatens these values must be fully assessed in a SEIS.

Additional RMP Concerns – Based on Mapping and Other Components of the RMP, and More Cumulative Impacts

We use the visual information portrayed in the RMP Maps to highlight concerns in this portion of our comments. We also discuss areas of the RMP where much more detailed analysis is essential.

Military Noise, Habitat Degradation, Fragmentation. It is necessary to understand the footprint of the military here, and all direct, indirect and cumulative disturbances. Please provide analysis of the US, Singapore, Saudi and other existing or foreseeable military noise, ground activity, use of military apparatus on ground and air, use of flammable and dangerous white phosphorus at Saylor Creek, and other activities here.

How has military activity caused fires – on both BLM and AF lands? How has the risk of military-associated fires increased? If BLM is going to develop any fuelbreaks, the key place this should be done is working with the AF on Air Force lands –since many fires start there. This is also likely to expand with increased use, use of white phosphorus, etc.

The FEIS failed to assess the full adverse footprint of the Gateway Transmission line on the area –including the Burley FO lands and wild lands, scenic, recreational, wildlife habitat, and other values.

The FEIS failed to provide detailed analysis of the current military disturbances and stresses on ecosystems and wildlife populations including sage-grouse, bighorn sheep, migratory birds and others. This must include direct, indirect and cumulative effects. For example, sage grouse in the Jarbidge are subject to extreme plane noise disturbance for several hours a day, and at night-time too during periods of intensive training.

How do the sounds from these activities affect sage-grouse? Bighorn sheep? Other wildlife? Recreational users? Please provide analysis of risk of military flare-caused fires. Has BLM, since expansion of the AF Bombing Range, ever required the Air force to stop using flares during periods of very hot and dry conditions? How many fires have

occurred on Air Force lands from 1987 to the present? Where? This includes at least one fire in LEPA habitat on Juniper Butte. Many of the emitter roads and portions of accessing routes would go for many days or weeks and receive no human motorized use – except for the Air Force. So what is the manner of use and disturbance to wild lands and wildlife that is actually occurring, and is foreseeable, over the life of this Plan? How do military lights interfere with dark night skies?

There is a very large and unexamined Footprint of military actions that have direct (vehicle-caused mortality of migratory birds, reptiles, and other wildlife, for example), indirect and cumulative impacts on habitats and populations of wildlife species.

Please examine the failed rehab actions on AF access roads grazed by BLM-managed livestock. What was seeded? What is now present, and in what condition, after several years of grazing? This must be factored into any predictions of treatment outcomes in the RMP EIS. This is crucial to inform BLM of how the severe livestock grazing footprint will ruin any rehab, fuels or other seedings it may try to put in place. The level and severity of grazing, and lack of adequate measurable use standard controls and required prolonged periods of rest will doom seedings.

BLM inaction (lax management of grazing disturbance) have resulted in failures of rehab efforts on Air Force road rights-of-way. We have watched as Brackett cows have devoured shrubs and other vegetation that were planted, including some like fourwing saltbush that were supposed to be “mitigation” for wildlife. Basically, the “mitigation” for the AF road expansion has been eaten up. Air Force seedings, just like the fire rehabs as documented in Arkle et al. 2014, often failed due to BLM overstocking and harmful seasons of use for politically powerful livestock industry permittees.

What actions can BLM take at some level to mitigate the severe adverse impacts of near non-stop noise and visual disturbances from low-flying aircraft on sage-grouse, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife? When the military does its own NEPA analyses, it claims that such things as road closures or vegetation condition are the purview of the BLM. So now BLM is doing a new RMP with new management. So how can all of the many disturbances/stressors on native wildlife, wild land ecosystems, i.e. the military Footprint in this landscape, be better mitigated by BLM? The FEIS fails to address this, and fails to provide a proper noise, traffic, habitat fragmentation, or other baseline. What has been the fate of the leks near Juniper Butte? Aren't they in freefall? The severely flawed EIS Visual analysis and allocation and several other parts of the EIS impose severe allowable disturbance to habitats.

BLM must also examine the footprint of military-permitted grazing levels, and the disturbance and conflicts with wildlife, promotion of weeds, polluted skies cloaked in contrail clouds, losses and disturbance to LEPA- and other impacts that the AF is causing. Regular and repeated use of roads by military vehicles accessing remote sites poses a very significant threat for weed expansion – as livestock crisscross all over the road verges and then disturb soils crosscountry.

Air Force Saylor Creek lands are choked with rush skeletonweed and other aggressive invasive species. Military vehicles can readily transport these weeds into LEPA and other habitats. We have watched in alarm as MHAFB puts out press releases about bringing in military tanker aircraft to disperse herbicide to try to address the severe weed problems on its Saylor Creek site. There is strong risk of aerial drift of herbicide, with mortality of non-target vegetation and other adverse impacts. Repeated spraying has occurred – so it must not be effective at control. Indirect and cumulative effects of herbicide use on military, state, private and other lands are not adequately assessed.

We have watched as the AF destroyed sagebrush, replacing it with crested wheatgrass as a so-called” Fuelbreak” along the Bruneau Desert road. Then, some shrubs grew into the seeding – and the Air Force mowed them – and intensive grazing continued. This resulted in cheatgrass expansion, and wildfires have repeatedly burned right over the fuelbreak.

BLM must provide much more detailed analysis of these activities as a real Baseline for understanding past, present and foreseeable effects in a greatly expanded analysis here in a SEIS. BLM must then act to significantly reduce the disturbance Footprint on species, lands and public lands activities that are impacted by military ground and air based disturbances.

We Protest the failure to properly assess all direct indirect and cumulative effects and minimize these disturbances and harms as described above.

Livestock Operation Disturbance Footprint, Indirect and Cumulative Impacts – Other BLM State, Private, HTNF Lands

The same very small number of permittee cattle and sheep herds impact the headwater areas too. The full watershed/ecosystem/wildlife disturbance Footprint of these operations must be examined. The Forest has in most instances never conducted ANY site-specific NEPA on livestock grazing operations of Jarbidge permittees. It withdrew, following Appeals, a Rangeland EIS, which did not provide necessary site-specific analysis of the disturbance Footprint of livestock grazing on the Forest. Understanding this all is necessary for BLM to fully take into account all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to ecological systems and native biota of its FEIS actions.

We Protest this as described above.

Erosion, Wind, Climate Concerns Continue

Wind erosion potential and mapping. BLM has failed to provide full analysis of the synergistic effects of loss of shrubs that has altered winds near the ground surface in the Jarbidge at the micro-site scale. How has this affected fire spread? Could an increase in taller shrubs actually serve to reduce fire risk – not only through providing wind breaks - but also through shading the ground surface and slowing snow melt and runoff, as well as retention of rain water moisture on site? Full analysis of how significant native shrub cover may ameliorate micro-site/local climate must be provided. If sites dry out one, two,

three or even more weeks later if shrub cover has helped retain moisture on-site, how might that help to reduce the time period of fire risk? We stress that many devastating fires have occurred in July, and with climate change, sites are predicted to dry out faster. So sound management must include providing taller shrub composition to retain moisture on-site and limit early-onset of fire season.

BLM must also examine how livestock grazing may reduce the period of moisture availability and green vegetation. This includes: Removing standing cover; creating bare dirt instead of soils covered with microbiotic crusts; drastically simplifying sagebrush and other shrub structure so that there is much less shade; by promoting dense growth of cheatgrass that “cheats” by germinating in fall and then growing rapidly in spring - using up moisture from the site and exacerbating early site drying- and many other factors; plants using up moisture as they attempt to regrow following repeated spring grazing, etc.

The presence of taller shrubs also traps wind-blown soils. Wind-blown soils are also of concern to LEPA habitats and populations. Soil deposited on slickspots and the surrounding sagebrush matrix would adversely alter site hydrology, increase nutrient composition that may foster weed proliferation, and have many other adverse impacts. The disturbance from livestock grazing generates dust that erodes and is then deposited in slickspots – so minimizing trampling disturbance to soils and microbiotic crusts during

While mapping of soil “potential” is fine - how is the potential for wind erosion affected by the presence of vegetative cover? By livestock trampling disturbance including the extreme burdens of the RMP FEIS Proposed Action? By both? How much soil potential has been lost? BLM must provide mapping and analysis that examines these factors, and a set of alternative actions that addresses this.

It is increasingly known that dust deposition accelerates snow melt, and exacerbates change processes. More cows= more dust. Please provide detailed analysis and mapping of a range of alternatives that serve to minimize dust production from these lands. This must include specific measurement of trampling impacts, and establishment of upland and riparian standards of livestock trampling disturbance use for any lands that continued to be grazed. An emphasis on restoration of microbiotic crusts to minimize wind-caused soil erosion is critical.

Water erosion potential and mapping. It is alarming to see that significant areas of occupied and potential LEPA habitat have “high” water erosion potential. Thus any continued livestock trampling and trailing may expose the sagebrush matrix soils to erosion – and slickspots to much deposition of matrix soils that result, in combination with other effects of livestock grazing, in conditions that favor weed infestations of slickspots and long-term loss of the slickspots and their natric soil surfaces.

Bull trout habitat in the Jarbidge system is also at risk from water-eroded soils –with erosion exacerbated by livestock grazing and trailing on BLM and HTNF lands, disturbance related with livestock facilities, as well as from the significant road network,

recent fires, etc. The FEIS RMP and BLM rangeland health (as BLM in Idaho assesses watershed standards) do not adequately address the role of intermittent and ephemeral drainages in a high desert ecosystem in transporting large volumes of sediment choked water into canyon and other stream systems during a very brief period of intensive late winter-spring flows, or summer thunderstorm events. Full understanding of the local climate regime, watershed condition and stressors, and the manner of runoff in these systems must be provided to understand grazing, roading and other disturbance effects, and to properly mitigate and minimize these.

The FEIS has failed to provide an understanding of baseline conditions, ecological degradation (how much topsoil has been lost, and is the “potential” in fact lost?) and management shortcomings on BLM Lands as well as in the adjacent headwater areas in the Forest must be provided - to understand what the total sediment load may be – and all direct, indirect and cumulative effects. There is a shocking lack of information and analysis of soil conditions. BLM cannot develop a reasonable range of alternatives until provides much more substantial information and analysis of the current degree and severity of soil degradation, losses and desertification processes.

Soil is the foundation for all the “forage” that BLM allocates. It is the foundation for sage-grouse habitats. It’s stability in the sagebrush matrix preserves slickspot integrity. The soils of slickspots are greatly vulnerable to livestock trampling, and the FEIS alternatives and analysis fails to control or even reliably measure this during grazing periods. See Appendix E. Large amounts of topsoil have eroded and been lost from many areas of the FO. Soils in upland and riparian areas receive very high amounts of trampling disturbance and displacement from 1000-1200 pound cattle – leading to compaction, erosion in wind and water, hydrological process disruption, loss of microbotic crusts, and promotion of weed invasion. Large areas of the soils are covered with vast quantities of livestock waste on an annual basis, upsetting the nutrient balance and providing excessive nutrients that weeds thrive on. Small mammals, and many insects that form the basis of bird and mammal diets (including for sage-grouse and migratory bird chicks), and critical pollinators of native plants all rely on functioning soils that provide diverse habitats – not heavily trampled, degraded soils as is the case at present. Soils form the basis for ecological processes, and native biodiversity.

These impacts and the degree and severity of loss at present are not adequately examined. Until this is done, no adequate range of alternatives can be developed and sustainable allocations made. BLM continues to ignore the current degradation – and develops its management schemes based on idealized conditions that do not exist. (Example: BLM’s Fuels modeling).

BLM provides minimal information on this critical component, or the adverse effects of land uses on soils. How will summer grazing disturbance impact soils of various types and condition –compared to winter, or grazing when soils are saturated? How long-lasting are heavy to severe trampling impacts during these times on soils of varying types? How much of the FO currently receives heavy trampling? Where? Where have soil horizons been lost due to erosion? Are depleted soils and monoculture coarse grasses

responsible in part for the need to feed so much supplement to livestock? What is the current soil formation rate? How has past erosion exceeded that rate, and where? How will the various alternatives affect this rate? How will depleted or degraded soils hinder rehab actions?

In scoping, BLM sought to minimize consideration of the critical role of soils as a foundation for ecosystem processes. In 2007, when WWP sought to submit an alternative, we were told to follow the minimalist box format that BLM was using at that time – and among its many flaws were how the framework prevented meaningful consideration of soil and other resource conditions. BLM never moved forward with any real analysis of soils all of this time.

BLM fails to provide mapping and analysis of the soil health, microbiotic crust condition and composition, erosion rates from current activities, predicted erosion rates under all alternatives, measures of soil compaction, and a host of other info and analysis necessary to develop and analyze a suitable range of alternatives.

While the DEIS finds time to point to fire erosion- the Affected Environment section of the DEIS provides no analysis or information on livestock trampling disturbance promoting erosion, pedestaling, loss of fertility, destruction of stabilizing microbiotic crusts, etc. – or of degradation of soils and microbiotic crusts promoting flammable weeds that exacerbate fire erosion.

Won't livestock-friendly BLM GOMAs in the high livestock disturbance alternatives that aim to maintain large areas in exotic and perennial grasslands and intensify grazing under various guises - lead to unhealthy accelerated wind and water erosion? Aren't shrubs keystone species that anchor and moderate microclimatic conditions including important soils processes – and should be present to protect from erosion, and moderate micro-climate features?

The analysis of Effects to soils under the limited alternatives is minimal. BLM basically points to other EIS Sections heaping the confusion and uncertainty of the Veg, Fire, Treatments, and other sections on top of the vague soils section. This is not analysis – yet this method is repeated across the Sections of the EIS. BLM points away, distracting from the gross deficiencies of the Soils or other sections at hand, to get the reader to look at other confusing and near-substanceless EIS sections.

Retaining soils in situ is dependent on the degree and severity of livestock impacts – both vegetation removal and tramping:

Runoff containing sediment and associated pollutants generally occurs as a result of two environmental factors. One is winter/spring snow melt and heavy rainfall periods occurring on saturated or frozen soils and in areas with rangeland soil surfaces lacking adequate vegetative ground cover to prevent excess erosion and sediment delivery off site. The other can occur after wildfire events on exposed rangelands during the summer months where

intense summer cloudbursts impact large areas of unprotected soil resources due to a lack of plant and litter cover. Activities including, but not limited to, livestock grazing, OHV use, and fire suppression can affect sediment and other pollutants in the water (Jarbidge AMS).

Even if we were to accept that BLM limits on utilization alone (without also having measurable trampling limits) would provide protective vegetation and protect soils – a reader of the EIS has no clear understanding of what these may be. It is impossible to understand how proper analysis of alternatives effects can be undertaken, or allocations made.

BLM ignores adequate analysis and alternatives development to address the predicted impacts of climate change on soils and vegetation – for example: Climate change may cause the region to become drier and less vegetated in the foreseeable future, leaving soils more exposed to wind erosion and resulting in an increase in particulate matter (Jarbidge AMS), see also Comer et al. 2012.

There is no real analysis of the current loss of soil potential and horizons, widespread pedestaling, depletion of essential nutrients, loss of microbiotic crusts, ecological conditions of soils in slickspots and surrounding habitats, soil conditions in all vegetation communities that are still native in composition, etc. This is all necessary to make science-based decisions to ensure sustainable uses and significant progress towards functioning ecosystem processes that provide the foundation for habitats for native biota.

BLM must overlay for LEPA and other sensitive and vulnerable species habitats, baseline data on the impacts of both moderately to high soil erosion in wind and water to affected values of the public lands. If slickspot habitat occurs in lands with both high wind and water erosion, then how does livestock trampling disturbance act cumulatively to worsen conditions?

We Protest these deficiencies as described above.

We also Protest the following:

Paging throughout the ES Summary Charts, a reader quickly sees that there is very little difference between many of the alternatives and their components.

There is no valid reason to allocate different amounts of “forage” percentages – especially taking into account adverse impacts that come along with the “forage” use – i.e. – severe livestock trampling –and compaction of soils, accelerated erosion of soils.

While BLM uses the phrase “resiliency”, and other current jargon, meaningful definitions and the basis for this is not provided.

303d Listed Streams/Water Quality/TMDLs and Continued WQ Violations

We are greatly concerned that BLM has been conducting limited monitoring, and does not have an adequate Baseline of the severity of sedimentation, turbidity algal growth, temperature and bacterial contamination of waters due to livestock grazing impacts, and in some cases the combined impacts of grazing and roads. The FEIS fails to provide this information, and adequately address how BLM post-fire grazing and other activities heighten water quality problems.

The RMP fails to provide required mandatory monitoring of bacterial contamination sediment, temperature, and other water quality concerns during periods of livestock use, when runoff occurs, and other critical time periods. It fails to provide thresholds/triggers for rectifying exceedances by minimizing disturbance such as livestock degradation of uplands and riparian areas. There is not a reasonable range of alternatives to address water quality issues. This must be corrected in a SEIS.

Chapter 4, 4-196 to 197 appears to allow TNR grazing in RCAs – Under Alts 1, 2, 3, 6 – and apparently IV as well. The analysis for riparian areas found throughout Chapter 4, draws sweeping rosy conclusions based on uncertain lists of BMPs and Appendices, without providing any understanding of how positive change, even to the greatly inadequate per cent of PFC, will ever be achieved.

We Protest all of these shortcomings and deficiencies that were not corrected in the FEIS.

Potential Veg Communities and VMAs

The EIS Veg map is much too general to provide understanding of complexity of interspersed soils, veg communities that “forage”, treatments, and all manner of RMP actions are based on.

The very small gray VMA inset Maps in the RMP are also greatly inadequate, as is using Potential Vegetation and modeled and artificial Ecosites. The FEIS has failed to describe how the Jarbidge Ecosites greatly over-inflate forage production, and downplay shrub cover, and describe how this was used in generating stocking levels/allocations.

We Protest this.

Desertification and Climate Hard Look Is Necessary to Evaluate Change Effects and Stress

Climate Change in the RMP DEIS was discussed in 3-4 to 3-6, 4-40 to 4-44. BLM provided little meaningful information, sidesteps analysis, fails to look at the overall Footprint of livestock operations and other activities, and fails to look at the overall Footprint of alternatives. It fails to address a suitable range of alternatives to address the threats and risks posed by climate change – i.e. likely increased temperatures, earlier snow melt, more spring rain, and more extreme weather scenarios. BLM’s own scientists have testified to Congress concerning the likely increase in cheatgrass due to higher temperatures and more spring rains. Thus, the sensitivity of lands to grazing disturbance

resulting in weeds is likely to be greater. This call into question BLM relies on large-scale TNR, increases significantly the risk of weed invasion following intrusive “active” treatments, and “targeted” grazing (whatever this is), as well as decreases the natural resilience of native vegetation communities and soil processes to livestock grazing disturbance. This continues in FEIS 4.3.1.2, 4-41 to 54. Erroneous assumptions abound in BLM initially addressing air quality – this includes the often very poor air quality in the northern part of the FO from the massive ag burning, ag feedlots (including linked to Jarbidge permittees, dairies and other sources of air pollution in south-central Idaho.

BLM’s climate assessment overwhelmingly focuses on gas emissions (even while ignoring manure), and uses 800lbs/AUM when cattle weights are much greater and typically large calves are present with cattle - in its calculations, and otherwise greatly under-estimates effects. BLM merely recites adverse effects of climate change and does not analyze them or develop any suitable alternatives to ameliorate and buffer these effects.

It ignores the information on desertification that we provided and analysis that is required – including of the degree to which lands are desertified feeds into climate change. See Sheridan CEQ Report, Steinfeld et al. 2006.

BLM fails to provide analysis of how all of the actions under all of the alternatives will be affected by predicted or foreseeable climate change effects. There are predicted major stresses on waters, watersheds, accelerated and early runoff, more violent rainfall events, more spring rains that are likely to favor cheatgrass and other weeds, and many other serious adverse effects of climate change that will directly, indirectly and cumulatively affect the outcomes of management actions under alternatives.

Doesn’t the predicted increase in cheatgrass due to climate change show a need for taking much better care of existing uninfested vegetation communities? For significant removal of livestock facilities, fences and ending salting-supplement disturbances in susceptible lands that are not yet invaded? Isn’t there significantly less risk of cheatgrass or other weed invasion, if treatments focus on passive restoration (removal if disturbance) rather than active restoration?

This must be taken into consideration in all aspects of the RMP, including the suitability of lands for Oil and Gas, Geothermal, granting ROWs, mineral withdrawals, or other actions that result in significant surface disturbance. It must also be fully considered in travel processes and identifying road closures to limit weed spread along rights of-way or as a result of road upgrades.

As the NTT describes:

Roads have multiple impacts on wildlife in terrestrial ecosystems, including:

- 1) Increased mortality from collision with vehicles;*
- 2) Changes in behavior;*
- 3) Loss, fragmentation, and alteration of habitat;*

4) *Spread of exotic species; and*
5) *Increased human access, resulting in facilitation of additional alteration and use of habitats by humans (Formann and Alexander 1998, Jackson 2000, Trombulak and Frissel 2000). The effect of roads can be expressed directly through changes in habitat and sage-grouse populations and indirectly through avoidance behavior because of noise created by vehicle traffic (Lyon and Anderson 2003, 75 FR 13910).*

The huge road footprint is caused by grazing infrastructure.

GHG emissions would be increased from No Action. BLM must analyze alternatives that reduce GHG emissions significantly – such as an alternative that removes grazing from the entire sagebrush Sea ACEC. How much would that alternative reduce emissions? How has BLM taken into account the role of grazing in damaging microbiotic crusts? See Wohlfahrt et al 2012, describing carbon sequestration. How would sagebrush lands being converted to cheatgrass reduce the ability of the lands to absorb CO₂, for example?

BLM analysis should be much more specific so that the real grazing and treatment GHG Footprint can be understood. This includes the livestock and livestock operator emissions, as well as the impacts of the livestock disturbance (and other disturbances) in adversely impacting the ability of the land to absorb CO₂. What is the combined footprint with private lands activities involving these livestock as well – for example, the Simplot Grand View feedlot?

BLM must analyze how to buffer lands, native biota, sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and other critical habitats, from climate change effects.

For bull trout, redband trout, spotted frog, California floater and other aquatic species, BLM must analyze the degree of predicted impacts to watersheds, drainage networks, stream flows, pattern of runoff, etc. It is critical that BLM focus attention too on drainages that currently lack perennial flow to buffer runoff and other effects, take better care of the whole watershed so precipitation can be absorbed rather than run off, and otherwise do all that it can to maintain flows. BLM must provide baseline information on water flows over all seasons of the year. How have flows changed since 1987? Since BLM did a water rights inventory in the 1990s? How have they been altered from “developments”? How can perennial flows be increased – we do not believe that stringer riparian fencing will provide all the necessary actions to buffer species from climate change effects. Here, as with all aspects of the RMP, a hard look at trends in resources relative scarcity of resources, and magnitude of loss is not taken.

If BLM were interested in controlling GHG emissions, why would it propose Alts with near-status quo actions, TNR, targeted grazing, and all manner of increased disturbances – including Alt VI?

BLM fails to answer key questions: How much are current uses currently impairing the ecosystem response to climate change? How will that impairment be affected by

alternatives and actions? Until BLM addresses the desertification concerns that we raised in Scoping, there will be no valid baseline for assessment.

How will all of the predicted adverse impacts of climate change affect sage-grouse and other sensitive and important species and migratory bird habitats and populations – and place greater stress on them? Bull trout habitats and populations? The tiny and disconnected redband trout populations in the Elk Mountain and Jarbidge Front area – that span BLM and Forest managed lands? BLM cannot summarily dismiss analysis. This is critical in applying some measure of precautionary management to the public lands.

Estimating at least some degree of temperature increase is essential to understanding if water quality criteria can be met with continued commodity uses or management stresses on systems. Since shading vegetation is critical to maintaining cool water temperatures, BLM must have much stronger recovery goals than PFC over the next 20 years to sustain flows in the face of climate change effects – especially in degraded and depleted watershed systems.

The combined effects of livestock grazing and trampling in watersheds, existing flow reductions for diversions and developments, etc. must also be examined along with the additional stresses posed by climate change on ecosystems.

In a hotter, drier, longer summer scenario – is it acceptable or sustainable to have any continued livestock disturbance (soil compaction, grazing, weed spread) to meadow-spring, intermittent, or ephemeral waters?

BLM also ignores assessment of dust produced from grazing, roading, and developments under the RMP Alternatives. Dust has been implicated in early snowmelt, and loss of glaciers.

We Protest the FEIS deficiencies in addressing these significant issues as described above.

Monitoring, MIM and Other Deficiencies

The RMP EIS is deficient in providing certainty of use limitations, and timely annual monitoring. We illustrate this with a discussion of riparian monitoring. According to BLM's 2010 MIM document:

Elzinga et al. (1998) defined monitoring as “the collection and analysis of repeated observations or measurements to evaluate changes in condition and progress toward meeting a management objective.” In contrast, inventory is “the systematic acquisition and analysis of information needed to stratify, describe, characterize, or quantify resources for land-use planning and management of the public lands” (USDI, BLM 1996a).

This protocol includes procedures for monitoring 10 indicators. Three indicators provide

data from which short-term livestock (or other herbivore) use information can be derived:

1. Stubble height (adapted from USDI, BLM 1996b) and Challis Resource Area (1999)
2. Streambank alteration (Cowley 2004)
3. Woody species use (adapted from USDI, BLM 1996b)

Short-term indicators provide information necessary to help determine whether the current season's livestock grazing is meeting grazing use criteria. They can be used as early warning indicators that current grazing impacts may prevent the achievement of management objectives and can also be used to help explain changes in riparian vegetation and channel conditions over time.

MIM requires no standards to be met. It does not establish any specific measurable standard. Establishing standards and system for accountability and decisionmaking is the job of the RMP – which the RMP fails miserably to do.

MIM monitors livestock impacts to riparian areas only – not roading, energy development, chemical pollution, etc.

MIM measurements are based on measuring livestock use along the thinnest of greenlines right by the water's edge – and serve to minimize understanding of the degree and severity of loss or degradation that has occurred, impacts to floodplains and meadow habitats critical to sage-grouse, and other essential data needed to understand the degree and severity of degradation so that prompt action can be taken to limit or end the livestock disturbance. Only 25% of veg must be perennial. And this can be ANY perennial Veg – weeds like perennial pepperweed, or anything else.

MIM Indictors include:

1. Stubble Height

a. Purpose: Stubble height is a measure of the residual height of key herbaceous vegetation species remaining after grazing. The amount of foliar cover remaining is important for keeping plants healthy, maintaining or promoting strong root systems, protecting streambanks from erosion, slowing water during high streamflows, and building floodplains (Clary and Webster 1989). The measurement may be used in at least two ways: first, to determine when livestock should be moved from the riparian area, often called trigger monitoring, and second, at the end of the grazing season and growing season to help determine cause-and-effect relationships between livestock grazing and stream-riparian conditions and whether livestock grazing management changes may be needed the following year.

Note use of word “may” with MIM. Nothing is required.

MIM Procedures also measure streambank trampling disturbance, and woody browse use.

The RMP FEIS has failed to lay out clear and required mandatory standards of use that serve as annual triggers for livestock removal from grazed riparian areas.

The MIM procedure discusses: Relationship to Other Indicators: Stubble height data can

be enhanced when analyzed with percent of livestock use (not in the MIM protocol), woody species use, and streambank alteration to estimate levels of grazing intensity during the current grazing season. Coupled with other short-term and long-term monitoring indicators, stubble height may be used to develop relationships between condition and trend and livestock grazing management. Stubble height alone does not provide adequate information to develop a relationship between livestock grazing and vegetation conditions on the streambank. Commonly, streambank disturbance, measured by the streambank alteration procedure, **is the most important factor relating to streambank stability conditions.**

Streambank disturbance brings us back to livestock trampling of soils, and the compaction and bank eroding impacts of 1000 pound cattle use. There are no required annual measurable use standards under the RMP. WWP provided a standard in the Alternative that we submitted, and it was ignored. We are now submitting an updated Alternative standards with this Protest. Full consideration in a SEIS is necessary.

Fire, Vegetation and Projected Vegetation

The DEIS Fire Vegetation mapping was already outdated due to the Lone Butte, China Mountain, and other fires. Clear mapping and analysis is needed of all sagebrush seeding and rehab actions and success (or failure) following Clover, Murphy and subsequent fires that have occurred, and some measure and reporting of rehab and other planting success based on monitoring of recent rehab efforts must be provided.

Map 10 Projected Vegetation is biased towards the livestock industry desire to keep these lands as grasslands, rather than native shrublands. Why did the public pay for BLM to buy and seed sagebrush – the critical Keystone species in the sagebrush ecosystem – if BLM then maps away any projected recovery? There is no projection beyond 2016 – when all the millions of dollars of seeded sagebrush may not yet be present at a level that would show up in BLM’s broad vegetation mapping.

BLM must provide mapping showing changes necessary to understand what areas sagebrush, rabbitbrush or other shrubs will have to be replanted, and how and where restoration can best be accomplished.

This brings up a critical issue: For some enigmatic reason, sagebrush seedings in the Jarbidge have often, but not always, met with little success. Why is this? How can post-fire actions, grazing, any use of herbicide, the methods of obtaining seed, etc be changed to improve this and provide much more certainty in any sagebrush recovery?

Please provide detailed mapping showing all lands where sagebrush has been aerially or otherwise reseeded following wildfire, and measurements of the success if any seeding. A key part of the RM must be to recover sagebrush over this vast landscape, and BLM must live up to the commitments it made to the public over the years as it poured tens of millions of dollars into “rehab”, provided minimal and grossly inadequate rest from

livestock grazing,

It is critical to understand these post-fire measures. Like the limited and divorced-from-reality alternatives in this DEIS, BLM ignored the severe impacts of livestock grazing disturbance and the need for protection of lands for sites to recover. It made promises that wildlife could thrive, yet vast herds of livestock could again be inflicted on burned lands with 1 or 2 years rest. Of course that did not happen – livestock were turned back out in high numbers with only a year or two rest, and cheatgrass thrived in the degraded interspaces, sensitive native species did not recover, and seedlings were lost, trampled, destroyed. Plus, BLM aurally and otherwise has applied herbicide to kill weeds at times right on top of lands seeded with sagebrush.

We have watched in dismay as promises of fire rehab and wildlife habitat recovery are set aside in management actions to favor livestock. BLM to this day, and in this RMP refuses to focus on removing the biological wasteland densely planted crested wheatgrass seedlings. All fences or facilities that were built following fires and rehab must be identified, and a range of alternatives must be developed that target these for removal.

In order to understand the ecological conditions and fragmentation related to animal communities in the Jarvis, BLM must provide detailed mapping and analysis of ALL seedlings, sagebrush or other shrub removal including rabbitbrush or other herbiciding, that has occurred over all time periods, since FLPMA.

The same must be done for livestock facilities. A reasonable way to do this with mapping would be to provide “snapshots” at five year intervals. This will aid in identifying projects for removal under expanded alternatives of a SEIS. For projects/actions, BLM must provide an Appendix Listing all past projects tied to a land area on a map, and a brief analysis of the actions taken – seeding, species, facilities, if facilities were supposed to be temporary or permanent, etc.

BLM must similarly provide a detailed accounting of all post-fire rehab actions it has taken. Seedlings, species, location, etc. and show where it has told the public it would recover sagebrush. Any areas currently lacking sagebrush where BLM committed to the public in the past that sagebrush would be recovered must under all alternatives be restored for sagebrush ecosystems. Rabbitbrush is an important native shrub that sprouts back from its roots and would serve to provide for some wildlife habitat needs, moderate site aridity, and must be mapped and encouraged under all alternatives. It is a successional species to sagebrush. In areas prone to frequent fires, planting a native species like rabbitbrush that reprints from roots along with planting sagebrush in all circumstances, should be a management emphasis.

RMP mapping is at a scale where necessary understanding of allocation of “forage”, habitat, allotment, and other specifics is just not possible. Where is mapping that shows how much forage was allocated/or used in analysis in the RMP – tied to each land area (pasture, allotment). Wouldn't the allocation change based on the configuration of facilities – as the position of water and fencing may serve to limit or reduce livestock use

in some areas? So if that changed – allocations may be different?

We Protest the RMP uncertainty and the deficiencies above.

Reference Areas for the RMP

Where are all reference areas located that BLM used in the ESI analysis? Why isn't there much more detailed info and mapping of the ESI in the RMP? It is impossible to understand how the livestock allocations, fuels models, sensitive species habitat outcome analyses, etc. were arrived at.

BLM must not use the battery of existing fences as the “baseline” in all alternatives. It is clear that BLM does not even show the nightmare of pasture fences here. It only shows the crazy jigsaw puzzle allotment pattern.

Existing pasture fences form the basis of this reference area mapping. We strongly oppose more fencing, and believe goals and objectives of the RMP must be large-scale reduction in pasture fencing based on a specific time schedule. Due to the large amount of evidence of adverse impacts of fences to sage-grouse, BLM must set aside existing pastures as reference areas. It has not done this. It would just fence off crazily positioned little blocks – creating even more of a hazard for sage-grouse, migratory birds, antelope and other wildlife.

Where are all lands that BLM currently considers “reference areas”? All lands in good or better or “reference” conditions? These must be identified.

The existing pastures in Map 14, page M-15 should be the basis for the most extractive alternative – with all others including much larger areas thus reducing the facility footprint – and analyzed in a SEIS.

We Protest the above deficiencies.

PFC Ratings, RCAs, Priority Streams

PFC is subjective, and a minimal habitat descriptor. Waters at PFC are not assured of meeting the actual habitat requirements for aquatic biota. BLM must fully examine aquatic habitat quality and quantity. This includes sediment, temperature, cobble embeddedness, aquatic biota, bacterial pollution, turbidity, algae, dissolved oxygen and many other attributes.

BLM must provide detailed mapping and analysis of springs, seeps, ephemeral and intermittent drainages. An examination of their condition inside and outside enclosures must be provided. Measurable standards of grazing and trampling use must be applied to all such areas as objectives of the RMP. These must be applied as triggers of livestock removal from the area. BLM must rely on non-structural methods to ensure functioning riparian areas and watershed processes. This includes closures, reduced stocking coupled

with requirements for active herding of livestock.

How are these areas classified in the upstream Forest lands? How does degradation of private lands in all watersheds (such as in the China Mtn area, Jarbdige Foothills, Three Creek, Murphy, Diamond A) impair habitats? Alter ecological conditions? What is the degradation Footprint of the private lands on aquatic and riparian systems? How does BLM take thing into account in taking stronger measures to ensure species viability and water quality attainment?

In many areas of the Jarbidge, there is little perennial surface water. In areas that still retain native vegetation, all springs, seeps, intermittent, ephemeral drainages are very important and must be delineated and protected.

Please identify all critical bull trout habitat tribs, all redband trout tris, all potential spotted frog, all sage-grouse brood rearing, and all tribs including intermittent and ephemeral streams – as Priority waters.

What segments of all the drainage networks on these maps have perennial flows? Intermittent flows? How can the perennial flows in streams be increased by taking better care of the whole watershed? Removal or reduction of grazing impacts (including trampling) will promote retention of waters and slow release of waters from watersheds – increasing perennial flows, and reducing erosive forces of runoff events. These watershed, riparian and hydrological issues really gets to our significant concerns about increasing desertification processes caused by livestock grazing, and now amplified by fires and grazing, in the JFO. Climate change is expected to put even greater stresses on these systems.

All of this must serve as the basis for developing a greatly revised range of Alternatives that serve to sustain flows and native biota in systems greatly stressed by 150 years of livestock disturbance, now amplified by large-scale fires related to livestock disturbance and/or climate change.

When were redband trout lost from so many drainages near Elk Mountain? Near Three Creek? What set of actions are needed to restore these populations? What is their distribution on the Forest? What does BLM's livestock monitoring data show related to degree and severity of livestock impacts to these systems? BLM must set a time table a establish a set of specific actions focused on livestock grazing removal and large-scale reductions in numbers of livestock in any remaining degraded watersheds in order to sustain what are clearly increasingly isolated and threatened rare native fish species.

Aren't these apparently isolated populations in danger of extinction?

We Protest the failure of the FEIS to address these serious concerns.

Big Game Winter Range, Restoration Areas

Much better and more detailed mapping and overlays of conflict areas must be provided. A detailed mapping and analysis of conflicts between land uses/disturbances and bighorn sheep, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, and all aspects of livestock grazing must be provided. This includes loss of structural complexity of hiding and thermal cover, loss of fawning/birthing habitats, fence hazards and barriers, disturbance from livestock during periods when young animals are present – and all aspects of conflicts.

BLM then must develop a specific **avoidance protocol** that includes livestock grazing during critical and important periods of use.

Why has BLM written off so much of the JFO as important big game habitats, (with this has worsened with the FEIS gutting the bighorn ACEC)? Hasn't BLM been promising all along that it would restore many lands in the northern and central FO for wildlife – including these big game species? Why has this been swept aside? These were obviously considered important habitats, yet they are not identified or acknowledged here.

What exactly does BLM mean when it labels maps for big game “restoration”? Is it including destruction or further alteration of native vegetation communities – as is promoted by some hunting groups tied to ranching interests?

Key Sage-Grouse Habitat – PPH and PGH Ignored

The Key Habitat mapping the DEIS alternatives were developed under was inaccurate and omitted important occupied habitats and leks. WWP repeatedly brought this to BLM's attention, and BLM refused to provide mapping of all Key sage-grouse habitat in important land areas grazed by permittees Simplot and Brackett. (71 Desert and Poison Creek area). – showing the stranglehold that livestock interests - and efforts by the agency's own range cons - maintain on the FO. habitat

BLM must clearly define what Key Habitat means, and how this relates to PPH/PGH. When WWP brings up the matter, BLM spins off false responses: “It's used for fire suppression purposes”. Which is of course not it's only use. We relate this to indicate the lengths to which BLM will cover up when pressed on issues of failing to protect lands from livestock grazing disturbance during critical nesting, brood rearing and other periods. Where is a Map of identified Restoration Habitats?

BLM must develop a broad range of new alternatives, and project the outcomes of Key and identified IDFG Restoration sage grouse habitat under all of them. A full set of actions to minimize disturbance, and conserve and enhance habitats for sustainable populations must be provided. A time frame of efforts made to achieve restoration and disturbance-minimization goals must be provided.

Why isn't BLM developing Alternatives based on the following: In Key and Restoration Habitat: **In 2 years, BLM will reduce fencing and water developments in all areas with sagebrush habitat by 50%. In 5 years, reductions will be 75%. In restoration habitat, BLM will reduce the amount of fencing and water developments by 50% in 5 years. This is the kind of specific alternative action that is needed to save the**

vanishing wildlife of the JFO.

It is clear that viable populations of sage-grouse cannot be sustained in the Jarbidge with the tremendous amount of habitat loss and fragmentation – coupled with ongoing chronic livestock grazing disturbance in the remaining native habitats.

BLM must provide detailed mapping and analysis that shows the current sagebrush and other vegetation communities, and depict key habitat.

Please provide mapping and analysis of the land area that must be recovered to provide viable populations, disturbance reduced, and protection measures taken to comply with BLM conservation plan for sage-grouse in a SEIS.

We Protest the above FEIS deficiencies.

Water Developments

We have previously discussed the severe adverse ecological effects of water developments. So did the BLM's own AMS. BLM must also identify all areas where it has allowed water hauling, and act to end this disturbance – we are aware of no NEPA analysis of its direct, indirect and cumulative adverse impacts.

Under all alternatives, BLM must develop a series of time-scheduled steps to significantly remove livestock infrastructure, as we describe above for fencing. The same actions and schedule should be applied to water developments.

Bottom line: There is no sense of urgency for addressing the myriad ecological crises or even the dire status of sage-grouse in the FO in the Jarbidge. BLM has produced a document that in many areas is near-status quo, in areas where there is some change, only minor differences often would occur. There is also no time frame, milestones or other actions that would be required to occur in a timely manner. It is also devoid of a broad range of necessary measurable use standards.

We Protest the concerns discussed above.

Wildlife Tracts

What toll is wind development on private lands in the area of these wildlife tracts taking on wildlife? Aren't these tracts now more important than ever? The Wildlife Tracts must be expanded, not reduced or lost in land disposals. This also in some ways is an Open Space issue. BLM just doesn't seem to comprehend the value that undeveloped land has to the public for Open Space, and a wide variety of recreational activity.

We Protest the lack of protective actions in the RMP.

Wildland Fire Frequency

As previously discussed, full and detailed mapping and analysis of all post-fire “rehab” and grazing actions must be provided. Infrastructure “creep” must also be mapped and examined. Please apply all concerns related to FRCC forward to this issues section, as well.

New and updated mapping that shows the Long Butte and other recent Fires must be provided. Please provide detailed mapping of all “fuelbreaks” or greenstrips BLM has planted since the 1987 RMP, or prior. These Fuelbreaks are in the same areas that have suffered several repeated fires – and do not appear to be effective. BLM must map them – and show fires so that an understanding of how fuelbreaks have not worked can be obtained. A full analysis of the location, species seeded, year seeded, and current composition of all Fuelbreaks must be identified here.

BLM has a proposal to drastically alter lands in the vicinity of the Saylor Creek wild horse herd area - and appears to be holding return of the horses to the HMA hostage so that it can leverage planting vast areas to the weedy aggressive exotic forage kochia. Once introduced in the northern part of the JFO, it will very likely be spread by BLM vehicles south in to LEPA habitats. This has not been adequately assessed.

We Protest this.

Hazard Rating for WUI

On what basis does BLM consider a seldom-occupied ranch, such as at Clover Creek, a WUI? Is the public supposed to spend millions of dollars “treating” the WUI at Clover Creek?

We Protest this.

Fire Suppression Mapping

We note that Map M-26 shows sagebrush-shrub habitats in areas where BLM purposefully left them off the preceding Key Habitat map for sage-grouse.

There is no reason for BLM to depict something it will never do – i.e. only conditionally suppress fire in a very few areas. A reasonable range of alternatives is required – not playing around with alternatives that will be out of the question to adopt.

Alternative V is the minimum of suppression that should be done here. This should just be a part of all Alternatives – instead of BLM trying to puff up “differences” between what in reality are a limited and greatly deficient set of alternatives.

We Protest the FEIS’s failures here.

Range Infrastructure in HMA, Alt VI Assault on Wild Horse Herd

BLM must consider a full range of alternatives that remove fencing in the wild horse HMA in a specific time frame. There is no need for endless little allotment fences here. This will also help the horses in the event of a fire.

The BLM in Alt VI imposes a drastic alternative to round up, and sterilize the wild horse herd. This is unacceptable to wild horse advocates, and is an action that livestock industry has long wanted.

We Protest BM abjectly disregarding public comment and participation and providing yet another gift to the livestock industry.

Serious RMP VRM, VRI Flaws

There is no possible rationale for BLM in 2011 designating VRM IV (maximum disturbance allowed) over such a vast area. This is one of many examples of BLM developing unreasonable and unrealistic alternatives - just apparently – to make it look like it considered more alternatives – and essentially lower the bar for a “mid-range” alternative.

Indeed all of the alternatives (and V is “poison-pilled”/contrived by BLM to be worse than IV, for example) would greatly sacrifice the public lands to all manner of development. The VRM actions would allow industrial development, mining, energy or other development to occur across nearly the FO – including the very lands that elsewhere are supposed to be “restored” for conservation of rare and declining species.

We again Protest the failure of BLM to properly protect visual resources of the sagebrush and other landscapes.

BLM Biased Rejection and Analysis of ACECS

We are dismayed that BLM refused to adopt the proposed Sagebrush Sea ACEC as its proposed action. BLM must reconsider its entire alternative structure, as all relevant and important values are now much greater for sage-grouse. This is shown by the USFWS’s recent Warranted But Precluded Finding that sage-grouse deserve ESA listing. BLM Has both worsened the Proposed action and aborted ACECs in the FEIS – guaranteeing irreparable harm will be done. See FEIS 4-822 through 828 (despite vast areas being found to meet relevant and important values – nearly all ACEC-suitable were inexplicably and arbitrarily discarded), FEIS Table 2.10.1, and Appendix M A-261 to 3-244.

Designation of an ACEC of sufficient size to conserve sage-grouse is fully supported by new scientific information – from the Knick and Connelly (2009/2011) Monograph *Studies in Avian Biology* to the recent Wyoming, Idaho and other studies on fence collisions and impacts to recent Ecoregional Assessments all highlight the grave threats that sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and other sagebrush-dependent species are under.

Removal and/or large-scale changes in grazing are fully supported, as well. See Manier et al. 2013.

BLM must adopt the ACECs that it admitted meet the Relevant and Importance Criteria so it can provide integrated and cohesive management to prevent further irreparable harm and loss to habitats and populations of sage-grouse, bighorn sheep, slickspot peppergrass, and other native biota. The current RMP Alternatives all allow death-by-thousand cuts near-status quo actions to continue across the landscape that is essential to sage-grouse – a landscape species.

We request that ecologists from outside the BLM, and free from political pressures, be brought in to address the Relevance and Importance of the area we have identified and develop a suitable modern day range of ACEC alternatives.

The Sagebrush Sea ACEC also must be designated to protect large areas of potential LEPA habitat – both occupied and recovery habitats.

Management under the morass of confusion of the RMP will not conserve sage-grouse. VMAs slice through and arbitrarily segregate the habitats and ACEC-suitable lands. FRCC and other complicated modeling are imposed on this land to justify all manner of unclear treatments in uncertain locations without a cohesive plan. The extremely high 800 lbs per AUM livestock “forage” allocations overlie this land. Critical habitat areas are open to ROWs, have anything-goes VRM classifications relegating the great majority of the supposed sage-grouse zone to a sacrifice, visual intrusion and visual blight landscape status (FEIS Map M-48), unclear ROW categories (Map M-92), significant land disposal shown in Map 113 amid some of the most crucial habitats, includes much of the area of Oil and Gas Potential in the FO and where the RMP would enable development with minimal and scientifically indefensible “avoidance” areas, even though currently thought to have Low Geothermal potential, the RMP fails to limit development and provides minimal protective measures, wide open mineral leasing with minimal restrictions (MapM-122). The FEIS Alt VI and nearly all alternatives provide minimal, uncertain and known to be ineffective BMPs and SOPs for these activities, near-unfettered salable Mineral destruction is also allowed – Map M-129. With its minimal constraints and maximum loopholes and loose wording, high levels of irreversible further habitat loss is certain to occur. All manner of confusion is imposed and nearly anything is allowed to occur under the lax management of the RMP. Both directly, indirectly and cumulatively - the grazing, extractive use and development footprint will doom, rather than conserve, sage-grouse.

While not designating a large ACEC may benefit commodity interests whose side BLM has so strongly taken in this RMP, BLM cannot allow these interests to trump those of crashing wildlife and rare plant populations. It is a violation of FLPMA. BLM’s analysis considers only small groups of local interests hostile to public lands protections –while ignoring a wide range of wildlife and other groups. See Tables 2.10.1, 2.10.2.

As it stands in its present form, the RMP and Preferred Alternative are really a Plan for

gradual extirpation of native vegetation and animal species, not the strong measures and prompt actions required for conservation. BLM spent over five years developing this cumbersome document. During the whole time - the plight of sagebrush species has gotten worse and worse, and the Relevance and Importance of the proposed ACEC lands have only increased. A SEIS must be prepared to correct the disastrous FEIS scheme.

We Protest all of the above serious FEIS actions and flaws.

SRMA/ERMA Concerns

We are very concerned that BLM considered a broad range of OHV “SRMAs” and not more non-motorized use SRMAs or non-OHV focused SRMAs such as our suggested Wild Horse-Oregon Trail-Fossil Beds region SRMA.

We are greatly concerned that expanded OHV torn-up areas will adversely impact native reptiles. Bare soil areas and some semblance of native shrubs are found in areas of hillier terrain and specific soils where OHV use is now being greatly imposed.

Aren't there also larger SRMA areas near Salmon Falls Creek as well? Why not all of Antelope Pocket?

Now, in the FEIS, an even less protective measure – an ERMA – is proposed That like the SMZ (meaningless sage management zone) will do nothing to protect natural resources.

We Protest BLM's lack of commitment to management of recreation and conflicts with other uses, as well as non-motorized uses of the public lands.

Areas Available and Unavailable for Livestock Grazing

BLM has woefully failed to grapple with the dire ecological concerns that are related directly, indirectly and cumulatively to livestock grazing disturbance in the Jarbidge.

Map 50 **does not** reflect the information provided by WWP to BLM during the Scoping period and other public comments. It greatly reduces the land area that would be closed to grazing compared to WWP's comments and communications with BLM. Our ACEC proposal would result in a greatly expanded area where livestock grazing would be removed in an orderly fashion. So would the need for sage-grouse habitat and population protection and enhancement and restoration to be a primary focus and outcome of the RMP.

Alt. V plus all LEPA habitats should be the minimum ungrazed area even in the most commodity-oriented alternative– and a series of alternatives that greatly expand ungrazed lands in remaining sagebrush habitat, and reconnect and restore habitats must be considered.

BLM must consider a No Grazing Alternative, and a series of significantly reduced

grazing alternatives with large areas closed to grazing, with a systematic de-stocking and de-industrialization plan that applies both passive and active restoration. It must consider closing of significantly more lands to livestock use than Map 50, Alternative V shows. This is essential to undertaking restoration and protecting the public's investment in restoration.

Travel Routes and Inventoried Ways

BLM must provide detailed analysis of the role of livestock infrastructure and management actions in expanding this road network. How does this road network compare with that present in 1987? How many roads were planned? How many roads just “grew up” as pipelines were ripped in, troughs expanded, fences built, and salt/minerals placed?

BLM must develop a greatly expanded range of alternatives that roll back roading linked to livestock facilities that would be removed or de-commissioned to allow protection and enhancement of remaining sage-grouse or other sensitive and imperiled species, as well as to protect the public/ investment in restoration and provide an expanded range of hiking and non-motorized recreational activities including wildlife observation and other wildlife-related activities.

BLM must provide mapping that overlays facilities. For fence repair, and routine pipeline activity, ranchers can ride horses. Road proliferation in areas where ranchers have created roads along pipelines and fences should not be allowed to be carried forward. How much has the road network increased since 1976? Since 1987?

Which roads are maintained? The proliferation of roads is linked to gravel pits and the damage that has been done. An example of the damage that extensive gravel pits do is the gravel pit developed above Clover Creek for the USAF destroying intact sagebrush. Rehab has been a failure. Soil erosion continues. BLM must prohibit any further gravel development in native shrublands, native grasslands, - i.e. any native communities and sage-grouse recovery habitats.

This is all tied together. BLM's Alt IV has zoned vast areas for ROWs. See Map M-77 ROW exclusion areas. This shows that nearly the entire JFO outside Wilderness and canyons can be developed with ROWs granted under Alt IV; disposal (Map 88, page M-89), industrial-style development and extreme Visual scarring (VRM Mapping 41), Oil and Gas, Geothermal, etc. Please review the devastation that would be allowed to occur and caused under the Preferred Alt - as vividly shown in the Map volume, pages 42, 57, 73, 77, 83, 89, 96, 101, 106, etc.

In review of this mapping that shows the BLM plans for all manner of development to occur over vast areas – it again becomes apparent that BLM contrived components of Alt V to be purposefully damaging so that it could more readily discard even this weak alternative for conservation. See Map 76 – where ROW exclusion is identical between Alts. IV and V, Map 90 Oil Gas – same under all, Map 91 – same under all, Map 96 –

where BLM would have MORE wide-open damaging leasable mineral allocations than IV, Map 101 showing more wide-open damaging salable mineral allocations under Alt V than Alt IV, Map 106 –showing more wide-open damaging mineral withdrawals under Alt V than Alt IV. BLM must be aware that there are all kinds mineral extraction and rights-of-way threats related to new and emerging technologies – from rare earth minerals to solar farms.

The more areas zoned for development, the greater the likely number of roads, and size of the disturbance footprint of a road is likely to be. Blading large areas with side-ditches, and wide bladed swaths on road verges increases habitat fragmentation, provides large weed invasion corridors – especially since livestock graze and trample road verges then move crosscountry. We also stress that “avoidance” BLM proposes is only seasonal - there is nothing in the various development actions components to Alt IV that prohibits new or expanded roading across nearly the entire FO. Super-imposed on top of that are various efforts to maintain livestock wasteland “fuelbreaks” and intensive grazing schemes – potentially along nearly all of the vast livestock-industry caused road network shown in Map 56, Page M-57. Did BLM think WWP or other environmentalists wouldn’t bother with looking at these sections of the RMP where it has jiggered Alt V so as to be able to claim that Alt IV is more beneficial? BLM’s connivance at constructing “poison pill” provisions of Alternatives further demonstrates that a whole new range of alternatives that would actually conserve sage-grouse must be examined.

We stress that there is no mapping, or clear analysis other than the mass confusion and uncertainty of the Vegetation, Fuels, Grazing sections that allows a reader to understand the location and Footprint of Fuels and Targeted Grazing roading would be located and configured.

Until BLM fully lays out a new range of alternatives that clearly and forthrightly act to conserve sage-grouse, it can not have a basis for a legitimate science-based RMP, Travel Planning, or any other allocation process. This is all linked together.

BLM should develop a series of alternatives with specific goals for reduction of road densities in important areas and critical habitats, and lay out a specific decisionmaking process and time-frame to do so.

But first, what is the road density in the JFO at present? In the MUAs? The artificial VMAs? In key sage-grouse habitat? In restoration habitats? On top of the whole landscape needed by sage-grouse and pygmy rabbit populations? What is the total length of the plethora of roads in the Jarbidge? 3000 miles? 4000 miles? A drive across the U.S. in length? Just quickly guessing –Map 56, M-57 shows a nightmare of roading – the great majority tied to livestock. How does this compare to other BLM FOs in Idaho? In Nevada?

BLM must particularly focus on road closures in lands across the Sagebrush Sea ACEC, in the Browns Bench-China Mountain area, south of the Murphy Rogerson road, in association with adjacent Forest lands, in potential LEPA habitats, near Salmon-Falls

Creek, in the wild horse HMA, and other areas of importance.

The Travel Route designations in Alt. 5 are clearly preferable for a Wilderness experience in the near-linear and narrow Wilderness areas of the Jarbidge. How do the sights and sounds of vehicles, coupled with livestock activities, intrude on Wilderness areas? On untrammelled viewsheds, solitude? Primitive and unconfined recreation? What cumulative or indirect adverse intrusions –such as military overflights – add to the disturbance Footprint in the Wilderness areas?

BLM cannot just plan for road closures in large blocks of roadless lands. Large areas of LEPA Habitats, sage-grouse habitats, pygmy rabbit habitats, ACECs, bull trout and redband trout watersheds, and restored areas must be identified and roads removed and rehabbed. This will limit environmental disturbance, protect watersheds, provide secure less disturbed habitats, reduce weed proliferation including any restored lands – and have a host of beneficial effects. If livestock grazing continues in any of the areas with road closures or where roads are removed, all management activities should be conducted in a non-motorized manner.

BLM must consider all lands that may be adjacent to designated Wilderness as potential WSA lands, as well as adjacent to USFS lands or in other areas where the total natural and scenic wild land values would be significant. A complete and thorough inventory must be done, including of significant wild land areas less than 5000 acres in size, There are several areas in or near China Mountain, Dave Creek and other areas that although small in size, should be considered for Wilderness status due to the very appealing, scenic and beautiful character of the land.

BLM would never adopt a TMA as shown in Alt. 2 – so why include such an Alternative? We can only think this is to set a Low bar for comparison with other alternatives and result in an outcome with little real change in the Footprint of disturbance in a landscape that is collapsing from the high degree of chronic disturbance.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Harms from Communication Sites, Transmission , Wind and other Vertical Structures and Impacts Not Properly Controlled, Minimized, Mitigated

BLM should strive to limit and require bundling of communication sites. These are visible over vast distance, kill birds and bats that collide with them, and intrude on recreational uses and enjoyment. A full analysis of the adverse impacts of vertical and night-lit structures on native wildlife and migratory birds, as well as recreational uses must be provided. BLM should manage for no increase in communication sites, bundling of facilities, and severe constraints in visual intrusion as well as night lighting to protect migratory birds and limit intrusion.

See: <http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/collisions/>, Longicore et al. 2012, Manville et al. 2005, WWP China Mountain Wind DEIS comments (on cd).

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0034025>

We Protest the failure of BLM to provide sound siting and mitigation, especially given the extremely harmful Visual provisions of the FEIS.

Utility Avoidance Areas Must Be Expanded

Much larger areas of the landscape must be utility avoidance areas –due to the substantial large-scale adverse impacts powerlines, gas lines and other utilities can have on wildlife habitats and populations, recreational uses promoting fires, etc.

Alternative 5 plus a five mile buffer should be a MINIMUM alternative - and a range of several more protective alternatives must be provided. The FEIS did not do this. The mindset of BLM in alternatives development is abjectly divorced from reckoning with the dire status of habitats, wildlife, recreational uses, healthy wild lands, and long-term use and enjoyment of the American people.

We Protest this.

ROW Avoidance and Exclusion Areas

We are dismayed at how wide open to development BLM's limited set of industry-centric alternatives are. The mindset of BLM in alternatives development is divorced from reckoning with the dire status of habitats, wildlife, recreational uses, healthy wild lands, and long-term use and enjoyment of the American people.

BLM provides no evidence that there is any justifiable need for alternatives that would allow rights-of-way sprawling across the great majority of the public lands.

This is the whole purpose of planning – to prevent crises and environmental calamities (like the severe losses that would have occurred from the China Mountain Wind Farm). WWP incorporates all of our comments and concerns provided for the China Mountain process into these RMP Comments.

BLM must include full analysis of potential night lighting, noise and other issues associated with any renewable or other energy development, military or other right-of-way here. Night lighting on tall structures may result in death of migratory birds, interfere with birds like sage-grouse that move around during dim light conditions, and impair recreational uses. BLM must develop clear protocols for analyzing all of these disturbances and their effects.

We Protest these FEIS failures and deficiencies.

ROW/Transmission Corridors

Why doesn't BLM provide clear mapping of ROW Corridors under all Alternatives?

Why has BLM even considered potentially new ROWs south of Murphy Hot Springs? If this is the existing powerline BLM must prohibit any expanded use on this route. In areas of where a powerline may be present, that use should be capped and not additional power lines, water, or other pipelines structures, gas lines, etc. be built.

BLM has not provided adequate mapping of smaller powerlines so the full footprint on sage-grouse and other values can be understood- including the footprint of projects that have had a significant adverse impact on sage-grouse and other biota – such as the AF powerline to Juniper Butte, various other lines, etc. BLM must specify that the existing powerline to the town of Jarbidge is not a utility corridor other than for the current line.

In powerline or other right-of-way that already exist, BLM must require significant new mitigation for wildlife and other impacts with any right-of-way renewal or amendment.

We are very concerned about the minimal analysis of the proposed energy and transmission proposals such as Gateway– including all direct, indirect and cumulative effects. Throughout the RMP and mapping – BLM treats the JFO and plummeting species as if the Jarbidge were an island – removed from indirect and cumulative adverse effects of the large-scale wildfires that have burned so many areas, the very large Footprint of livestock disturbance, facilities and roading in neighboring areas of the sagebrush landscape and removed from the large-scale utility transmission and other energy proposals. Many of the actions in the RMP are linked or related to other energy actions. For example, China Mountain Wind was linked to SWIP. What is the Gateway line linked to? Coal and wind in Wyoming? There are inter-relationships – and cumulative effects that are not examined.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Wind Resource Potential

BLM must zone the China Mountain and all areas of the WWP Sagebrush Sea Alternative “off limits” to wind under all ROW alternatives. BLM will be unable to live up to its own conservation plan for sage-grouse conservation if it does otherwise.

We Protest the RMPs failure to do this –if it is not a rock solid exclusion. While Map M-105 of FEIS Alt VI shows wind only in the northern portion of the FO. We request that BLM clarify that this will be the only place any applications would be accepted. This can be the only areas where any solar can be allowed as well. The full adverse impacts of huge industrial energy facilities on public lands are not adequately addressed here.

Wind Potential

BLM must provide much broader area mapping of wind “potential”. This is necessary to understand the relative importance of the Jarbidge BLM lands for any wind development at all. BLM must provide detailed analysis of what is actually now a glut of wind power in southern Idaho – due to development on many private lands. BLM must conduct

detailed analysis of the relative benefits of private and development close to infrastructure, typically flatter lands, and in the case of Idaho – often in lands where irrigation water is increasingly scarce – so providing alternative income through wind siting is a significant benefit to the landowners too. How poor is the wind in the Jarbidge compared to other BLM Districts in the sagebrush biome?

All of these alternatives must also be examined across a broader landscape context so that the full cumulative effects can be understood.

WWP incorporates by reference all of e-mails, letters, wind MET Tower Appeals, and other information submitted to Jarbidge BLM since 2002 related to wind energy in the Jarbidge. Any right-of-way/Land Use authorization should be limited to areas with expanses of annual grass.

The EIS's presentation of information on wind energy is very confusing. Strict prohibitions must be laid down. Any further loss or fragmentation of sagebrush habitats is not able to be mitigated in the JFO. The wind, ROW and other portions of the RMP must reflect this ecological reality in firm and binding language.

By using loose wording and exceptions – like “if able to be mitigated”, BLM leaves the door wide open for political pressures to be brought and interference occur. This is especially the case in the Jarbidge, where politically powerful ranchers also stand to profit enormously from wind energy.

Land Tenure

Alternatives have too much land in sage-grouse habitat identified as available for disposal to comply BLM has failed to provide a reasonable range of alternatives in the context of the current dire status of SG populations in the FO here and in all other alternatives. There is no reason to get rid of BLM land just because it borders ranches – which is what BLM is proposing all around the Three Creek area. There is no indication at all that the administration costs are more. In fact, these lands are typically more readily accessed by good roads. All alternatives should focus on retaining all lands in the southern FO across the areas of the WWP proposed Sagebrush Sea ACEC.

BLM must have a goal of no net loss of BLM land, and strive to increase the amount of public land across the FO over the life of the plan. It must identify specific areas where the focus may be land acquisition. Disposals are also to likely further complicate and compound the “WUI” factor.

DEIS 2-180 showed BLM plans to dispose of lands for purposes never before allowed – including for a “public purpose” of Grazing”. How is disposing of lands for grazing “an important public objective”? It is an action that benefits private commodity uses. And in the case of the Jarbidge, this is primarily a few powerful and wealthy ranching dynasties,

and the Simplot ag. conglomerate. Yet this and other harmful provisions were “common” to all alternatives. Is this carried forward in the FEIS?

We support no DLE. Where has this occurred? We remind BLM that the whole reason for the Wildlife Tracts in the first place was because of the large-scale loss of lands in the north to DLE. Now this RMP, in violation of FLPMA, considers alternatives that would allow BLM to get rid of significant numbers of Wildlife Tracts – likely to ranchers or wind developers.

BLM must not allow submitted DLE applications to go forward, as it proposes under all Alternatives. Where are these? How many? Who? See LT-CA-MA-13, DEIS page 2-182.

We oppose disposal of lands as would be allowed under the part of DEIS LT-CA-MA-4 (2-181) – that serves as a huge loophole for actually enabling the disposal of historical properties, T&E habitat, Wildlife Tracts, cultural sites, etc. This provision allowing a loophole for disposal must be stricken from all alternatives.

What exactly can be considered under R&PP? We saw BLM’s Elko Mgr. Hankins dispose of lands by Jackpot, and elsewhere where mines or others wanted key parcels – and claim the parcels had really low value. Yet the Jackpot lands had high subdivision value. There are very shady actions associated with how BLM values lands when politically powerful interests want parcels for development.

Alternative 5 does not adequately protect important values of the public lands, either. It shows far too much land for disposal, including lands all around the wildlife tracts area, and the HMA. This is another poison pill that BLM has inserted, and this continued in the FEIS. Alt V should retain all important habitats – not just if lands are “consolidated” – whatever that means.

Please describe in detail the circumstances under which lands would to be sold to the state for R&PP? This is a matter of much concern given the political dealmaking for cronies that some Idaho governors may engage in. Idaho has no public “NEPA” environmental review process, so much damage could be done to values of lands remaining in BLM ownership, or to critically important habitats. Please recall the state land parcel Hog Farm proposal of a decade or so ago that would have sprawled across the Jarbidge. It is foreseeable that something as damaging as that could come around again.

BLM must greatly strengthen protections for public land retention – and lay out a clear decisionmaking framework.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Oil and Gas Development/All Leasable Minerals

BLM must place all lands in the southern and central FO as proposed in WWP’s Sagebrush Sea Alternative, and all lands important to sage-grouse conservation, as well

as special habitat and wild horse areas in the north, off-limits to Oil and Gas development. BLM instead would allow large-scale Oil and Gas disturbance in the critical lands west of Salmon Falls Reservoir and SF Creek in the SOUTHERN FO in Alt VI. FEIS 2-457, Map M-114. Constraints are minimal, and greatly inadequate to protect sensitive species, water, wildlife Any modern day arid lands EIS must also prohibit fracking.

What sense does it make to restore lands – and then have them torn to pieces by OG development? The RMP alternatives are internally inconsistent.

The Oil and Gas mapping shows that BLM would even allow the critical Browns Bench sage-grouse area to be developed. What part of the Oil and Gas industry destruction of sagebrush habitats that has unfolded in the American West over the past decade – and the collapse of sage-grouse, as well as big game habitats and populations when this development has occurred - does the Jarbidge BLM not understand? See Knick and Connelly 2009/2011.

BLM here seeks to use the very same “seasonal avoidance” and NSO provisions that have done almost nothing/been minimally effective to protect wildlife, recreation, waters, watersheds, and other public uses and values of the public lands from degradation and loss.

BLM must analyze in detail all of the adverse impacts of modern day Oil and Gas – including fracking and all the harmful activities and chemicals used in such activity so it can understand the full implications of allocating even a single acre in the JFO for Oil and Gas.

Please review all of the information in the Holloran, Naugle , and other sage-grouse studies in Wyoming and Montana. See also Connelly et al 2004, Knick and Connelly 2009/2011, Manier et al. 2013. Please review all of the recent information about the Pinedale anticline and other big energy field population declines. BLM has been completely unable to prevent deep losses to wildlife populations that occur with this development with the same meager measures that the RMP relies on. We also stress that the sage-grouse mule deer and other populations in Wyoming were much less stressed and reduced than the crisis now facing the Jarbidge. Anyone can understand that Oil and Gas, wind, geothermal or large-scale energy of any kind – will result in calamity in the Jarbidge.

BLM’s weak GOMAs would do little to nothing to prevent wholesale destruction and development for OG in the lands allowed Open, and Open with Constraints.

The ESA and other lease stipulations LE-CA-MA-2 under all Alts is greatly inadequate – BLM would make ineffective minor tweaks as full throttle development proceeded. BLM would not even close all ACECs under most Alts and remaining sagebrush habitats to OG leasing and development.

We Protest these failures to protect public lands resources.

Other Extractive Use/Development/Allocation Deficiencies

Mere seasonal closures are greatly inadequate for protection of lands from mineral activity. Zoning lands off-limits to the disturbance – and the habitat degradation, loss and fragmentation that results - must be done in the RMP. Plus, even though BLM might not allow road bulldozing in nesting season, it still allows livestock disturbances during these periods.

BLM provides a range of exploitation and development alternatives that do not comply with its Conservation Plan for GSG and the SSA, and would allow destruction of lands identified for restoration.

Why in the world are so few areas closed under all alternatives? Not even potential ACECs or LEPA habitats, are closed under Alt 5. BLM arbitrarily inserts harmful provisions into Alt V in comparison to Alt IV related to Leasable mineral allocations for no logical reason. Compare Maps M-96 to M-97). 4/5ths of the FO is wide Open to Oil and Gas and exploration, under Alt. V – while around ½ is Open under Alt. IV.

BLM arbitrarily poisons Alt V by leaving the LEPA ACEC wide open to grazing. Please also compare 2-194 to 2-196 – with lists of protections - to Alt V. It is clear, because this arbitrary poisoning of Alt V occurs in multiple places in the EIS, that this is not a mix-up with mapping – but is indeed what the industry-biased planners have based the RMP analysis on.

Alt IV has a seasonal restriction for big game winter habitat protection of 509,000 acres. Yet sage-grouse get a mere 248,000 acres for sage-grouse habitat protections in Alt. IVB. Alt V would have the arbitrary and contrived minimal sage-grouse restriction only. BLM has arbitrarily attempted to segregate sage-grouse habitat needs to small bits and pieces of the JFO. There is no reason whatsoever that the LEPA ACEC is somehow more important to deer than to sage-grouse. We believe these elaborate and irrational delineations are being done to avoid identifying large areas for sage-grouse that may result in ranchers having to change grazing use.

BLM in the DEIS attempted to “ghetto-ized” sage-grouse habitat to just the bits of sagebrush that remain in the JFO –compare Map 96, M-97 to Maps 9 and 10. BLM does not even include all of the remaining shrubland. We also stress that BLM mapping in the RMP is 20 acres or larger blocks of sagebrush –so it does not reflect the sagebrush remnants that assist in movement across the landscape. This mapping also appears to assume that the post-Murphy seeding of sagebrush is all a failure. Is that the case? We are greatly concerned that in the meaningless Alt VI of sage-grouse management zone, BLM would greatly sacrifice all the non-sage occupied acres, continuing on the very harmful management under the AGPs.

There is no possible way that responsible management and “avoidance” of sage-grouse

habitats could occur based on BLM's mapping of very little sagebrush remaining over much of the FO – if only these lands were more protected under the sage zone, which it appears would be the case.

Any claims of “protection” under Alt IV are a joke. The Mineral Leasing provisions in DEIS Alt IV 2-194 to 2-196 are riddled with exceptions, and this largely continues in the FEIS.

This also violates the ESA – see 2-195 to 2-196 – where BLM would allow exceptions to be made in opening up RCAs.

All aquatic species – from Jarbidge bull trout to Bruneau hot springs snail –are threatened by the geothermal development that would be allowed under all alternatives of the RMP. BLM must plan based on the situation that is occurring across public lands –including Idaho - where geothermal leases are being issued all over the place- even on lands formerly thought secure (such as long-billed curlew ACEC and LEPA habitats in the Four Rivers FO). Whether there is potential or not, speculators are using the public lands to gain lease to gain investment– and fueling destructive exploration and promoting development.

Then, DEIS 3-71 to 3-72 provides no real explanation of the arbitrary and often internally contradictory provisions within alternatives and the GOMAs laid out in Chapter 2. This is similar to Chapter 3 Affected Environment for the RMP. The Chapter 2 lists of loosely worded and uncertain GOMAs exceed the info provided on the Jarbidge environment.

New technologies are being developed all the time, and areas never thought to face energy threats are being opened up and leased. Modern-day geothermal leasing and development has a major harmful and adverse Footprint on the environment. Fracking is even being used in some areas for geothermal. Very significant adverse impacts can occur under geothermal leasing alone. BLM currently has a hopelessly segmented process where CEs and DNAs are heaped one upon the other through the geothermal process up to full throttle development. Under leasing, large areas can be bulldozed clear of vegetation, massive Deepwater-Horizon-on-dry-land drill rigs can be positioned. Fite, 2010 field observations in Nevada BLM lands. New road networks can be built and graveled. This all occurs prior to any NEPA analysis for the industrial facility “plant” that would be built.

This has the potential to greatly pollute and diminish the scarce waters of the FO.

New powerlines, night lights, heavy duty roads, constant human disturbance, noise, and severe visual intrusions accompany modern geothermal development.

The RMP is woefully lacking in essential ground water and aquifer analysis needed to understand a Baseline, and potential impacts. Geothermal IS exploding across the landscape.

As with all other Components of the environment, the RMP Affected Environment

Section is woefully lacking in essential Baseline data and analysis.

This RMP component also covers exploration activity and tremendous damage to soils, microbiotic crusts, vegetation communities, and rare and declining species' habitats can be done under exploration alone.

There is no adequate alternative to protect values of the public lands from OG, geothermal and other energy explo and development, mining and minerals activities, etc.

Chapter 4. Leasable Mineral –direct and indirect impacts. DEIS Alt IV 7-9% of FO inaccessible, 39% accessible under standard lease terms. Yet there is no analysis of these impacts. vs. Alt V – 4% inaccessible, **70% accessible under standard lease terms**. This is an arbitrary Poison pill placed by BLM to aid in rejection of Alt V.

We Protest these deficiencies.

Geothermal Development Potential

BLM must zone all lands in or near important Sage Grouse and Restoration Habitats as off-limits to geothermal potential. There is significant environmental damage done just by the “exploration” phase of geothermal activity alone.

We Protest this.

Salable Minerals

Please see Leasable minerals comments. This section is worse for the environment (salable minerals). Alternative V doesn't even have as much of a closure as Alt IV. Yet V is supposed to be the environmentally preferable alternative. This is a Poison Pill.

We Protest this.

Locatable Mineral Withdrawal

All lands in ACECs and sensitive species habitats should be Withdrawn from locatable mineral or other mining and exploration. Why in the world would BLM in 2011 develop a LUP and allow hard rock mining to occur in the remaining sagebrush habitats for the greatly fragmented Jarbidge?

BLM must fully consider the impacts of a modern-day cyanide heap leach mine and the impacts to soils, water, and habitats, populations recreational uses, etc. if such a mine was to be developed in lands in or near bull trout habitats. Alt IV allows development in lands east of Dave Creek including the East Fork area, and in the areas of the remaining lek complexes near Browns Bench-China Mtn- Three Creek and other portions of the Jarbidge foothills. BLM can – and must - place these lands off-limits. This includes the Toano Freight road, and HMA, too.

We Protest the deficiencies of the FEIS.

ACECs

Alternatives 1,2,3,4,6 should all be non-starter alternatives for ACECs, as they fail to protect necessary habitats for sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, and recovery of slickspot peppergrass.

We fully support the Sagebrush Sea ACEC, and believe it is the only alternative that would sufficiently protect the relevant and important sage-grouse and other sagebrush species and habitats. It is the minimum that is necessary for viable populations and to allow sufficient land area for recovery including in the face of potential wildfires.

ACEC designation here is essential to prevent further irreparable losses and to sustain a viable population of sage-grouse, pygmy rabbits and other native species. BLM must fully take into account the plethora of threats these species face, and the “death by a thousand cuts” management that occurs on BLM lands if special ACEC protection is not applied. BLM must prepare a population viability analysis to examine outcomes and time to extinction of populations under Alts, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

The same must be done for managing for viable populations of LEPA, Bruneau Dunes tiger beetles, and other sensitive, rare and imperiled species.

We Protest these deficiencies.

More Settlement Requirements

BLM is required by the Settlement Agreement to “Make determinations for future management of the Jarbidge FO, consistent with the requirements of FLPMA, NEPA, implementing regulations, and BLM’s Planning Manual and Handbook”.

By developing alternatives with provisions, and in the case of II, II, VI, and portions of IV and the poison-pilled Alt V, that are not consistent with FLPMA and NEPA in the context of the severely altered JFO. BLM has violated the SSA.

BLM is also required to consider info including science submitted. Many components of the Alternatives are NOT consistent with current ecological science in the context of the large-scale habitat losses and population declines for sagebrush species in the Jarbidge that WWP has submitted throughout this process. Nor in the context of the rarity of bull trout, the tiny remnant populations of redband trout in the Elk Mountain area, and other beleaguered populations. Threats are magnified by looming predicted climate change effects, especially in the context of this landscape that has suffered such a high degree of disturbance and desertification.

We have provided copious comments throughout this process, including comments in

meetings with BLM that the RMP was not sufficient to conserve and enhance sage-grouse and other wildlife.

The Settlement requires that BLM “establish protocols and develop data necessary to evaluate current populations and habitats for BLM-designated “sensitive” species on the Jarbidge FO ...”.

The RMP fails to do this for sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, bull tout and other rare, declining and imperiled species.

BLM has not developed appropriate “desired outcomes” to sustain, conserve and enhance native biota and waters.

BLM has not balanced uses - or acted to sustain, conserve and enhance sage-grouse and other rare biota in identifying lands available or not available for livestock grazing. It has not adequately incorporated current science on soils, micro crusts, vegetation, watershed characteristics, invasive species, sensitive and imperiled species, and acted to protect them in goals objectives and management actions in allocations - in Zoning lands Open to many forms of exploitation and developments. It has failed to develop sustainable alternatives range and appropriate allocations to address the many grave threats that native biota and a other important values of the public lands face here.

Wild Horses

One of the reasons the RMP is such a huge disappointment is that the Jarbidge has been so altered that any animals in this broken landscape need all the help they can get. BLM has not developed an RMP with a reasonable range of alternatives to meet the conservation challenges of 2011 in the Jarbidge. Instead this is in many ways a Plan that perpetuates an intensive resource extraction and development status quo and perpetuates serious conflicts between often conflicting allocations. It makes no sense to include an alternative that would not place the single, small HMA as a Priority for suppressing fires. BLM appears to have in many instances developed alternatives it knows it never would adopt – in order to set a low bar “range” that helps perpetuate the status quo. In any one alternative, even the most supposedly environmentally friendly Alt. V, many provisions within an alternative conflict with others. DEIS Map M-33 in Vol. 3 shows the HMA with all the fences. But the other maps – where wind, utility or other energy and all kinds of activities are overlaid – do not outline the HMA. So it is very difficult to tell what will and won’t occur there. All mapping should include an outline of the HMA so that the public can clearly understand how the HMA and horses will be managed/protected. The HMA should be VRM I. Not VRM 4. VRM 4 allows BLM to turn it into an industrial zone. The HMA should be closed to geothermal/fluid mineral leasing. The HMA should be closed to mineral allocations and locatable mineral development, as well as Rights of Way.

A range of alternatives that focus on removing and reducing fencing in the HMA should be developed, with a specific time frame to do this, and a goal that significant removal

occur within 5 years. The RMP should allow for consideration of expansion of the HMA if livestock permits in adjacent lands to the HMA are bought out and retired. The RMP should include an Oregon Trail, Wild Horse, and Fossil Bed Recreational SRMA. Hagerman fossil beds is nearby, and expanding and linking public visitor interests should be a focus. BLM should clearly identify a balanced method for determining carrying capacity, suitability, and AML. It must present a range of AML increase numbers and livestock reduction numbers as part of the RMP. This is the only HMA in south central Idaho, it is very small, and horses have a large following in the public, management emphasis should be on giving the horses more. A Goal of the RMP should be to increase the horse share of the allocation pie in the HMA or areas where use may be expanded. Horses can see more rugged areas of the HMA more effectively than livestock, travel further from water, and otherwise make use of the lands differently than do cattle.

BLM must fully explain all the changes that have occurred in the HMA (infrastructure expansion, seedings including species used, etc.) over all periods since the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

What is the basis for the current allocation? No transmission or energy corridors should be allowed in the HMA. In fact, since the HMA is so small and horses are vulnerable to disturbance from the dense road network, a five mile buffer surrounding the HMA should be “off-limits” to development and all kinds of leasing. BLM should focus fuels projects on using small statured native species and reductions in the large unpalatable exotic grass monocultures it has seeded incrementally for livestock and following fires. BLM’s past efforts have cost taxpayers a fortune - and have only served to exacerbate the fuels and weed problems.

RMP DEIS 4-674, 4-675 Tables 4-312 and 4-313 claims to show constraints with wind energy ROWs under all Alternatives. BLM presents a biased and self-serving analysis that lacks any detailed or clear basis for claims. BLM rigged the Alternatives components so that Alt IV would appear in the most favorable light. There is no valid analysis of the effectiveness of any of the measures that are claimed as protections or mitigation in conserving sage-grouse, recreational uses, or the other values of the public lands that large-scale wind or other energy or development rights-of-Way would greatly impair. There is no analysis of the effectiveness of claimed “constraints” in the context of the large habitat and population losses of the Jarbidge.

BLM uses a sage-grouse lek radius that is not defined here. We assume BLM is using a greatly inadequate two mile distance. Current science suggests wind and other energy developments should be located 5 miles or more from leks. In the case of the Jarbidge, where grouse are known to move over large distances to nest and fulfill their seasonal needs, the entire area of the Sagebrush Sea ACEC must be off-limits to wind development. There is no alternative that examines this.

4-674 refers to more areas in the No Action Alternative being in VRM I and II. Why is there no mapping of No Action VRM? Do VRM I and II categories under the current RMP mean that development would be constrained in the China Mountain area? BLM

knows there is intense controversy over the proposed China Mountain Wind development. It must clearly lay out what the current situation is related to No Action for China Mountain, and all remaining sagebrush habitats in the Jarbidge.

The analysis is devoid of substance (DEIS at 4-675 to 4-677). It is based nearly entirely on stating which of the flawed Alternatives is first, second, third, or fourth in a mixed bag of constraints (or lack of constraints). It does not examine critical biological conflicts with development in relation to fragmented sage-grouse and other habitats and populations.

For example: Impacts from Alt IV consists of two paragraphs, and a single sentence. All the Preferred Alt analysis says is that “Alt IV would have the highest level of constraint of all Alternatives”, and that “In the potential utility development area, management for sage grouse leks, soil resources, and wildlife seasonal periods results in more constraint on location and timing than in the other alternatives”. This is because BLM has placed greater emphasis on mule deer, and less emphasis on sage-grouse in its Preferred Alternative. BLM further skewed “constraints” on development in Alt V by allowing full throttle development VRM III and IV allocations over vast areas of remaining sagebrush habitats and recovery habitats across much of the proposed Sagebrush Sea ACEC.

In Alt V, BLM constructed the Alternative to minimize sage-grouse protections compared to Alt IV, and laced Alt V with Poison Pill VRM and other provisions. It developed Alt IV to promote habitat generalist mule deer above sagebrush-dependent sage-grouse.

BLM also appears to have done this to muddy the waters for the public in clearly understanding which alternative that is environmentally preferable.

Further, BLM can not tally up the Number of constraints listed under each Alternative – after it has purposefully skewed the Alternatives with a long list of Alt IV Mule deer “seasonal” constraints over a big land area, and then claim one Alternative is better than the other. There is no analysis of the effectiveness of each constraint.

By pointing to “constraints” that are only seasonal avoidance for construction, but still allow large-scale industrial development to be built - with predictably disastrous consequences as BLM well knows from the failure of these constraints with energy in Wyoming in the Pinedale Anticline and elsewhere, BLM ducks addressing the fact that No industrial/energy development/ROW is preferable to tinkering with seasonal road blading and habitat destruction “constraints” in its lame comparisons between Alternatives.

Valid comparative and cumulative impacts analysis cannot be conducted until much more careful and science-based analysis of a valid range of alternatives with internally consistent GOMAs occurs.

BLM must re-do this. It must set aside its industry-biased games of setting up in such a way that BLM can contrive analysis to gain adoption of very harmful Alternatives.

This limited and slanted presentation of Jarbidge BLM 's RMP impacts must be swept aside, and provide honest clear analysis that lays out alternatives, GOMAS and a cohesive Plan to conserve and recover sage-grouse.

Serious threats are posed by improperly sited energy developments – no matter how many constraints they were built using. The failures of constraints to mitigate impacts that BLM itself knows full well from Wyoming, and elsewhere have failed, also highlights the broader issue of BLM's failure to develop an effective framework for mitigation and for denying poorly sited and harmful ROWS and developments in the RMP.

Fire Mapping and Cumulative Effects

BLM fails in all parts of the RMP to provide adequate baseline information, mapping and analysis to understand the severity of impacts and threats from grazing, fire, energy and other activities that sage-grouse and other species of concern face across the biome, region and area of relevance to local populations. See Knick and Connolly (2009).

We have Attached mapping showing fires that have occurred in the broader landscape context of the Jarbidge from 1998 to 2010. Source: BLM and USGS Fire Data. USGS mapping has data from other land agencies.

Please view this map side-by-side with RMP Map 24 Fires 1987-2007, which shows significant burned areas of the Inside Desert during this period. On-line GS layers were not available for earlier periods so we did not have the 1987-mid-1990s data on our map that provides a bigger picture of the regional fragmentation and loss of sagebrush habitats.

Please also consider the NDOW 2008 sage-grouse reporting and mapping that overlays Nevada fires with leks.

It is clear that vast areas of the sagebrush habitats have been burned, resulting in long-term significant reductions in critical habitat components for sage-grouse and other sagebrush species. BLM fails to analyze cumulative effects of these losses to sage-grouse populations.

BLM also fails to provide a large context for its very high fence densities, roads and water developments, and many other sources of habitat disturbance that sage-grouse and other wildlife populations face.

We have also Attached a Map that shows the Jarbidge fence density in some context. We could find no on-line Nevada Forest and BLM fence layer – but Idaho BLM must obtain this info from sister agencies so the fence Footprint on sage-grouse, antelope, migratory bird and other populations over a broader landscape can be understood. This is particularly important for lands used by the same population of birds – where grouse from Jarbidge leks may move up on to the heavily fenced Forest lands in summer. What

is the fence density on Forest lands outside the forested Wilderness Area? What happens if fencing is overlaid with fire? Overlaid with water developments?

What is the current direct, indirect and cumulative Footprint of fragmentation and facilities that the Jarbidge grouse population faces?

We have also Attached a file based on 2006-2007 agency cheatgrass mapping. Note the yellow coloring in many areas of the Jarbidge. Since that that time, the risk of cheatgrass expansion and dominance has only grown. This is especially the case 4-5 years and after following wild fires like Murphy, and with continued intensive grazing pressures.

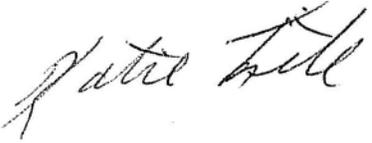
WWP recommends in all alternatives of the final RMP/EIS that the BLM allocate and or zone the lands of the Sagebrush Sea Alternative as a domestic sheep-free zone to protect Bruneau-Jarbidge bighorns and to allow bighorn sheep expansion into the Jarbidge Foothills canyons. A single domestic sheep operation prevents establishment of viable bighorn herds over vast areas of suitable landscape. The RMP must determine the relative value to the public of bighorn sheep recovery vs. one sheep operation. We have included a map showing the relationship of existing bighorn sheep populations and domestic sheep operations.

Western Watersheds Project is also concerned that the analysis of the social and economic consequences of each alternative in the Draft RMP/EIS is cursory and incomplete. The Draft RMP/EIS is focused solely on the economic benefits to grazing permittees when all Americans own these landscapes and will be impacted by the cost to administer the Field Office and by the economic cost of wildlife values foregone should the BLM continue to enable destructive livestock grazing that damages all native species habitat. The BLM needs to enlarge the social and economic analysis to include the income and expense of administering the public lands in the Field Office for each alternative. Nowhere in the FEIS is there any information that assesses the expense and income to administer the Field Office including the costs to American taxpayers of subsidizing livestock grazing on the Field Office managed lands. The BLM has also failed to address the economic value of recovered wildlife populations in each alternative of the EIS. Additionally the BLM must quantify the costs of degraded wildlife habitat that would continue to exist as a consequence of each alternative.

We request that non-BLM outside biologists/ecologists with USGS or some other impartial entity be brought in to produce a scientifically valid and tenable land use plan management document with a valid and reasonable range of alternatives. Despite the tremendous effort we have made, BLM continues to mislead and obscure the truth. The Twin Falls District - and JFO under apparently continued political pressures from the livestock industry - cannot be trusted to produce a credible document and range of alternative actions related to conserving and enhancing the important public lands and wildlife values of this damaged landscape. We Protest this has not been done to date, and it must be corrected in a SEIS.

Sincerely,

/kf

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Fite". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'K'.

Katie Fite
Biodiversity Director
Western Watersheds Project
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Boise, ID 83701
208-429-1679
Katie@westernwatersheds.org



Western Watersheds Project

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Web site: www.WesternWatersheds.org

Working to protect and restore Western Watersheds

September 18, 2014

Director (210)
Attn: Protest Coordinator. WO-210
PO Box 71383
Washington, DC 200024-1383

Sent Cert. U. S. Mail Return Receipt Requested
Also Sent by email to: protest@blm.gov

Dear BLM Director,

This is an additional Protest from Western Watersheds Project (WWP) regarding the Final Jarbidge Resource Management Plan and its associated Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Biased and Arbitrary Consideration of public Comments and Science in Appendix P and RMP

WWP Protests the BLM's biased analysis and presentation of science-related information for biological and all other values of the Field Office in the Final EIS and analysis of Alternatives, including the appalling new high adverse impact Alternative VI.

Critical insight into the bias is shown by reviewing the dramatically different response to conservation-based comments vs. comments that minimize concerns about livestock impacts and advance the interests of livestock permittees in Appendix P.

The state of Idaho's comments must be viewed as a foremost example in the latter category. The state comments sought to strip and undercut environmental protections of the RMP – showing extreme bias towards livestock grazing and some other extractive users. No matter the lack of validity of the comment, BLM caved into the state.

The state of Idaho under C.L. Butch Otter has become increasingly known for its virulent anti-predator policies and highly controversial management of wildlife in general – such as proposed raven poisoning and pelican egg oiling. IDFG, the state agency that is supposed to be an independent voice for wildlife, is shackled and effectively silenced as being an advocate for nearly all wildlife –especially if wildlife habitat and conservation needs conflict with livestock interests or energy developer desires. Thus, state wildlife management, water quality oversight, and other state agency functions are now greatly subservient to industry wishes. The current politicized situation regarding state agencies requires that BLM take an even harder look at the full and compete range of science related to sage-grouse and other wildlife needs across this landscape.

This is vividly on display in the wildlife, sage-grouse and other sections regarding native biota in Appendix P, and how BLM responds to state comments. But it pervades the entire comment category and topic set.

The state set about undercutting the scientific references and basis that BLM used to lay out ecological damage and harms caused by livestock grazing.

BLM obliged – in Alt VI and RMP analyses, in blindly accepting what the state said (and wanted), while minimizing conservation-based input and other public voices.

At the same time, any comment that promoted protection to even a minor degree was acknowledged by BLM, phrasing may have been changed a bit, but the actual heart of the issue the conservation actions a commentor raised were largely ignored, downplayed or beneficial impacts minimized – or at times ignored altogether.

We Protest this arbitrary and biased EIS process and analysis.

FLPMA Requires BLM Prepare a SEIS, Balance Uses and Ensure Sustainability

Multiple use and sustained yield management means there must be a significant portion the public lands devoted to conservation – or sensitive species like sage-grouse, clean water, ad a wealth of public recreational uses will not be sustained – and will not be adequately buffered from adverse effects of climate change which are amplified by grazing and other intensive disturbances.

To manage for sustained yield, BLM must manage uses without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment. In doing this, BLM must weigh the relative values of the resources to society, and not economic return to a hand full of local ranching interests.

BLM must sustain natural landscapes, scenic resources, clean air, water wildfire, night skies, soundscapes, and opportunities for solitude, quiet and primitive recreation. See 2014 TWS Comments on cd re: BLM planning.

BLM should allocate these lands, waters, and habitats to conservation and restoration purposes – before allocating to livestock grazing and/or extractive uses. Allocations must extend far beyond the skyhigh “forage” estimates of unknown origin that the entire RMP with its mammoth grazing and livestock facility and linked road network footprint is based upon.

We Protest the lack of consideration of the full range of values, and also the lack of a full science-based consideration of cumulative effects acknowledging threats from grazing and resource extraction that must be considered beyond “forage” in making allocations.

FLPMA Requires BLM Prioritize ACECs – Instead Jarbidge Gutted and Cast Aside ACECs

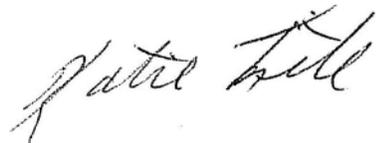
BLM has acted to gut rather than prioritize ACECs – again acting with extreme bias to placate ranchers and the state of Idaho at the expense of all other values of the public lands.

BLM’s Alt VI and the FEIS violate FLPMA in casting aside 600,000 acres of ACECs that meet the Relevance and Importance criteria.

A Supplemental EIS with a full and valid range of alternatives based on current baseline information and science must be developed.

Sincerely,

/kf



Katie Fite
Biodiversity Director
Western Watersheds Project
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208-429-1679
Katie@westernwatersheds.org

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2014 12:12 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: IDT call notes - 9/4/14
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-09-04.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from yesterday's call, also on the SharePoint site. I asked David about the text for the 12 inch precipitation zones and he said that it is awaiting SOL approval. He hopes to have the notes out by COB today.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 4, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Rod Collins; Natalie Cooper; Bruce Schoeberl; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; Kasey Prestwich; Karen Porter; Dustin Miller; Kelly Bockting; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse Rawson; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None

Action Items

- None

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Having a federal family meeting for the Rocky Mountain Region next week. Compiling numbers on existing rights and activities for the USFWS. Utilize numbers from the DEIS for Montana.
- White paper on Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) – Brent shared with some staff for review and will also send to Kelly. Using 2011 data for population and habitat. In general, we are not close to the disturbance cap. May receive national guidance on how the disturbance cap will be calculated, but Brent has been working on some new possible calculations. Call at 10 am today to discuss disturbance.
- Process – waiting to hear about changes in the proposed plan. Have changed to a disturbance “cap” and the waiver, exemption, modification language has been changed. Will likely change Core habitat from closed to NSO for fluid mineral leasing.
- Meeting with GIS and Rob to review the Forest Service plan. Would like to ensure that maps are consistent across BLM and FS boundaries.

Proposed Plan Follow Up

- Lands –Core/Important are not available for disposal/sale. Need to review existing plans for any description of lands identified for sale. Check if these lands are in Core/Important and if so, need to clearly identify that they are no longer available for sale (by parcel description). 1) Review LUPs; 2) take legal descriptions and compare to map; 3) make separate appendix that states which parcels are no longer for sale.
- Forest Service Wild Horse Territory – none in our subregion.
- Comments related to livestock grazing and fire – Brent will have to follow up with some staff about this.

- Some concern over prescribed fire in less than 12 in precipitation zones. Pat was supposed to provide language. This language will be sent with the notes from the Great Basin federal family meeting.
- For areas post-rehabilitation, when do they meet the criteria to be called effective mitigation? Must meet the key habitat standard and needs to be consistent within the plan (e.g., Table 2).
- Anthropogenic disturbance criteria – regarding co-location in Important habitat, will rephrase to say that it would be located to minimize effects, if possible, through co-location in Important. This is because co-location may not be the best way to minimize impacts in all areas.
- Need to review the proposed plan to make sure we have addressed Montana appropriately.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2014 11:34 AM
To: 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov)
Subject: IDT meeting notes - 9/11/14
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-09-11.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are the meeting notes from this morning's call. They are also saved on the SharePoint.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 11, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Don Kemner; Bruce Schoeberl; Jason Pyron; Katie Powell; Karen Porter; Ethan Ellsworth; Connie Breckenridge; Kelly Bocking; Brandon Knapton; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German

Handouts

- None

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- Brent is almost done editing the proposed plan. A few items to follow up on.
- Disturbance meeting tomorrow. Have discussed doing a moving window analysis for the anthropogenic disturbance calculation. Showed that much of WY, eastern MT, UT, and OR are over the 3 percent cap. Other areas are under the 3% cap. This calculation doesn't roll up easily to a larger scale.
- Have been responding to questions from the Rocky Mountain meeting, such as a justification for three-tiered habitat management system.
- Brent will send out the BLM and Forest Service proposed plans with the allocation maps in the next couple of days.
- Brent scheduling a meeting with Montana staff in mid- to late October to make sure the proposed plan reflects their needs. Also reviewing the MT state GRSG plan that was just signed. Will need to incorporate that to some extent. Disturbance calculation and adaptive management still a question.
- Brent will share the BSU paper with the team.

Proposed Plan Additional Information/Work

- Implementation-related details needed (probably would not require changes to the proposed plan): 1) mitigation team and strategy (e.g., how the boards work); 2) the adaptive management evaluation process.
- Need definition of "high voltage" versus "minor rights-of-way". Check to see what the FS has and NPT recommends. Might be 100 kV.
- Brent will send Montana the habitat objectives table to review from their perspective.
- Rob is working on VDDT acres. Had a webinar yesterday to go over the results with Craig.
- How to manage habitat that is lost or gained? Lost habitat will still be managed for GRSG until there is a mapping plan amendment/adjustment on a five year basis. Some thought that gained/new GRSG habitat could be managed as general habitat, but since allocations are tied to

general habitat, changes would require a plan amendment. Don, Paul, and Ethan will work on criteria to include, such as following RDFs, seasonal restrictions, and buffers.

- Included broad prioritization language from the Great Basin Region federal family meeting that discourages use in Core/Important habitat and pushes uses outside of GRSG habitat.
- Continuing to work and identify lands for disposal in existing plans. When you acquire lands, they're not automatically open to mineral entry. Need to say that lands acquired would be managed for the appropriate management zone except not automatically open to minerals.
- Will need to augment the appendix describing project-level key habitat map adjustments based on site conditions/surveys. Ethan and Paul will work on this and share with others.
- Regarding disturbance, need to make sure that we are consistent in how ROWs are counted as disturbance. In the BSU description, it says we would follow the monitoring framework, but elsewhere it mentions ROW width.
- Waiting for the *Lepidium* conservation agreement to be signed. Will ensure those conservation measures are in our RDF appendix.
- Need to provide justifications/rationale for the decisions we made in the administrative record. List of items: Why 2011 for baseline? Why 10% and 20% change for adaptive regulatory triggers? Why is maximum number of males the appropriate measure? Why is 3% the disturbance cap? (need USFWS input on some of these).
- Questions about Forest Service versus BLM standards for grazing and what can be changed. Forest Service standards are designed to meet viability requirements for wildlife because of the certainty of implementation. Certainty of implementation is the same for Forest Service standards and guidelines, except that a standard needs a plan amendment to change. Biological benefit would be the same. Will have a meeting to discuss how GRSG concerns were incorporated into the Owyhee permit renewals. Implementation plans should help with consistency.
- Once the final EIS is out for internal review, would like to have a series of half-day or one-day workshops in each of the BLM district offices and including nearby Forests. Will have a presentation to the field on what the decisions are by program area. Then will work through some examples, to help with implementation Probably November at the soonest.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2014 11:37 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Call Today - 9/18 notes
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-09-18.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from this morning's call, also saved on the Sharepoint site.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2014 7:46 AM
To: Arnold, Jenifer L; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Brown, William B; German, Jesse S; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Kershaw, Kathi G; Knapton, Brandon L; Kuyper, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Prestwich, Kasey C; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tolness, Denise R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S; Brent Esmoil; Cally Younger; Catherine Wightman; Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; eugene.schock@id.usda.gov; Fletcher, Tammy; Jeff Bergland; jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov; Jon Beals; Katie Powell; Mike McDonald; Pyron, Jason; Rapley, Kathleen; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov; Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brooks, Sandra S; Burkhardt, Glen H; Carlson, John C; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Ethan Ellsworth; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; Halford, Fredrick K; Jirik, Steven J; Jonathan Norred; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Porter, Karen F; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Tanya Thrift; Wiedenmann, Kurt R
Subject: Call Today

Here is the call in information for today's call – 9-10:00 a.m. MDT

Participant passcode: 97575
Toll Free Number
USA 877-324-1605

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 18, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Katie Powell; Trisha Cracroft; Brandon Knapton; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Jesse German

Meeting Minutes

Meetings This Week and Ongoing

- Meeting in Reno regarding implementation of the FIAT.
- Another meeting in Reno with Deputy State Directors to talk general implementation planning.
- Meeting in DC this week with regional leads to discuss the federal family meeting outcomes. Brent has been responding to more questions on our plan.
- Coordination meeting with the states will be the week of October 9th. Unsure what the agenda is or intended outcomes.

Project Update

- We have been finishing GIS calculations and developing maps.
- Brent sent the next version of the draft proposed plan which highlights the actions that have been changed. Some further changes are being made to conifer objectives and additional language in mapping section regarding management areas. Very nearly complete.
- Brent will try to include the maps with the next version.
- Brent will be following up with state director Tim Murphy and sending final version to field and district office managers likely within the next week. Would like to put together a day-long workshop for each of the district offices (including BLM and FS staff), likely after the FEIS goes to WO for review.
- EMPSi starting on effects analysis and including revisions based on feedback from BLM and Forest Service, changes to the proposed plan, the Forest Service proposed plan, VDDT, and GIS. EMPSi staff will contact BLM staff if needed for input. Goal is to send all sections to lead BLM counterpart by next Friday and CC Brent and Meredith.
- Disturbance team met last Friday. Goal was to determine definitive scale and how it will be measured. Did not get conclusions on these topics. Will set up another call, but probably not this week due to other meetings.
- Awaiting outcomes and possible changes from federal family meetings, though some of the GBR outcomes have been incorporated into the current version of the plan.
- Staff have been working on the land tenure assignment. Some of the parcels are split between GRSG management zones. Decision was to take the whole parcel out of consideration for disposal if part of it is within GRSG habitat. Staff should identify split parcels. Due by the end of the month.

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 2:32 PM
To: 'Arnold, Jenifer L'; 'Beck, Jonathan M'; 'Blinn, Laurie A'; 'Brown, William B'; 'German, Jesse S'; 'Guyer, Vincent L'; 'Haight, Scott S'; 'Haupt, Jon M'; 'Heide, Sarah C'; 'Hotaling, Richard M'; 'Jakovac, Gloria R'; James Barnum (jbarnum@blm.gov); 'Kershaw, Kathi G'; 'Knapton, Brandon L'; 'Kuyper, Michael W'; 'Leonard, Stephen P'; 'Prestwich, Kasey C'; 'Rawson, Jesse M'; 'Rice, Karen E'; 'Sampson, Dianna L'; 'Schoeberl, Bruce C'; 'Shaw, Elena A'; 'Tolness, Denise R'; 'Wood, David'; 'Wright, Jason S'; 'Adamski, Joseph J'; Anne Halford; 'Bockting, Kelly D'; 'Bohn, Bryce A'; 'Braun, Christa M'; 'Brooks, Sandra S'; 'Burkhardt, Glen H'; 'Carlson, John C'; Charles Tuss (ctuss@blm.gov); 'Chi, Danielle K'; 'Collins, Rodney J'; Colt, Chris J -FS; 'Cooper, Natalie M'; 'Danly, Lynn A'; 'Elizabeth Maclean'; Ethan Ellsworth; 'Fehlau, Robin S'; 'Foss, Jeffery L'; 'Gardetto, Jessica D'; 'Halford, Fredrick K'; 'Jirik, Steven J'; Jonathan Norred; 'Lepak, Dominika'; 'Makela, Paul D'; 'McConnaughey, Diane L'; 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empfi.com)'; 'Mickelsen, Robert'; 'Porter, Karen F'; 'Quamen, Frank R'; 'Ralston, Brent E'; Tanya Thrift (tthrift@blm.gov); 'Wiedenmann, Kurt R'; Brent Esmoil (brent_esmoil@fws.gov); Cally Younger ; 'Catherine Wightman (CWightman@mt.gov)'; Cracroft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; 'Don Kemner'; 'Dustin T. Miller'; 'eugene.schock@id.usda.gov'; 'Fletcher, Tammy'; Jeff Bergland (jeff_berglund@fws.gov); 'jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov'; Jon Beals (Jon.Beals@osc.idaho.gov); Katie Powell (katie_powell@fws.gov); 'Mike McDonald'; 'Pyron, Jason'; 'Rapley, Kathleen'; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov
Subject: FW: ID/MT IDT meeting notes
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-09-25.docx

Here are the notes from today's call and a reminder that our next call is scheduled for Thursday October 23rd at 9:00 a.m.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Meredith Zaccherio [<mailto:meredith.zaccherio@empfi.com>]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 1:20 PM
To: "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov)
Cc: Annie Daly
Subject: ID/MT IDT meeting notes

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from this morning's IDT call (thanks Annie!). Sorry I couldn't make it, as I was pulled off to another meeting. The schedule you proposed sounds good to me as long as we don't have substantial changes to incorporate to the ADPP. If we do have some changes, we may need more than a week to turn around revisions between 10/24 and 11/1, but we can cross that bridge when we come to it.
We are still pending the vegetation GIS – do you know if Diane has what she needs to do these calculations? I know there were some questions about which vegetation layer to use.
Let's touch base tomorrow or early next week before you're out to make sure everything is tracking and will move along while you're gone.
Thanks,

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
www.EMPSi.com Twitter: EMPSInc Facebook: EMPSi

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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

September 25, 2014 11:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Nika Lepak; Kelly Bockting; Gloria Jakovac; Jason Wright; Karen Rice; Vince Guyer; Kasey Prestwich; Trisha Cracroft; Brandon Knapton; Rob Mickleson

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- There was a project management call for the Great Basin Region with an update on the project from the Washington Office
- A schedule has been prepared and is under review at the department level.
- At this point, specific dates have not been shared.
- Should be seeing the schedule in the next week or so.
- A couple policy decisions (below) have been made, though most won't specifically affect IDMT.
 1. A *No Net Unmitigated Loss* approach has been adopted across both RM and GB regions. IDMT's approach is linked to Key Habitat. We'll need to figure out and define what this means for MT.
 2. Lek Buffers: Right now a team of USGS scientists is reviewing literature on lek buffers in order to determine an approach on which lek buffers are best for various activities. IDMT did this already and submitted that information to the Washington Office and WO has commissioned the USGS to do the same thing.
 - The USGS team should have results back to BLM by October 6th. USGS is considering pulling in outside scientists and the Solicitor is looking into whether this would violate FACA (Federal Advisory Committee Act).
 - IDMT's approach won't be modified too much by the results of this research, since IDMT has already done this work within their subregion. This work is more likely to impact other subregions.
 3. Cumulative Effects Analysis: All the *Important* management zones will be lumped together with the *General* management zones for the CEA. This was a decision made by the WO Solicitors and is more of a worst-case-scenario look at cumulative effects. The tentative deadline of getting the CEA data to the NOC is the 2nd or 3rd week of October. For the most part it's all ready to go. This timeframe will be easy to meet.
 4. Record of Decision: Currently leadership is leaning towards the idea of having two RODs, one for each region (GB and RM).
 5. The final review of the FEIS won't be due to Washington until after the holidays. We're looking to have our pieces pulled together by after Thanksgiving and then hand that over to EMPSi for editing etc. so that we'll be on track to get everything to Washington by January.
 6. *This decision DOES impact IDMT*
 - We're changing the names of our management areas again.
 - We still have 3 habitat categories: Priority, Important, and General.

- These will now be referred to as *Habitat Management Areas*. We will now need to refer to our habitat categories as: PHMAs, IHMAs, and GHMAs.
- Other subregions will be using a similar naming convention.
- This will result in a lot of changes to our document, but it won't be impacting any substantive decisions we've made.
- This is most likely the final name change.

Work Items In Progress

- Brent has been working on a paper that describes the anthropogenic disturbance and adaptive management science and calculations. Brent will share this paper more broadly after it's been reviewed by Rob. Brent should be able to share this out by early next week.
 - October 24th will be the deadline to express any questions and concerns about this paper to Brent. If there are significant questions or concerns, please give Brent a call so these can be discussed.
- There is an information bulletin (IB) that will go out likely next week. It is currently being reviewed in the State Office. The IB transfers the Administrative Draft Proposed Plan and the Admin Appendices to District and FO managers that are involved in this process. This will probably result in workshops in January. The purpose of the workshops will be to share out pieces of the implementation strategy that have already been discussed, and also to discuss how to develop a final implementation plan to be included as part of the FEIS.
- EMPSi will send out revised sections to the BLM tomorrow (Friday). Please make sure you read through them and make sure they've captured all the important parts. When looking over the sections, consider the big picture and make sure the analysis captures that. Consider whether the section has captured all the management actions, whether the effects have been talked about, whether all administrative units have been accounted for (BLM, BLM MT, FS, FS MT, Sawtooth NF), and whether cumulative effects have been considered.
 - The timeline for the review of the section is as follows: EMPSi will get revised section to BLM on September 26th. The BLM will have until October 24th to review those sections and provide comments back to EMPSi. EMPSi will have until November 1st to turn those comments around and get the revised sections back to the BLM. The BLM will review the draft between November 1st and Thanksgiving. A pseudo-final draft will then be ready after Thanksgiving. The BLM will get one final look before the WO review in January.
 - These next 4 weeks are the last big look the BLM will get at these sections, so look carefully and be thorough.

Other

- There is a meeting scheduled in Montana at the Dillon Field Office on October 21st to go through the administrative draft proposed plan to make sure everything is captured for Montana. Kelly will look at the plan ahead of time to flag potential issues.
- There will be no call next week. Brent will be on leave starting next Wednesday.

Brent Ralston

From: Dustin T. Miller
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2014 10:55 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Don Kemner
Subject: RE: Quick Update and Naming Change

Thanks Brent,

I had a meeting that went a little longer than planned so I missed the call.

The name change is not a big deal, but my question is why? The overtone to all of this has been “consistency”, and you are more than aware of the State’s feelings on rangewide consistency. I just hope that we hope the NPT now has a good understanding of our overall approach to conservation and that it really is an outcome-based approach. I don’t want the name changing of the management zones to be a precursor to more “consistency” discussions.

Thanks for listening.

Dustin

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 2:41 PM
To: Dustin T. Miller; Don Kemner
Subject: Quick Update and Naming Change

We you guys missed an exciting call this morning. A couple things I wanted to let you know –

I heard some information on the conference in early November:

The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Wildfire in the Great Basin 2014 Conference will be held on November 5-7, 2014, at the Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho.

State participation is encourage for this so there will likely be more information coming to you soon, I wanted to let you know the dates to help your schedule.

The second item regards our management zone names or title. There was a national decision at the Rocky Mountain Region Meeting to have all the EISs, including Wyoming’s refer to the GRSG delineated areas as Priority and General Habitat Management Areas or PHMAs and GHMAs. For Idaho we will therefore have – Priority Habitat Management Areas, Important Habitat Management Areas and General Habitat Management Areas. This change does not affect any substantive decisions but will change all the references from management zones to habitat management areas. I’ll be working on that effort for the ADPP. This should be the last name change, until it changes again!

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Brent Ralston

From: Lawrence Schoen
Sent: Tuesday, September 09, 2014 12:20 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Status and Cancellation of Upcoming Meeting

great. thank you brent! have safe trip to moscow.
regards,
larry

Lawrence Schoen
Blaine County Commissioner
206 First Avenue South
Hailey, Idaho 83333
Ph: 208-788-5500 x1124
Fx: 208-788-5569
E-mail: lschoen@co.blaine.id.us
Web: www.blainecounty.org

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 09, 2014 8:58 AM
To: Commissioners Assistant; Bob Shirley; Dennis Crane; Dennis Crane; depperjd@id.doe.gov; dmlamb01@gmail.com; Douglas Balfour; Douglas Balfour; Happel, Dan; James Hart; Jerald Raymond; Jerry Hoagland; Ladd Carter; Lawrence Schoen; Lee Miller; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; OCNRCDIR@aol.com; Robert Cope; Seth Grigg; Terry Kramer; Thoms Rice; Todd_Stefanic@nps.gov; Wayne Butts; William Frederiksen
Subject: Status and Cancellation of Upcoming Meeting

Currently BLM and Forest Service continue to work forward on development of the Proposed Plan Amendment in coordination with the State of Idaho and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Our major efforts at this point have been to finalize incorporation of public comments into any adjustments of the Proposed Plan and to incorporate the comments you have provided into the Proposed Plan and effects analysis.

The Proposed Plan is nearing finalization, expected in mid to late October. Internally we have been coordinating across subregions and briefing our leadership on status and components of the Proposed Plans. The Great Basin Subregions met with BLM, Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service leadership recently in to discuss the Great Basin plans and this we that same leadership is meeting to discuss the plans in the Rocky Mountain Region. It is my understanding that the leadership of the Federal agencies is working to schedule a coordination meeting with State governments toward the end of this month. After these meetings we should be able to finalize the Proposed Plan and begin the completion of the Final EIS.

I am scheduled to address the IAC Public Lands Committee next Tuesday, September 16th at 3 p.m. in Moscow, ID; and since it looks like I won't have much substantially new to share until mid-October, let's cancel our upcoming call tentatively scheduled for this Thursday.

Hopefully I'll see many of you next week in Moscow and if you have any questions or concerns we could talk then.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 11:04 AM
To: Paul Makela; Ethan Ellsworth; 'Mickelsen, Robert -FS'; Jason Pyron (jason_pyron@fws.gov); Katie Powell (katie_powell@fws.gov); Rod Collins (rcollins@blm.gov)
Cc: Donald Major
Subject: RE: IMPORTANT: Disturbance call with FWS

Looks like there is going to be an answer on disturbance soon!!! I have reserved the Eagle Room for our Disturbance Friday – maybe we should call it Disturbed Friday(?).

While Paul is the only one actually invited to attend I figured you would be interested – even if it is just to listen in on the proceedings. I'm just hoping they proceed in a direction that we are familiar and comfortable with!

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Paul Makela [mailto:pmakela@blm.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 7:27 AM
To: Ethan Ellsworth
Cc: Donald J Major; Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: IMPORTANT: Disturbance call with FWS

Ethan
We need to be on this call on Friday. I will ask Frank Q to put you on his distribution list.
Paul

Paul Makela
Wildlife Program Lead
Idaho BLM State Office
Office: 208.373.3809
Email: pmakela@blm.gov

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Frank Quamen <fquamen@blm.gov>
To: "pmakela@blm.gov" <pmakela@blm.gov>, Glenn Frederick <gfrederick@blm.gov>, Lara Juliusson <lara_juliusson@fws.gov>, Gordon Toevs <gtoevs@blm.gov>, Sandra Brewer <sbrewer@blm.gov>, Vicki Herren <vherren@blm.gov>, Jennifer Morton <j75morto@blm.gov>, "ddamm@fs.fed.us" <ddamm@fs.fed.us>, Douglas Havlina <dhavlina@blm.gov>, Lief Wiechman <lief_wiechman@fws.gov>, Robin Sell <rsell@blm.gov>, Emily Kachergis <ekachergis@blm.gov>, "rskorkowsky@fs.fed.us" <rskorkowsky@fs.fed.us>, John Carlson <jccarlso@blm.gov>, Renee Chi <rchi@blm.gov>,

David Wood <dwood@blm.gov>, Pat Deibert <pat_deibert@fws.gov>

Subject: IMPORTANT: Disturbance call with FWS

You have been invited to the following event.

Title: IMPORTANT: Disturbance call with FWS

All,

As noted in the Great Basin and now the Rocky Mountain Federal Family Meetings, we have been asked by Neil Kornze, Steve Ellis, Jim Lyons, Noreen Walsh, Chris Iverson, and your State Directors to quickly come to a conclusion on how we will be dealing with Disturbance. Pat Deibert & Gordon Toevs are available Friday. I know this is not our usual meeting time, but if you are available, we really need you all to participate. Please set aside this block of time. We can break for lunch, but we have been given firm instruction to get this all resolved soon.

We will use the NetMeeting

Thank you,
Frank

877-702-9789
9489549#

Join Instructions for Instant Net Conference:

1. Join the meeting now:

<http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?sigKey=blm&i=442809195&p=&t=c>

2. Enter the required fields.

3. Indicate that you have read the Privacy Policy.

4. Click on Proceed.

(Note - you may have to use Internet Explorer and not Google Chrome)

You do not need a password for this account.

When: Fri Sep 12, 2014 10:30am - 2pm Mountain Time

Where: 877-702-9789 9489549#

Calendar: Paul Makela

Who:

- * Frank Quamen - organizer
- * Glenn Frederick
- * Lara Juliusson
- * Gordon Toevs
- * Sandra Brewer
- * Vicki Herren
- * Paul Makela
- * Jennifer Morton
- * ddamm@fs.fed.us
- * Douglas Havlina
- * Lief Wiechman
- * Robin Sell
- * Emily Kachergis
- * rskorkowsky@fs.fed.us

- * John Carlson
- * Renee Chi
- * David Wood
- * Pat Deibert

Event details:

<https://www.google.com/calendar/event?action=VIEW&eid=OGI2OHJwOWJjZGxsOHJ1cDZraDJhbDVjZnMgcG1ha2VsYUBibG0uZ292&tok=MTUjZnF1YW1lbkBiG0uZ292ZjUyZmJlMzJhYjE5OTY0ZTVjYTlkOTIzYzM3M2YxNDgyMjE5NzJmOA&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

Invitation from Google Calendar: <https://www.google.com/calendar/>

You are receiving this email at the account pmakela@blm.gov because you are subscribed for invitations on calendar Paul Makela.

To stop receiving these notifications, please log in to <https://www.google.com/calendar/> and change your notification settings for this calendar.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2014 1:55 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Reminder for Team Meeting Tomorrow - Thursday March 20th
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-03-20.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from today's call, also saved on the SharePoint site.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94108
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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2014 1:01 PM
To: Adamski, Joseph J; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; Brooks, Sandra S; Burkhardt, Glen H; Carlson, John C; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; German, Jesse S; Halford, Fredrick K; Jirik, Steven J; Jonathan Norred; Lepak, Dominika; Major, Donald J; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; Porter, Karen F; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Tanya Thrift; Wiedenmann, Kurt R; Brent Esmoil; Cally Younger; Catherine Wightman; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; eugene.schock@id.usda.gov; Fletcher, Tammy; Jeff Bergland; jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov; Jon Beals; Katie Powell; Koziol, Deborah - NRCS, Pocatello, ID; Mike McDonald; Pyron, Jason; Rapley, Kathleen; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov; Arnold, Jenifer L; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Brown, William B; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Kershaw, Kathi G; Knapton, Brandon L; Kuyper, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Moore, Kelley; Prestwich, Kasey C; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tolness, Denise R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S
Subject: Reminder for Team Meeting Tomorrow - Thursday March 20th

We will be having a call tomorrow. Attached is the newest iteration of the preliminary plan including mining and grazing.

1)Recurring webinar: I set up a recurring webinar for our Thursday calls. That will hopefully simplify things, as the meeting access code will be the same every time:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/meeting/join/204302141>

Access Code: 204-302-141

Passcodes/Pin codes:

Participant passcode: 96049

For security reasons, the passcode will be required to join the conference.

Dial in numbers:

Country Toll Numbers Freephone/
Toll Free Number

USA 877-324-1605

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

March 20, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Don Major; Nika Lepak; Deb Koziol; Bruce Schoeberl; Jason Pyron; Kasey Prestwich; Kelly Bockting; Karen Rice; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright

Handouts

- ID swMT Recommended Proposed 031814

Meeting Minutes

Comment Response

- Comment response workshop in two weeks. Brent is securing a meeting room and he should know the meeting location tomorrow.
- EMPSi has been working on comment coding and preparing issue summaries and responses. There is some boilerplate language provided on the national level, but we'll also need to craft sub-region-specific responses.
- Will work through Montana comments on Tuesday and recreation, water, and fisheries on Thursday.

Ongoing Efforts

- Proposed plan data needs to be submitted to the NOC by 5/15.
- Goals/objectives: Will review next week. Need to create more quantifiable objectives, but this will likely be based off the VDDT modeling.
- GRSG habitat management objectives: Rob has been preparing a table to present the habitat objectives, similar to a table in the NV/CA EIS.
- Adaptive management: Brent is working on the language and hopes to have a meeting with others next week to discuss and refine.
- Disturbance threshold: Don and Jason working on, as well as the state task force. Expecting a response to the state from the task force tomorrow and will hopefully hear more early next week.
- Don has been working on developing the suite of metrics that will be incorporated (numerator) into the disturbance calculation and the appropriate scale (denominator) at which it will be calculated. May need to do this calculation at multiple scales. Paul, Don, and Jason will coordinate on this. Then will discuss, so what? What does it mean? Will need to discuss further with the USFWS.
- Kelly will coordinate with Montana staff regarding disturbance threshold/calculation for the state.
- Mitigation framework: broad scale guidance from the national level: 1) creation of a state board to look at mitigation and 2) develop mitigation strategy within one year of ROD. Working with the state to get more details on their framework which will help inform the mitigation strategy.

- Range: Nika will write up a white paper on how BLM will renew grazing permits. How to prioritize, how to apply habitat management objectives on an allotment basis, any additional decisions needed to clarify? How to deal with this in areas that don't have the ecological potential to be GRSG habitat? What we intend, what we want to accomplish, how we'll do it. Remove the ambiguity as to how this management will be applied. Potentially will include this as an appendix to the FEIS.
- Lands and realty management: still some work to be done to resolve differences between Alternatives D and E. State task force may propose excluding wind, solar and airports in Core Habitat. Specific exemption criteria for transmission lines.
- Buffer areas: Paul will provide input to ensure we're using the appropriate buffers.
- Monitoring: draft monitoring plan from the national level.
- Montana: which decisions should we include in the Dillon plan and where is existing guidance sufficient? Kelly is looking at the table.
- Management area mapping: Don has been working on this. Preliminary map that shared with USFWS and State. Some adjustments to map expected from the state, particularly in the Owyhee Front. No major changes expected in other areas.
- Review of recommended proposed plan.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 12:43 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Cooperating Agency Call - Thursday March 13th @ 11:00 MDT
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-03-13.docx; CoopAg Meeting Notes 2014-03-13.docx

Hi Brent,
Attached are notes from this morning's ID team and Cooperating Agency calls.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
26 O'Farrell Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 1:21 PM
To: Angenie McCleary; Bob Shirley; Dennis Crane; Dennis Crane; depperjd@id.doe.gov; Douglas Balfour; Douglas Balfour; Happel, Dan; James Hart; Jerald Raymond; Jerry Hoagland; Ladd Carter; Lawrence Schoen; Lee Miller; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert; OCNRCDIR@aol.com; Robert Cope; Seth Grigg; Terry Kramer; Thoms Rice; Todd_Stefanic@nps.gov; Wayne Butts; William Frederiksen
Cc: Foss, Jeffery L; Kurt Wiedenmann
Subject: Cooperating Agency Call - Thursday March 13th @ 11:00 MDT

For our upcoming call Thursday I wanted to get everyone and update and discuss our upcoming work schedule as we move forward preparing the Final EIS.

The call-in number is 1-877-324-1605
Participant passcode: 96049

Agenda

1. Update on Status and Schedule
2. Public Comments and Responses
3. Development of Final EIS

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office

Idaho/Southwest Montana Subregion Sage-Grouse RMP/EIS

Cooperating Agency Call

March 13, 2014 11:00 a.m. MST

Attendance

BLM/FS: Brent Ralston

Counties: Doug Balfour – Power County; Bill Frederiksen – Clark County; Todd Stefanic – NPS; Jack Depperschmidt – DOE; Dan Happel – Madison County; Robert Cope – Lemhi County; Bob Shirley – Air Force; Larry Schoen – Blaine County

Meeting Minutes

Project Update

- DEIS released on November 1 for a 90-day public comment period. Comment period ended on January 29, 2014. Held public comment meetings for 2 weeks in early January; they were well attended. Had an open house format that included a short presentation at the beginning of the meeting. Goal was to avoid confusion and clarify any concerns.
- Have received 16,000 comment letters/emails
- Many of the letters were email/form letter campaigns from wild horse advocacy group; Audubon Society; Wild Earth Guardians; and Idaho Cattlemen's Association.
- 300 unique letters – EMPSi is working to deliver a preliminary comment report by the end of this month.
- Received a number of comment letters from Cooperating Agencies – states of ID and MT; USFWS; EPA; several counties.

Ongoing Efforts

- IDT will be going through the substantive comments in early April and determining a response and changes to make to the EIS.
- Trying to minimize the changes to the existing alternatives. Focusing on creating another alternative that will be the proposed plan. Compared the preferred alternatives and found that in many cases they are very similar and in other cases, they augment each other. Identifying areas where the management between Alternatives D and E are not the same and trying to resolve these differences.
- The biggest difference between the two alternatives is the habitat zone mapping. Also differences in how infrastructure would be managed.
- Hoping to get some draft materials prepared by the end of April and Brent will share these when they're available.
- There was a Great Basin Region federal family meeting last month in Portland. Compared each of the sub-regions for consistency, particularly along the borders. Often there were some

differences, but most of the sub-regions were similar. ID/MT was different regarding oil, gas, and geothermal leasing, and mineral material sites.

- For infrastructure under Alternative E, in Core Areas there is an exemption process and Important areas are open if you meet certain criteria. Considering trying to make oil and gas management consistent with this and have all infrastructure managed similarly. Then evaluate on a site-specific basis.
- USFWS would like to see a disturbance threshold/cap in all the plans. Ongoing discussions with the USFWS to meet consistency with the COT. Trying to work out how to incorporate a disturbance threshold into the ID/MT plan.
- USFWS also requested additional direction and regulatory certainty on wildfire suppression activities in Alternatives D and E. A national Fire and Invasives Assessment team is putting together direction to use in the Great Basin that will address USFWS concerns.
- USFWS would like clarification on what exemptions would be allowed in Core in Alternative E.
- USFWS would also like to see quantifiable objectives for vegetation treatments, conifer removal, and activities to restore sagebrush habitat in Alternatives D and E.

Schedule

- April: reviewing public comments, crafting responses, and determining what needs to change in the FEIS. Drafting the proposed plan in April.
- May: revisions to the EIS. Re-do the effects analysis, including analysis on the proposed plan.
- Early June: prepare FEIS. Will send sections out for Cooperating Agency review as they are available. Done by mid-June followed by local, regional, and Washington Office reviews.
- Format: will have 3 volumes as previously. For the FEIS, one volume will include the Executive Summary, maps, and proposed plan.
- Governor's consistency review and protest during the summer. Prepare the ROD in the fall.

Other/Questions

- Question about whether people understood the scope of the effort and that some issues are not under BLM control/authority. BLM prepared a one page predation handout excerpted from the DEIS. For Pocatello, Salmon, and Dillon, Brent addressed predation during the introductory presentation.

Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

March 13, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Karen Porter; Don Kemner; Deb Koziol; Jason Pyron; Kathleen Hendrick; Katie Powell; Bruce Schoeberl; Kelly Bockting;
Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Mike Haney; Jim Klott; Jesse Rawson; Elena Shaw; Brandon Brown; Kasey Prestwich

Handouts

- ID_Management Action Evaluation_GRSG
- ID_Management Action Evaluation_WestNile

Action Items

- Brent: send working to-do list to the group.
- IDT: send suggested changes on working draft of preliminary proposed plan to Brent.

Meeting Minutes

Ongoing Efforts

- Brent sent a version of the draft preliminary proposed plan earlier this week. ID team should send suggested changes to Brent. He is working to incorporate the range and minerals management actions. Focus is to get the recommended proposed plan drafted in the next couple of weeks.
- Comment analysis: We'll be having a 3-day workshop April 1-3 in Boise (maybe at the Oxford Suites) to discuss issue statements and responses. Brent would like the following staff to attend: Paul Makela, Natalie Cooper, Glen Burkhardt, Karen Porter, Robin Fehlau, Bryce Bohn, Scott Hoefer, Connie Breckenridge, Rob Mickelsen. In addition, one representative from each field or district office: Jason Wright, Elena Shaw, Kelly Bockting, Brandon Knapton/Bruce Schoeberl.
- Effects analysis and GIS coordination: Brent has been meeting with GIS staff in the State Office on Thursday afternoons at 1 pm. Will be including resource program leads in these meetings to talk specifically about the recommended proposed plan: what is needed for effects analysis; indicators; what data layers do we have; what are we trying to show; how to display the information; and how to break the numbers down for effects analysis. We'll have EMPSi and their relevant resource staff on the calls as well.
- Other efforts update: working with state and USFWS to decide on a final map. Discussion on describing how we would make adjustments to the map. Talking with Paul on the key habitat map. Will describe how the map and adjustments fit in with the adaptive management regulatory triggers.
- Disturbance threshold: Jason has been working with BLM, USFS, and state task force. There is relative agreement on a 3% disturbance cap within nesting/wintering within core/important at

conservation area scale. Still discussing the appropriate biologically significant unit. Also some discussion on how to consistently apply the threshold at the project level and how that may impact the population triggers.

- Mitigation strategy is in progress and tied into the disturbance cap.
- Monitoring strategy is also in progress at the national level.
- Rob has been working with FS NEST team to develop language to include in plans. They have been taking the management actions and rephrasing them as plan language. We will put these actions in a matrix with BLM actions to facilitate comparison.
- Brent will send his working to-do list to the group.
- Brent and Kelly will continue to working together for management on Montana lands.
- Brent has been working on RDFs and seasonal restrictions.
- Rob has been working on habitat management objectives and we'll likely look at this next week.
- We'll eventually need to discuss quantifiable treatment objectives from the VDDT model.

Review of Management Actions

- Team reviewed GRSG and West Nile Virus management actions and discussed the management actions to include in the preliminary proposed plan. A smaller subgroup will have a follow up meeting regarding adaptive management triggers.

Brent Ralston

From: Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2014 7:42 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: GRSG EIS Leadership and Schedule

Congratulations Brent. I hope the transition is good for you! I will not be able to make the call today. Please let me know if there are any actions items for me. Thanks.

Trisha

From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 11:35 AM
To: Adamski, Joseph J; Anne Halford; Bockting, Kelly D; Bohn, Bryce A; Braun, Christa M; ssbrooks@blm.gov; Burkhardt, Glen H; jccarlso@blm.gov; Charles Tuss; Chi, Danielle K -FS; Collins, Rodney J; Colt, Chris J -FS; Cooper, Natalie M; Danly, Lynn A; Elizabeth Maclean; Ethan Ellsworth; Fehlau, Robin S; Foss, Jeffery L; Gardetto, Jessica D; German, Jesse S; halford@blm.gov; Jirik, Steven J; Jonathan Norred; Lepak, Dominika; Makela, Paul D; McConnaughey, Diane L; Meredith Zaccherio; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; Porter, Karen F; Quamen, Frank R; Ralston, Brent E; Tanya Thrift; Wiedenmann, Kurt R; jarnold@blm.gov; Beck, Jonathan M; Blinn, Laurie A; Brown, William B; Guyer, Vincent L; Haight, Scott S; Haupt, Jon M; Heide, Sarah C; Hotaling, Richard M; Jakovac, Gloria R; James Barnum; Kershaw, Kathi G; bknaption@blm.gov; Kuypers, Michael W; Leonard, Stephen P; Prestwich, Kasey C; Rawson, Jesse M; Rice, Karen E; Sampson, Dianna L; Schoeberl, Bruce C; Shaw, Elena A; Tolness, Denise R; Wood, David; Wright, Jason S; Brent Esmoil; Cally Younger; Catherine Wightman; Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; Don Kemner; Dustin T. Miller; Schock, Eugene - NRCS, Boise, ID; Fletcher, Tammy -FS; Jeff Bergland; Burwell, Jeffery - NRCS, Boise, ID; Jon Beals; Katie Powell; Mike McDonald; Pyron, Jason; Rapley, Kathleen; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov
Subject: GRSG EIS Leadership and Schedule

We continue to make progress on the Final EIS for GRSG. There are a few pieces that need some additional attention as part of recent national and state coordination efforts. We continue to move forward with our effects analysis review. We should be on track to have most of the ID Team work done by the end of November.

We will have a call on Thursday October 23rd at 9:00 to discuss our status and next steps.

Participant passcode: 97575

Toll Free Number 877-324-1605

There are also some personnel movements that I wanted to apprise you of. Recently, Jake Vialpando has accepted a new position, creating a need for leadership on the Jarbidge and Owyhee Permit Renewal team that I will be moving into, and subsequently Jon Beck, who has been doing a stellar job filling the void I left in Idaho planning, will be moving in to pick up the reins of the GRSG effort. We are still working out many details as to how and when this transition will occur. Jon will become more involved as we continue forward and will be focusing on document preparation while I will still be the primary contact for coordination efforts with all of our partners.

For now none of this shuffling should affect our schedule – we are still on track to finish the internal review of the proposed plan by Friday. EMPSi continues to work on effects analysis and we will work to finalize that over the next several (3-4) weeks.

We will have share more information regarding the transition then on the call.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

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Brent Ralston

From: Annie Daly
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2014 12:14 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Meeting notes
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Mtg Notes 20141023.docx

Hi Brent,

The notes from this morning's meeting are attached to this email. I missed the start of this morning's roll call, so if you can fill in that hole, that'd be great.

Thanks!

Annie Daly

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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

October 23, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Paul Makela; Karen Porter; Natalie Cooper; John Beck; Ethan Ellsworth; Vince Guyer; Jesse German [Brent – I came on a minute late and may be missing a few individuals]

Meeting Minutes

News on Management Transition

- Brent will be transitioning to a new opportunity and John Beck will be taking over Brent's role as the Sage-Grouse planning lead.
- Brent will stay involved to complete the proposed plan (goal is to complete this over the next 2 weeks) and John will step in to work on the effects analysis. John will be working with EMPSi and the ID Team to review and revise sections.

Five Major Concerns about the Proposed Plan that need to be addressed

- FWS expressed concerns about mitigation. They'd like to see a commitment in the plan regarding the timeline for the implementation of mitigation measures. This information already exists but it is in an appendix. Brent will pull this information out of the appendix and put it in the plan.
- FWS also had questions about adaptive management- "untriggering." What does BLM plan to do if an adaptive management trigger is tripped, but then the habitat/population recovers? Is there a reversal of triggers set up?
 - Brent will set up a call for early next week to discuss this.
- FWS also is concerned about how triggers and adaptive management will work for populations that cross the border.
- FWS would like to see more specifics on how BLM plans to work with other players like the state implementation team, adaptive planning team, etc. on implementation. The plan needs to discuss the details of this.
- The Solicitors want to understand where IDMT stands regarding disturbance.

Update on RMP/EIS Efforts

- There have been several meetings recently between state directors and the states, and each state is being met with one-on-one to discuss the specific state plans and how that integrates with the federal plan. Idaho's was last week and went well.
- This week state directors got together to talk about consistency. Until we see what they discussed, it doesn't make sense to talk about and make decisions on adaptive management.

Proposed Plan

- Any comments/questions/concerns about the Proposed Plan are due to Brent by COB tomorrow, Friday, 10/24.
- We'll make the changes we can based on comments and if there are things that can't change due to direction from higher up, we'll note that in the record and move on.
- Have PAC boundaries changed? At this point the boundaries are the same- no one has yet mentioned changing them. The FIAT identifies "focus" and "emphasis" areas and it would be highly problematic if the FIAT recognized a high priority focus or emphasis area that is outside of priority habitat. To address this concern, the BLM will be including language about how habitat maps can be re-evaluated if FIAT identifies focus/emphasis areas that are in general habitat areas.
- EMPSi has created a new template for us to use.

Next Steps

- Once the Proposed Plan is done, it should be complete other than format tweaking. There will be no more discussion or revisions after that. After that we'll need to get GIS, numbers, tables and maps done. Then GIS will be completely done. There may be a little GIS/map clean-up work after this point, but that's it. The next big piece will be the effects analysis. We have about 6 weeks from today to get that done- aiming to finish that by the end of November. After that we can disband the sub-regional ID Team.
- After that point we'll just be stepping forward with the decision. During the 1st or 2nd week of December we should be pulling together the final EIS so we can send it to DC around the first of the year.
- The next three pieces are the Proposed Plan, the comment report, and the effects analysis.
- We currently have all the sections for Chapter 4. John will be looking at them and sitting down with each of the teams to address comments/concerns.
- There will likely be one more version of the effects analysis sent out for review, and then after that, the final version will be the last version.
- When the final comes out there will be a protest period and governor's review, and then the ROD, which says whether we are deciding to go forward with the Proposed Plan.
- There will be one major work effort between the Final and the ROD. We're going to have to step through the Proposed Plan and all our old plans and look at all management actions in existing plans to determine which management actions are being replaced by the Proposed Plan. That way we can include in the ROD which decisions in existing plans are no longer applicable due to the Proposed Plan. The time frame for this will be sometime between February and April.
- This effort will require some IDT folks, but the push may be more at the district/field manager level.
- When we're comparing the Proposed Plan to existing plans to see if we need to replace any management actions, will we have the ability to tweak language? Or will we need to take actions 100% as they are?
 - We will need to take actions as they are- no tweaking.

- Will there be meetings when the FEIS is on the street?
 - There will be implementation meetings which will involve all program leads. Protest response may require some district and field office help, but may be an effort that focuses primarily on the program leads in the state office.
- Brent hasn't made many changes to Chapter 1 since April. Plans to make a few changes and then will send to EMPSi. For Chapter 2- the Proposed Plan is in the works and Meredith is working on the rest of Chapter 2. Brent will send to that to EMPSi who will put it in the new format. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4- these are the pieces that we're working on now with the effects analysis. We will need to deal with similar sections in both these chapters at the same time.
- We will not putting the text of the document into ePlanning. We'll pdf all chapters and upload those to ePlanning so people can download them.

Other

- There will be a call next Thursday. Plan on an hour-long Thursday call every week from now until we're done with the effects analysis. Next Thursday's meeting may be in a webinar format and may be a little longer than an hour.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2014 11:28 AM
To: "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov)
Subject: IDT meeting notes - 10/30/14
Attachments: IDMT SG IDT Meeting Notes 2014-10-30.docx

Hi Brent and Jon,

Attached are the notes from this morning's meeting, also saved on the SharePoint site. I will be out of the office M-Th next week, but Annie Daly will be available for the Tuesday and Thursday calls/webinars. After next week, I should be around.

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio

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Idaho/Montana Sage-Grouse ID Team Meeting

October 30, 2014 9:00 a.m. MST

Attendees: Brent Ralston; Diane McConnaughey; Paul Makela; Nika Lepak; Natalie Cooper; Don Kemner; Mike McDonald; Karen Porter; Jon Beck; Kelly Bockting; Karen Rice; Gloria Jakovac; Vince Guyer; Jason Wright; Rob Mickelsen; Jesse German; Elena Shaw

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

- Meeting next Tuesday in the ID SO at 1 pm to discuss task force and adaptive management items (tentative, pending attendee availability).
- Meredith will follow up with Zoe regarding the livestock grazing GIS request.

Meeting Minutes

Update on Washington Office Direction

- Several meetings with the state and the Department regarding state plans and adjustments by state. Twelve overall issues that USFWS is looking at (discussed below).
- Last week, state directors met prior to ELT meeting and reviewed these 12 issues. Refined the issues and will be providing direction. Had expected direction last week, but new USFWS memo has delayed this. No direction yet on how the memo will factor into the direction. Still numerous discussions ongoing. USFWS memo is not widely distributed. Should have final approach communicated either tomorrow or early next week.
- Dan Ashe and Neil Kornze briefing Sally Jewell tomorrow.

USFWS Issues to be Resolved

- In addition, 5 related sub-issues for ID/MT to address.
- 1. PAC boundaries in UT and NV. Does not apply to ID/MT.
- 2. Management decisions for populations that cross state lines (e.g., SW Idaho, SE Oregon, NW Nevada; Bear Lake in ID/UT/WY). Once national guidance received, may have further discussion about these differences in management and develop rationale for how the outcomes for the bird would be similar.
- 3. Monitoring, specifically regarding adaptive management. ID/MT plan is fairly descriptive: population triggers collected by the state; BLM will track habitat through key habitat map and annual updates.
- 4. Disturbance calculation. Unsure on how this will affect the ID/MT effort but hopeful we will be consistent with WO guidance and white paper that will be released.

- 5. Adaptive management. ID/MT has a good description of how adaptive management works in Idaho; need to finalize for MT. Will have a call/meeting next Tuesday at 1 pm to discuss remaining issues (removing adaptive management once measurements are below trigger level. In other words, reversing a tripped trigger).
- 6. Mixed ownership lands and allocations – state/private/BLM lands. Does not apply to ID/MT plan.
- 7. Lek buffers – USGS is reviewing lek buffers related to anthropogenic disturbance. They will provide feedback on what is the best science for each of the buffers. They are not providing the buffers, but reviewing the science. It was supposed to be received in early October, but has not been received.
- 8. ROW Avoidance and exclusion areas – some potential changes for ID/MT.
- 9. NSO and oil/gas – all core/important areas in ID/MT identified as NSO. RDFs include a 2 mile lek buffer around any occupied lek. Probably no changes for ID/MT.
- 10. Closures related to limiting disturbance in priority habitat. Probably no changes for ID/MT.
- 11. Mitigation – USFWS would like to see a commitment to do a mitigation strategy after the ROD. This language was in the appendix and will be pulled into our proposed plan.
- 12. How to address improper grazing. WO looking at this and developing different approaches. Brent and Nika have been providing feedback.
- 5 sub-issues for ID/MT – 1) commitment to mitigation; 2) management direction across state boundaries; 3) disturbance; 4) additional detail on how the implementation task force would function. Would be similar to the Idaho Roadless Rule- Brent has drafted an MOU to describe the intent behind how the task force would work; 5) adaptive management and untripping hard triggers – define criteria for removing a tripped trigger.

Effects Analysis

- Resolution of a few issues.
- Vegetation – in the DEIS, we used one layer for vegetation and VDDT. Now, new layer (LANDFIRE EVT) from NOC for VDDT. Should we use the old DEIS layer or the new NOC VDDT layer to calculate all vegetation?
- Rob recommends using EVT just for VDDT. For proposed plan, use old vegetation layer used in the DEIS. Will only need to calculate Alternative G vegetation requests.
- VDDT – likely need to run other alternatives with the new EVT vegetation layer.
- Livestock grazing and seasonal habitat – GIS request to identify acres open to grazing and AUMs in different GRS habitat (related back to the habitat objectives table). Forest Service will be providing the same details and BLM will share what they have been working on with Forest Service.
- Paul proposes lumping nesting and late brood-rearing habitat as there is no map available for late brood-rearing. Will call it “breeding/late brood” and will encompass lek, nesting, early and late brood-rearing habitats. This will be one map. MT is providing their inputs. Initially talked about calculating AUMs in winter habitat, but grazing is less important in winter habitat. Paul feels there would be no value added to quantify that for grazing analysis. He will include a table

in Chapter 3 (GRSG section) to quantify seasonal habitats and undetermined areas by population areas. For effects analysis (grazing section), table for each alternative showing acres open to grazing and AUMs but only focusing on breeding/late-brood habitat. Forest Service analysis will be pretty similar. Have a description in the table or text regarding why winter habitat was not calculated.

- Meredith will follow up with Zoe to make sure this meets the intent of her GIS request.
- Minerals – Karen will revisit the issues they were working through regarding locatable minerals.
- Jon may have some follow up calls with resource specialists.

Schedule

- Schedule is changing, but the last schedule had final EIS to WO after the holidays. Effects analysis completed by end November, early December. FEIS release mid-late March. Will get a new schedule once direction from WO comes out.

Next Week

- Will have another 2 hour call next week and may have a webinar to go through various items and new direction.

Brent Ralston

From: Peter Gower
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2014 1:28 PM
To: David Batts; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov)'; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki; jmbeck@blm.gov; ssmith@blm.gov
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-10-21.docx

Good afternoon,

Attached please find the notes from today's call.

Peter

Peter Gower, AICP CEP

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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2014 4:20 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov)'; Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSB PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213

participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
 - Overview of ELT meeting
 - Schedule update
2. Tier II/CEA Update
3. VDDT update - Rob
4. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
 - Chapter 2 outline – Addressing questions
 - Others
5. Action Items from past calls
 - EMPSi - Provide a detailed list of what will need to be done (or re-done) to restructure the administrative record.
6. Other topics?

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

October 21, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Shelley Smith, UT; Jessica Rubado, OR; Jon Beck, ID; Brent Ralston, ID; Matt Magaletti, WO; Sarah Shattuck, SOL; Johanna Munson, WY

USFS: Madelyn Dillon, Randy Sharp, Rob Mickelson

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower

Handouts

- None

Action Items

EMPSi

- Provide a detailed list of what will need to be done (or re-done) to restructure the administrative records.

Meeting Minutes

WO Review Update

- Overview of ELT meeting
 - The Executive Leadership Team meeting was held yesterday, participants also included the State Directors. The meeting objective was to resolve the list of remaining issues.
 - There were many follow up actions, which will be summarized in a key issues document expected to be released to the PMs on Friday, 10/24.
 - Key outcomes from the ELT included:
 - A requirement for all sub-regions to incorporate in their FEISs vegetation objectives similar to Table 2-6 from Nevada plan. For Oregon and Utah, this will likely require additional analysis, which is necessary in order to underpin the commitments made for livestock grazing.
 - General habitat management areas will now be more restrictive – particularly for high voltage T-lines. PHMA **and** GHMA are avoidance for ROWs. No new corridors.
 - Geothermal will be included in the “smart from the start program,” which is a conservation objective, not necessarily an allocation. Originally, geothermal restrictions only applied in PHMA; they will now apply in GHMA as well. Geothermal is not excluded, but would be avoided, in a sense (although not the same as a planning-level avoidance allocation). This change is not likely to require updated impact analysis – it is more of an aspirational objective/statement of intent.

- A decision regarding NSO exceptions and modifications is pending. The ELT is working on a clause for mixed-use land patterns (e.g. in Montana and Colorado).
 - For Utah's PACs, the proposal originally on the table was to manage all GRSG habitat areas as priority habitat. However, because the range of alternatives did not analyze all areas as PH, this option cannot be moved forward. The ELT and SOL decision was to allow for as much as possible within the decision space contained in the DEIS.
- Buffers were discussed at the ELT meeting, but there will not be buffers input available by the end of the week.
- Utah's 4-mile disturbance buffer issue was not discussed.
- The ELT talked about drop in language for coal suitability, but only in terms of process and not specific suitable or unsuitable areas.
- Wind and solar was not discussed at the ELT; it is still exclusion. Potential impacts on renewable energy (including geothermal) are on Director Kornze's radar and there may be some additional discussion on this topic.
- ELT decisions supersede previous Federal Families meeting decisions. There needs to be a solid rationale for these recent decisions, especially those that shift decisions that have had a long record of decision making process.
- A livestock grazing vegetation objectives white paper was sent to the project leads last week. It included drop in language for the LUPs. The grazing modification commitments are now just for priority habitat.
- For disturbance monitoring, the denominator includes the entirety of PHMA in BSUs.
- In Nevada, the State has uploaded new mapping to the state's Sage-Grouse website. The FEIS will only include the revised maps and associated new analysis for the state's alternative. The proposed plan maps will not change and PACs will not be redrawn for the proposed plan. Sarah wants to have a follow up discussion with NV leads.
- Sarah will also follow up with Brent and Jon on ID map changes.
- Schedule Update.
 - The FWS is in the process of developing a listing decision schedule. FWS will be using eight models to assist in making its decision and will start running the models in January with preliminary outcomes expected in May. At a minimum, FWS will need the allocation decisions by January.
 - The WO is now leaning toward a 4 week review vs. a 2 week review given that it will be reviewing 14 plans concurrently.
 - Summer of 2015 is now the projected date for ROD releases.
 - The schedule will likely include one extra week for the contractors.
 - The ELT did not discuss cooperator review. Subregions should consider limiting cooperator review to 2 weeks so that responses to cooperator comments can be developed before WO feedback is received. Even if input from cooperators cannot be incorporated into the FEIS, there is still a need to have a transparent process. Nevada,

Oregon and Utah will likely need to send out the whole FEIS. Idaho may only need to send the impact analysis and CEA.

Tier II/CEA Update

- EMPSi is still working with WY and MT to incorporate changes and will provide an update on an upcoming call.

VDDT update

- Rob sent reports showing the amount of projected treatments in the first decade and 50 year average. The team felt the first decade treatment acres were those necessary to meet treatment objectives, beyond that it was hard to predict. Rob will be working more with UT this week.

Chapter 2 outline Questions

- Matt will be sending out responses to the subregion's questions by this afternoon.
- There will be changes to the template based on feedback received.

Follow up of outcomes from Federal Families Meeting

- The CEQ definition for feasibility is likely to be used.
- Lauren will work with FWS on appropriate language associated with the 12" precipitation maps, and hopes to have the language available for discussion next week.

Admin Record

- EMPSi is working on a process for combining the AR into a merged record.

Brent Ralston

From: Bahr, Quincy
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 12:32 PM
To: Magaletti, Matthew
Cc: Meredith Zaccherio; David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); gstein@fs.fed.us; 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharpay@att.net' (sharpay@att.net); Tague, Joe (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; jmunson@blm.gov; Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; jarubado@blm.gov; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Herren, Vicki; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov); dhavlina@blm.gov
Subject: Re: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Gateway South, which runs through WY, CO and terminates in UT was noted on the draft "12 points" memo, but isn't on the website. Does it count as one of the projects to which the language would apply?

Q

On Tue, Oct 28, 2014 at 12:18 PM, Magaletti, Matthew <mmagalet@blm.gov> wrote:
Hi everyone,

As a follow-up from today's call, below is a link that outlines the "priority transmission line projects" that are being coordinated by the Rapid Response Team for Transmission (RRTT).

<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/transmission.html>

If you have additional questions related to these projects, let me know and I can touch base with Lucas Lucero here in our WO.

Best,

Matt

On Mon, Oct 27, 2014 at 6:35 PM, Meredith Zaccherio <meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com> wrote:

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213

participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
 - Overview of ELT meeting
 - Schedule update
2. Split estate management actions (attachment)
3. Tier II/CEA Update
4. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
 - Chapter 2 outline – confirm final
 - Others
5. Administrative record changes (attachment)
6. Other topics?

Meredith Zaccherio

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--

Matthew Magaletti

Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

--

Quincy Bahr

Project Manager – Greater Sage-Grouse LUP Amendments, Utah Sub-Region

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Electric Transmission Facilities & Energy Corridors

To build America's clean energy economy we must update our transmission grid for the 21st century, so that we can efficiently move power from the new energy frontier to the places it is consumed. - Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar

The U.S. Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management are committed to processing applications in an environmentally responsible manner for electric transmission facilities that expand and modernize the transmission grid. Processing of the applications will be done in accordance with applicable laws and through a coordinated approach that involves local and state governments, tribes, other federal agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders.



Energy
Renewable Energy Resources
Wind Energy
Solar Energy
Geothermal
Biomass
Electric Transmission Facilities & Energy Corridors
Oil and Gas
Coal
Oil Shale & Tar Sands
Rights-of-Way
Energy Policy Act of 2005
Public Events on Oil and Gas Comparative Assessment of the Federal Oil and Gas Fiscal System

We know the country that harnesses the power of clean, renewable energy will lead the 21st century.
- President Obama

The President has stated that the country that harnesses the power of clean, renewable energy will lead the 21st century. These facilities will accommodate additional electric capacity over the next several decades, including new renewable generation as well as improve reliability and reduce congestion in the western grid. These electric transmission facilities will transmit the energy that will power our future.

Interagency Rapid Response Team for Transmission (RRTT)

The RRTT aims to improve the overall quality and timeliness of electric transmission infrastructure permitting, review, and consultation by the Federal government on both Federal and non-Federal lands through:

- Coordinating statutory permitting, review, and consultation schedules and processes among involved Federal and state agencies, as appropriate, through Integrated Federal Planning;
- Applying a uniform and consistent approach to consultations with Tribal governments; and,
- Resolving interagency conflicts and ensuring that all involved agencies are fully engaged and meeting timelines.

Participating Agencies include: the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Electric Regulatory Commission, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

"Transmission is a vital component of our nation's energy portfolio, and these seven lines, when completed, will serve as important links across our country to increase our power grid's capacity and reliability," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "This is the kind of critical infrastructure we should be working together to advance in order to create jobs and move our nation toward energy independence."

The RRTT will initially focus on seven projects. Four projects that involve BLM-managed public lands are:

Boardman to Hemingway Line to power Oregon and Idaho: The new 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line proposed by Idaho Power would create an approximately 300 mile long, single-circuit electric transmission line from a proposed substation near Boardman, Oregon to the Hemingway Substation near Melba, Idaho--known as the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project or B2H Project. According to the developer of this project during peak construction, this project is estimated to create about 500 jobs in Idaho and Oregon.

Gateway West Project to bring new transmission across Wyoming and Idaho: Jointly proposed by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power, this project would add approximately 1,150 miles of new, high-voltage transmission lines between the Windstar Substation near Glenrock, Wyoming and the Hemingway Substation near Melba, Idaho. According to the developer of this project, during peak construction, it is estimated to create between 1,100 and 1,200 jobs.

SunZia Transmission, LLC to bring power to New Mexico and Arizona:



SunZia Transmission, LLC plans to construct and operate up to two 500 kV transmission lines originating at a new substation in Lincoln County in the vicinity of Ancho, New Mexico, and terminating at the Pinal Central Substation in Pinal County near Coolidge, Arizona. According to the developer estimated job creation will be about 3,408 direct jobs during the construction period.

TransWest Express to stand-up transmission from Wyoming to Utah and Nevada: TransWest Express LLC plans to construct and operate a more than 700 mile, 600 kV, transmission line which is estimated by the developer to create 1,035-1,550 direct jobs per year at peak construction. This project will facilitate the development of new wind projects in Wyoming.

For a list and map of the transmission line pilot projects, please visit the [DOE Interagency Federal Permitting Transmission Tracking System](http://www.doe-etrans.us) at: www.doe-etrans.us.



Interagency Transmission MOU

The [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) was signed by nine Federal Departments and Agencies on October 23, 2009. The goal of the agreement is to speed approval of new transmission lines, reduce expense and uncertainty in the process, generate cost savings, increase accessibility to renewable energy and jumpstart job creation. The agreement will cut approval time off the normal Federal permit process and help break down the barriers to siting new transmission lines by:

- Designating a single Federal point-of-contact for all Federal authorizations;
- Facilitating coordination and unified environmental documentation among project applicants, Federal Agencies, states, and tribes involved in the siting and permitting process;
- Establishing clear timelines for agency review and coordination; and
- Establishing a single consolidated environmental review and administrative record.

Instead of applicants going to multiple agencies, a single lead agency will coordinate all permits and approvals. The new process will keep applications on track by requiring agencies to set and meet clear deadline and improve transparency by creating a single record to be posted on line at the following webpage: www.doe-etrans.us.

The BLM's guidance for consistent implementation of the Interagency Transmission MOU can be found in: [IM 2013-118- Revised Implementation Guidance for the Interagency Transmission Memorandum of Understanding](#)

West Wide Energy Corridors

Section 368 (a) of the [Energy Policy Act of 2005](#) (the Act), Public Law 109-58 (H.R. 6), enacted August 8, 2005, directs the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, and the Interior (the Agencies) to designate under their respective authorities corridors on federal land in 11 Western States (Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution facilities (energy corridors). A [Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement](#) (PEIS) was prepared that proposed the designation of more than 6,000 miles of Section 368 energy corridors among the various Agency land use plans is a forward-looking response, mandated by statute, to address a national concern.



To view a larger map of proposed energy corridors, [click on the map](#) or [select this link](#).

BLM Approved a [Record of Decision](#) for the PEIS on January 14, 2009. The ROD included a listing of [Interagency Operating Procedures](#) (IOP) intended to foster long-term, systematic planning for energy transport development in the West, provide industry with a coordinated and consistent interagency permitting process, and provide practicable measures to avoid or minimize environmental harm from future development within the corridors.

West Wide Energy Corridors Website: <http://corridoreis.anl.gov/>

West-Wide Energy Corridor Litigation and Approved Settlement Agreement

On July 7, 2009 multiple organizations (Plaintiffs) filed a Complaint in the *Wilderness Society, et al. v. United States Department of the Interior, et al.*, No. 3:09-cv-03048-JW (N.D. Cal.). The Plaintiffs raised a variety of challenges in response to the BLM's January 2009 Record of Decision.

The BLM, United States Forest Service (USFS), Department of Energy (DOE), and the Department of Justice worked collaboratively with the Plaintiffs to develop a settlement with specific actions to mutually resolve the challenges in the Complaint. The agencies and Plaintiffs agreed to settle these matters without any adjudication or admission of fact or law by any party and to avoid protracted and costly litigation as well as preserve judicial resources. The case was dismissed pursuant to the [Settlement Agreement](#) on July 11, 2012.

"This is a win-win outcome that will support the Obama administration's all-of-the-above energy approach by increasing the reliability of our pipeline and power line networks and unlocking American-made energy, while helping to ensure that transmission lines and natural gas pipelines that cross public lands are sited in the right places.

"By requiring periodic review of our nation's energy corridors, with the benefit of thorough public participation, the settlement agreement will help meet our nation's needs for expanded domestic energy infrastructure while protecting land, water and wildlife.

"The interagency agreements outlined in the settlement will provide greater certainty for transmission and pipeline developers, whose proposals are subject to environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act." – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar

In fulfillment of the Settlement Agreement, BLM, USFS, and DOE executed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#)

(MOU) on July 8, 2013. The MOU includes a Work Plan for the Regional Periodic Reviews as Attachment A. The Agencies also approved a [Work Plan for the Corridor Study](#) with the execution of the MOU.

Included in the Settlement Agreement was the recognition of 36 of the 119 BLM approved corridors as Corridors of Concern (COC). The BLM Washington Office has developed a series of [Corridor Maps](#) showing all the approved corridors with COC highlighted in red. A listing of the [West Wide Energy Corridors](#) including COC with information about the areas of concern is available

As part of the Settlement Agreement the BLM and USFS agreed to issue new policy for use of the West Wide Energy Corridors on Agency administered lands. In fulfillment of that requirement the BLM issued a policy for the administration of West Wide Energy Corridors on BLM administered lands, [IM-2014-080](#), effective April 7, 2014.

Helpful Web Resources

- [U.S. Forest Service \(USFS\)](#)
- [Rural Utilities Service - Electric Programs Loans and Grants](#)
- [Federal Energy Regulatory Commission \(FERC\)](#)
- [North American Electric Reliability Corporation \(NERC\)](#)
- [Western Electricity Coordinating Council \(WECC\)](#)
- [Department of Energy \(DOE\)](#)
- [Western Area Power Administration \(WAPA\)](#)
- [Bonneville Power Administration \(BPA\)](#)
- [DOE Interagency Federal Permitting Transmission Tracking System - Trans](#)

Last updated: 05-21-2014

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Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, October 07, 2014 2:18 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-10-07.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2014 2:18 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; Seth Flanigan; 'jarubado@blm.gov'
Cc: Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
2. Tier II/CEA Update
3. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting

- Chapter 2 outline
 - Others
4. Administrative Record – managing for two RODs
 5. Schedule
 6. Action Items from past calls
 7. Other topics?

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

October 7, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Joan Suther, OR; Jessica Rubado, OR; Matt Magaletti, WO; Johanna Munson, WY; Vicki Herren, WO

USFS: Randy Sharp; Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- None.

Action Items

Sub regional PMs and Forest Service

- ALL: Send questions on the Chapter 2 template to Matt by COB this Friday.
- Matt: Send Chapter 2 outline to Madelyn.
- Madelyn: Discuss vegetation objectives table with Rob.
- Joan and Matt: Discuss whether Alternative A should be added to the alternatives comparison table for the FEIS.
- Matt: Talk with the Solicitors to determine their preference on AR structure/organization.

Meeting Minutes

WO Review Updates

- Thanks to all for help with webinar prep. Went well and happy with attendance from states. WO staff out this week for Task Force meeting. They are having a combined Great Basin and Rocky Mountain discussion tomorrow.
- After task force meeting, planning one-on-one meetings with State Directors to talk to states. Matt is unsure of exact dates, but expect to be solidifying dates tomorrow. Intent is to meet with states before 10/20. OR State Director is out so WO should get Mike Haske involved.
- ELT meeting the week of Oct 20th. Set aside a full day on 10/20 for State Directors to finalize and synthesize decisions made over the past few months. Would like to have one list of decisions that can be distributed. WO staff will meet Thursday of next week to draft this decision document and send out to State Directors.
- Gordon Toevs is now on detail as branch chief for renewable energy in Reno. Vicki will be taking over his workload.
- Matt will be compiling questions on the Chapter 2 template that was distributed last week. Send questions to Matt by COB Friday.

- Disturbance cap white paper will not be distributed until after Oct 20th. It will outline methodology for 3% cap and include language recommended for proposed plan. Specifics for implementation will not be included. Will keep BSUs and recommends disturbance measured at fine/site scale using a method similar to DDCT. USFWS does not want to see disturbance measured at WAFWA scale, so no land use plan decisions tied to this scale.
- There is a push for subregions to have similar table to Table 2-6 in NV/CA plan. Would like to tie back to measurable objectives to make sure we are meeting LUP objectives. Madelyn will ask Rob what the Forest Service approach will be. Overall decision was to wait to see what direction comes out of the ELT meeting on the 20th. Timing a concern – if all subregions must develop and include this table, there could be schedule delays.

Tier II/CEA Updates

- Great Basin CEAs largely on hold due to the need for new data analysis. In the meantime, EMPSi has been working on the templates and finding information on relevant cumulative actions. Sent an internal review draft of Buffalo CEA to John Carlson and Jennie Morton for their feedback. This draft includes incorrect data sets but provides a sample analysis that will be revised. Once their feedback is incorporated, will share with Great Basin PMs.
- Once released to a wider distribution, EMPSi will hold conference call/workshop. Likely will occur in about a month.

Chapter 2 Outline Feedback

- Matt will send Chapter 2 outline to Madelyn.
- It is OK to include original comparison tables from DEIS, including those that are on larger (8.5 x 14 and 11 x 17) sheets.
- Decided not to include proposed plans as part of DEIS comparison table for several reasons. Table is already very large and not easy to read, and it may be hard to compare since there were many changes in the proposed plans.
- Joan and Matt will discuss whether Alternative A should be added to the comparison table for OR since it was not included originally (was included a separate appendix). Likely value in having Alternative A included in the table with allocation decisions.
- Decisions in the proposed plan should be numbered.

Administrative Record

- Need to determine how to structure and organize the administrative record now that there will be one ROD. Since there are many common citations between the plans, can prepare a master AR for the Great Basin region with information unique to each subregion pulled out separately. To this point EMPSi has been maintaining a duplicative record, one for each subregion.
- Matt will work with the Solicitors to determine their preference.

Schedule

- WO is still working on the schedule. The schedule they created at the WO debrief meeting had proposed plans out in February with ROD in August. This schedule was rejected and now compressing schedule to get RODs out by May. WO and EMPSi will absorb most of these schedule changes.
- Concerns about preparing the proposed plan data by the end of the month if the final decisions will be released on Oct 20th. Could require significant geospatial edits that would have broad changes and one week may not be sufficient to make adjustments. Matt suggests that when the draft decision document comes out on Oct 16th, subregions should talk to their State Director about issues and schedule concerns.

Other

- Forest Service buffers were not sent to USGS for their review. Anticipate initial response early this week and the start of the peer review process. Should be completed by end of October.
- Core Team in WO will meet weekly to track the action item list from federal family and debrief meetings.
- Thanks for wild horse specialists for meeting and crafting consistent language.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2014 3:53 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fqumen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; Katie Patterson; Annie Daly
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-10-14.docx

Good afternoon,
Attached are notes from this morning's call.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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From: David Batts
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2014 3:10 PM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fqumen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'; David Batts; Katie Patterson; Annie Daly
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

I. WO review updates

- Overview of State meetings
 - Schedule update
2. Tier II/CEA Update
 3. Administrative Records
 - Direction on two records vs one for each planning effort
 - How to incorporate public comments into AR
 4. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
 - Chapter 2 outline – comments due to Matt
 - Others
 5. Action Items from past calls
 - ALL: Send questions on the Chapter 2 template to Matt by COB this Friday – COMPLETE?
 - Matt: Send Chapter 2 outline to Madelyn.
 - Madelyn: Discuss vegetation objectives table with Rob.
 - Joan and Matt: Discuss whether Alternative A should be added to the alternatives comparison table for the FEIS.
 - Matt: Talk with the Solicitors to determine their preference on AR structure/organization - COMPLETE.
 6. Other topics?

Sage-Grouse Great Basin Region Project Management Team Weekly Call

October 14, 2014 10:00 a.m. PST

Attendance

BLM: Lauren Mermejo, NV; Joe Tague, NV; Quincy Bahr, UT; Jessica Rubado, OR; Vicki Herren, WO

USFS: Madelyn Dillon

EMPSi: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; Meredith Zaccherio; Holly Prohaska; Derek Holmgren; Peter Gower; Drew Vankat

Handouts

- None

Action Items

EMPSi

- Provide a detailed list of what will need to be done (or re-done) to restructure the administrative records.

Meeting Minutes

WO Review Update

- On 10/20, all state directors will meet to resolve the remaining 12 issues:
 - PAC boundaries;
 - Issues related to political boundaries;
 - Disturbance tracking;
 - Adaptive management;
 - Mitigation;
 - Mixed management landscapes;
 - Buffers;
 - ROWs;
 - Priority habitat NSO closures, ACECs, and withdrawals;
 - Coal suitability;
 - Livestock grazing; and
 - Smart from the start related to oil and gas drilling (e.g., leasing outside of PH first).
- Oregon – concerns regarding communication since staff are out of the office (e.g., no one has seen the meeting invitation for next week).
- PMs should talk to state directors about these issues since the list will not be sent to PMs. PMs should be prepared to make changes to your proposed plan.
- Schedule will likely be finalized at the meeting next week.
- Jim and Ed are meeting with states this week: WY today; call with Oregon Wednesday morning; meeting with Idaho on Thursday; call with NV on Thursday; unsure when UT meeting is.

- Last Wednesday's meeting in Denver with USFWS, the states and state directors – some disagreements between USFWS and states; USFWS felt that virtually every state plan (except for WY) does not do enough for state/private lands. However, states described their provisions for state/private lands (e.g., oil and gas in UT goes through Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining) and USFWS did not know about these things. USFWS wanted the states to write up everything they have regulatory oversight on.
- USFWS and states have disagreements on plans, but generally agreement between BLM and states. Some misunderstandings in UT regarding what actions can be done in priority habitat.

Tier II/CEA Update

- Expecting feedback from John Carlson on Buffalo Draft CEA today. Planning ahead to take advantage of our window now and prepare for when data are ready.

Administrative Records

- Two RODs – need to restructure ARs to support any litigation on the RODs. Solicitors said that a re-organization of AR would be appropriate. Instead of 4 separate ARs, there would be one AR with common files referenced together and unique information for each subregion coded separately.
- A lot of work already done that will need to be re-done. Want to make sure we're all on the same page before proceeding. EMPSi will provide a detailed list of what will need to be done (or re-done) in order to comply with this new direction. Hope to get approval on our next call to move forward.
- May need to have a different approach for the Rocky Mountain ARs.
- Public comments – how best to incorporate into record given the number of public comments submitted. Two approaches, both are acceptable from a legal standpoint: 1) incorporate all comments specific to each subregion in a zip file. Zip file would have unique identifying number and would be shown as one row in the index. Each file will still have an identifier that includes the commenter's name. This would be the easiest option; 2) enter the public comments individually and each comment would have an identifying number. Each comment would be a separate entry into the AR. Would take longer.
- All PMs are fine with using the easier option (option #1).

Forest Service Update

- Finished initial review of NV proposed plan, sent to Glen for review this week. Hope to meet with Glen, Randy and Forest Supervisor this Friday.
- Glen and Chris are meeting in WY and will be at the Idaho meeting and on the NV call with states.

Action Items from Past Calls

- Chapter 2 outline

- NV has sent in comments.
- UT – already matches up well with existing Chapter 2. UT detailed no action alternative is in an appendix.
- OR and Madelyn will be submitting comments today.
- Matt will be responding to comments later this week, early next week.
- Madelyn working with Rob and Carol-Anne regarding the vegetation objectives table.

Other

- OR – still working on adaptive management and RDFs.
- Will need consistent adaptive management triggers for shared populations. Will likely have a meeting to discuss, but will occur after the 10/20 meeting.
- Feel that there is inconsistency in the message from USFWS regarding the biologically significant unit for disturbance and adaptive management. Some areas were too big for disturbance calculation and too small for adaptive management. Lauren stated that there will be coordination meetings with the USFWS on this issue.
- UT – meeting with state and USFWS today. NRCS data for conifer percent cover shows there are many areas with high conifer cover in GRS habitat. Will discuss whether they want to re-draw habitat boundaries.

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 4:35 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; 'lmermejo@blm.gov' (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; 'mmagalet@blm.gov' (mmagalet@blm.gov); 'qfbahr@blm.gov' (qfbahr@blm.gov); 'jsuther@blm.gov' (jsuther@blm.gov); 'bralston@blm.gov' (bralston@blm.gov); 'sharphay@att.net' (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday
Attachments: GBR_AR_Changes_needed.docx; Split Estate Management Actions.New Table.docx

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213

participants: 9009662#

1. WO review updates
 - Overview of ELT meeting
 - Schedule update
2. Split estate management actions (attachment)
3. Tier II/CEA Update
4. Follow up of outcomes from Federal Family Meeting
 - Chapter 2 outline – confirm final
 - Others
5. Administrative record changes (attachment)
6. Other topics?

Meredith Zaccherio

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Split Estate Management Actions

<u>IDAHO/SW MT</u>	<u>UTAH</u>	<u>OREGON</u>	<u>NEVADA/NE CA</u>
<p>1.1.1. Mineral Split Estate (MSE)-1: BLM Owns Mineral Estate – non-federal surface owner: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs, IHMAs, and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands in the management zone, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.</p>	<p>SE-1: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.</p>	<p>Action MSE - 1: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs as applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.</p>	<p>Action G-MSE 1: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in GRSG habitat and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs as applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner, SETT, NDOW and CDFW.</p>
<p>1.1.2. MSE-2: BLM owns surface – non-federal mineral estate owner: In coordination with the state regulatory entity and mineral estate owner, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management procedures, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities.</p>	<p>SE - 2: Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PPMA and PGMA, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management procedures, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, in coordination with the mineral estate owner/lessee.</p>	<p>Action MSE - 2: Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PPMA and PGMA, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management procedures, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, in coordination with the mineral estate owner/lessee.</p>	<p>Action G-MSE 2: Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PPMA and PGMA, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management procedures, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the mineral estate owner/lessee, SETT, NDOW and CDFW.</p>

Brent Ralston

From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 1:12 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: RE: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday - Notes
Attachments: GBR PM Meeting Notes 2014-10-28.docx

Hello all,
Attached are notes from this morning's meeting.
Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
26 O'Farrell Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
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From: Meredith Zaccherio
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 3:34 PM
To: David Batts; Chad Ricklefs; "lmermejo@blm.gov" (lmermejo@blm.gov); 'gstein@fs.fed.us'; "mmagalet@blm.gov" (mmagalet@blm.gov); "qfbahr@blm.gov" (qfbahr@blm.gov); "jsuther@blm.gov" (jsuther@blm.gov); "bralston@blm.gov" (bralston@blm.gov); "sharphay@att.net" (sharphay@att.net); 'Tague, Joe' (jtague@blm.gov); Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; 'jmunson@blm.gov'; 'Sarah.Shattuck@sol.doi.gov'; mmagalet@blm.gov; ssmall@blm.gov; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; Robert -FS Mickelsen; 'jarubado@blm.gov'; Quamen, Frank R (fquamen@blm.gov); Drew Vankat; Herren, Vicki; Beck, Jonathan M (jmbeck@blm.gov)
Cc: 'dhavlina@blm.gov'
Subject: Great Basin GRSG - NEPA PM Call Tuesday

Reminder - Great Basin GRSG PM conference call Tuesday at 10AM Pacific Time / 11AM Mountain Time. Call in info and draft agenda below.

877-928-4213
participants: 9009662#

I. WO review updates

- Overview of ELT meeting
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Meredith Zaccherio

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Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2014 2:15 PM
To: Kelly Bockting; Pat Fosse (pfosse@blm.gov); Cornelia Hudson; John Carlson (jccarls@blm.gov); 'Rob Mickelsen'; Jason Pyron (jason_pyron@fws.gov); Katie Powell (katie_powell@fws.gov); brent_esmoil@fws.gov; 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com)'
Subject: Montana Coordination Meeting
Attachments: MT Coordination Mtg 102114.docx; Meeting info 10_21_14.docx

We are still on for a meeting at the Western Montana District Office/Dillon Field Office in Dillon, MT tomorrow starting at 8:00 a.m.

Attached is an agenda for our discussion and a short evaluation of the MT Governor's Plan that Kelly put together for discussion tomorrow.

We will display the ADPP using an overhead projector so I will not be bringing any hard copies of that with me.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

The following list is a few things I noticed in the MT GRSG conservation plan that may not be consistent with the ADPP:

- Stip #1, pg. 14. the 5% surface disturbance - wildfire IS included.
- Stip #2 pg. 14, NSO of 0.6 miles from lek including roads.
- Stip #3, pg. 14. seasonal use TL outside NSO are not consistent with dates and times used in Appendix B of IDSWMT ADPP. (pg 12 of the ADPP appendix)
- Stip #4, pg. 14. transportation, locate new roads 0.6 miles from leks, - the IDSWMT ADPP uses a BMP > 0.8 miles from nesting habitat for new paved or high traffic gravel roads??.
- Stip #6, pg. 15. overhead powerline siting > 0.6 miles and - IDSWMT used RDF not allowed <600meters, and BMP of 2 miles from lek in appendix A but Appendix B pg 4 of 17 states BMP of no new roads within .8 miles of leks.
- Stip #7, pg. 15. no noise increase over 10dBA above ambient, IDSWMT has an RDF of no repeated or sustained disturbance (ie. no noise level increase identified) For fluid mineral development RFD of 10 decibel increase above ambient is used. (pg. 7 appendix A)
- Stip #9 pg. 16. Sagebrush Eradication and Treatments, not sure what is included in "treatments", appears to be habitat restoration?
- Stip #10 pg. 16, Prescribed burns prohibited - no sagebrush habitat types identified that may be more suited to use of fire. Wildfires are included in the 5% disturbance cap. – IDSWMT ADPP habitat treatments, wildfire and conifer expansion are not included in the 5% disturbance. (pg. 5 appendix G)
- Stip # 11 pg.16. Monitoring and adaptive Response. – Uses a population trigger and the operator is to propose the adaptive management response?? - IDSWMT ADPP uses uses habitat based Adaptive Management.
- Stip #13 pg. 17. No net conifer expansion and recommends manual methods, and removal of all conifers <0.6 miles from leks.
- Stip #15, pg 17. Existing activities/disturbances are not subject to stipulations but the disturbance is calculated towards the disturbance cap and existing disturbance may exceed 5%.

General Habitat stip #1 Pg 19 NSO of 0.25 miles. – IDSWMT ADPP Appendix B (pg 3 of 17) lists research that states .25 and .6 buffers are not sufficient and uses a 2 mile buffer for structures in the anthropogenic catch all on pg. 8 of 17 (appendix C?)

*Also of note in the MT GRSG Habitat Plan there is Lek Status definitions on pg 28 – not consistent with ID SWMT occupied lek definition.

These are just a few things that I have noticed, (some of which may not be an issue but probably need discussion.) There may be more that others have picked up on if they have reviewed both documents.

I think we need to review the following from the 96 page ADPP appendix. RDF/BMP's (11 pages) and the Buffer and Restriction tables (17 pages), and Appendix G for ID (H for MT?) (21 pages long.) to make sure they are consistent with the rest of MT.

Should discuss the Appendix J “Lands no longer available for disposal”



National Greater Sage-Grouse
Idaho & Southwestern Montana Sub Region
Montana ADPP Coordination
October 21, 2014



Agenda

Purpose: Discuss Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) to ensure it contains and reflects the management direction appropriate to SW Montana and is as consistent as appropriate with other Montana land use plan direction for GRSG and with the Montana State plan.

- 8:00 Introductions, Format and Expectations
- 8:30 Montana Direction within ADPP
- 9:45 Break
- 10:00 Montana Direction within ADPP Appendices
- 11:00 Lunch Break
- 12:30 Montana Governor's Plan Consideration and Consistency
- 2:00 Break
- 2:15 Montana Data and Information for Final EIS
- 3:00 Other Concerns
- 4:00 Adjourn

Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 10:50 PM
To: 'Arnold, Jenifer L'; 'Beck, Jonathan M'; 'Blinn, Laurie A'; 'Brown, William B'; 'German, Jesse S'; 'Guyer, Vincent L'; 'Haight, Scott S'; 'Haupt, Jon M'; 'Heide, Sarah C'; 'Hotaling, Richard M'; 'Jakovac, Gloria R'; James Barnum (jbarnum@blm.gov); 'Kershaw, Kathi G'; 'Knapton, Brandon L'; 'Kuyper, Michael W'; 'Leonard, Stephen P'; 'Prestwich, Kasey C'; 'Rawson, Jesse M'; 'Rice, Karen E'; 'Sampson, Dianna L'; 'Schoeberl, Bruce C'; 'Shaw, Elena A'; 'Tolness, Denise R'; 'Wood, David'; 'Wright, Jason S'; 'Adamski, Joseph J'; Anne Halford; 'Bockting, Kelly D'; 'Bohn, Bryce A'; 'Braun, Christa M'; 'Brooks, Sandra S'; 'Burkhardt, Glen H'; 'Carlson, John C'; Charles Tuss (ctuss@blm.gov); 'Chi, Danielle K'; 'Collins, Rodney J'; Colt, Chris J -FS; 'Cooper, Natalie M'; 'Danly, Lynn A'; 'Elizabeth Maclean'; Ethan Ellsworth; 'Fehlau, Robin S'; 'Foss, Jeffery L'; 'Gardetto, Jessica D'; 'Halford, Fredrick K'; 'Jirik, Steven J'; Jonathan Norred; 'Lepak, Dominika'; 'Makela, Paul D'; 'McConnaughey, Diane L'; 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empfi.com)'; 'Mickelsen, Robert'; 'Porter, Karen F'; 'Quamen, Frank R'; 'Ralston, Brent E'; Tanya Thrift (tthrift@blm.gov); 'Wiedenmann, Kurt R'; Brent Esmoil (brent_esmoil@fws.gov); Cally Younger ; 'Catherine Wightman (CWightman@mt.gov)'; Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID; 'Don Kemner'; 'Dustin T. Miller'; 'eugene.schock@id.usda.gov'; 'Fletcher, Tammy'; Jeff Bergland (jeff_berglund@fws.gov); 'jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov'; Jon Beals (Jon.Beals@osc.idaho.gov); Katie Powell (katie_powell@fws.gov); 'Mike McDonald'; 'Pyron, Jason'; 'Rapley, Kathleen'; tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov
Cc: 'annie.daly@empfi.com'
Subject: FW: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call
Attachments: ID swMT ADPP BLM Decisions 110514 No Maps_responses.docx

During our call today we went through roughly half of the comments we received on the ADPP. Attached is a file with those comments and responses through comment # 54.

There are various assignments associated with responding to comments that are detailed below. For those of you identified please look at the management action and the comment(s) associated – what I am looking for is a final version of the management action with the comments considered. Please send those to me and include Jon Beck on that email.

Next Thursday Jon will be leading another call where we will walk through the remaining comments and note responses or make some assignments for preparing responses. These responses all need to be completed by November 19th so we can incorporate those into the plan by November 21st.

Here are today's assignments by comment # -

Comment # 7-10 – State office GIS staff to update maps once our final direction is received from WO
19-20 – Rob Mickelsen – please verify the numbers in the table
21-27 Habitat objectives table – Paul, Ethan, Kelly, Rob to finalize table
28-29 Brent to prepare paragraph regarding Idaho/Montana management actions and denote within ADPP
30 – Paul and Don Kemner
31 – Brent
32 – Paul and Don Kemner
33-34 – Paul, Ethan & Don Kemner
35 – Kelly

- 36 – Paul, Ethan and Don Kemner
- 38 – Jason and Paul
- 39 – Kelly and John Carlson
- 40 – Revise the management action based on Tuesday’s meeting outcome – Jon and Brent
- 44 – Jon work with GIS to develop map of overlaid management areas
- 45 – Paul, Ethan, Don Kemner, Jason P., Katie work on language for sideboards on map adjustment
- 46 – Kelly and John Carlson
- 54 – Paul

In addition with the release of the REA Jon, Paul, Nika and Ethan are going to discuss what is appropriate and/or necessary to incorporate the REA into the final EIS.

Travis and Paul are also working to respond to some concerns on the mapping process from our solicitor’s office in WO. Brent will follow-up the week of the 17th with solicitor based on Travis and Paul’s work.

There are other comments that may warrant some attention before next Thursday. I’ve identified a few of those with who may be able to address below:

- 60 & 61 – Jason Wright and Paul
- 62, 63 & 65 – Nika, Steve Jirik, Paul, Jason Wright
- 66 – Nika, Paul, Steve J.
- 68 & 69 – Nika and Paul
- 76 – Natalie
- 84-88 – Nika, Ethan, Paul

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Annie Daly [mailto:annie.daly@empsi.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 11:14 AM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: RE: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call

Hi Brent,

The revised file from this morning’s meeting is attached. Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks!

Annie Daly
EMPSi Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc.
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From: Brent Ralston [<mailto:bralston@blm.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, November 06, 2014 6:05 AM
To: Annie Daly
Subject: Fwd: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call

Annie,

Here is the file for today's webinar.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>
Date: November 5, 2014 at 10:56:08 PM MST
To: "Arnold, Jenifer L" <jarnold@blm.gov>, "Beck, Jonathan M" <jimbeck@blm.gov>, "Blinn, Laurie A" <lblinn@blm.gov>, "Brown, William B" <wbbrown@blm.gov>, "German, Jesse S" <jgerman@blm.gov>, "Guyer, Vincent L" <vguyer@blm.gov>, "Haight, Scott S" <shaight@blm.gov>, "Haupt, Jon M" <jhaupt@blm.gov>, "Heide, Sarah C" <sheide@blm.gov>, "Hotaling, Richard M" <rhotalin@blm.gov>, "Jakovac, Gloria R" <gjakovac@blm.gov>, James Barnum <jbarnum@blm.gov>, "Kershaw, Kathi G" <kkershaw@blm.gov>, "Knapton, Brandon L" <bknapton@blm.gov>, "Kuyper, Michael W" <mkuyper@blm.gov>, "Leonard, Stephen P" <sleonard@blm.gov>, "Prestwich, Kasey C" <kprestwich@blm.gov>, "Rawson, Jesse M" <jmrawson@blm.gov>, "Rice, Karen E" <krice@blm.gov>, "Sampson, Dianna L" <dsampson@blm.gov>, "Schoeberl, Bruce C" <bschoeberl@blm.gov>, "Shaw, Elena A" <eshaw@blm.gov>, "Tolness, Denise R" <dtolness@blm.gov>, "Wood, David" <dwood@blm.gov>, "Wright, Jason S" <jswright@blm.gov>, "Adamski, Joseph J" <jadamski@blm.gov>, Anne Halford <ahalford@blm.gov>, "Bockting, Kelly D" <kbocktin@blm.gov>, "Bohn, Bryce A" <bbohn@blm.gov>, "Braun, Christa M" <cbraun@blm.gov>, "Brooks, Sandra S" <ssbrooks@blm.gov>, "Burkhardt, Glen H" <gburkhardt@blm.gov>, "Carlson, John C" <jccarlso@blm.gov>, Charles Tuss <ctuss@blm.gov>, "Chi, Danielle K" <dkchi@fs.fed.us>, "Collins, Rodney J" <rcollins@blm.gov>, "Colt, Chris J -FS" <ccolt@fs.fed.us>, "Cooper, Natalie M" <ncooper@blm.gov>, "Danly, Lynn A" <ldanly@blm.gov>, Elizabeth Maclean <emaclean@blm.gov>, Ethan Ellsworth <eellsworth@blm.gov>, "Fehlau, Robin S" <rfehlau@blm.gov>, "Foss, Jeffery L" <jfoss@blm.gov>, "Gardetto, Jessica D" <jdgardetto@blm.gov>, "Halford, Fredrick K" <fhalford@blm.gov>, "Jirik, Steven J" <sjirik@blm.gov>, Jonathan Norred <jnorred@blm.gov>, "Lepak, Dominika" <dlepak@blm.gov>, "Makela, Paul D" <pmakela@blm.gov>, "McConnaughey, Diane L" <dmconnaughey@blm.gov>, Meredith Zaccherio <meredith.zaccherio@empfi.com>, "Mickelsen, Robert" <rmickelsen@fs.fed.us>, "Porter, Karen F" <kfporter@blm.gov>, "Quamen, Frank R" <fquamen@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Brent E" <bralston@blm.gov>, Tanya Thrift <tthrift@blm.gov>, "Wiedenmann, Kurt R" <kwiedenmann@blm.gov>, Brent Esmoil <brent_esmoil@fws.gov>, Cally Younger <Cally.Younger@gov.idaho.gov>, Catherine Wightman <CWightman@mt.gov>, "Cracraft, Trisha - NRCS, Boise, ID" <Trisha.Cracraft@id.usda.gov>, Don Kemner <don.kemner@idfg.idaho.gov>, "Dustin T. Miller" <Dustin.Miller@osc.idaho.gov>, eugene.schock@id.usda.gov, "Fletcher, Tammy" <tammyfletcher@fs.fed.us>, Jeff Bergland <jeff_berglund@fws.gov>, jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov, Jon Beals <Jon.Beals@osc.idaho.gov>, Katie Powell <katie_powell@fws.gov>, Mike McDonald <mike.mcdonald@idfg.idaho.gov>, "Pyron, Jason" <Jason_Pyron@fws.gov>, "Rapley, Kathleen" <Kathleen_Rapley@fws.gov>, tom.perry@gov.idaho.gov
Subject: FW: Webinar information - 11/5/14 Call

Here is the webinar information for our 9-11 a.m. call tomorrow – I've also attached the ADPP with comments that we will be walking through to respond to comments and/or make assignments for response.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Annie Daly [mailto:annie.daly@empsi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2014 3:25 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Cc: Meredith Zaccherio
Subject: Webinar information

Hi Brent,
The information for tomorrow's webinar is below. Let me know if you have any questions.
Thank you!

GRSG SR IDT Call

1. Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone on Thu, Nov 6, 8:00 AM Pacific Standard Time

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/299731789>

2. Join the conference call.

Call in number: 877-324-1605 Code: 97575

Not at your computer? Click the link to join this meeting from your iPhone®, iPad®, Android® or Windows Phone® device via the GoToMeeting app.

Annie Daly
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IDMT_PUB_10833
6.1

Draft

Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement

*Great Basin Region
Nevada and Northeastern
California Subregion*

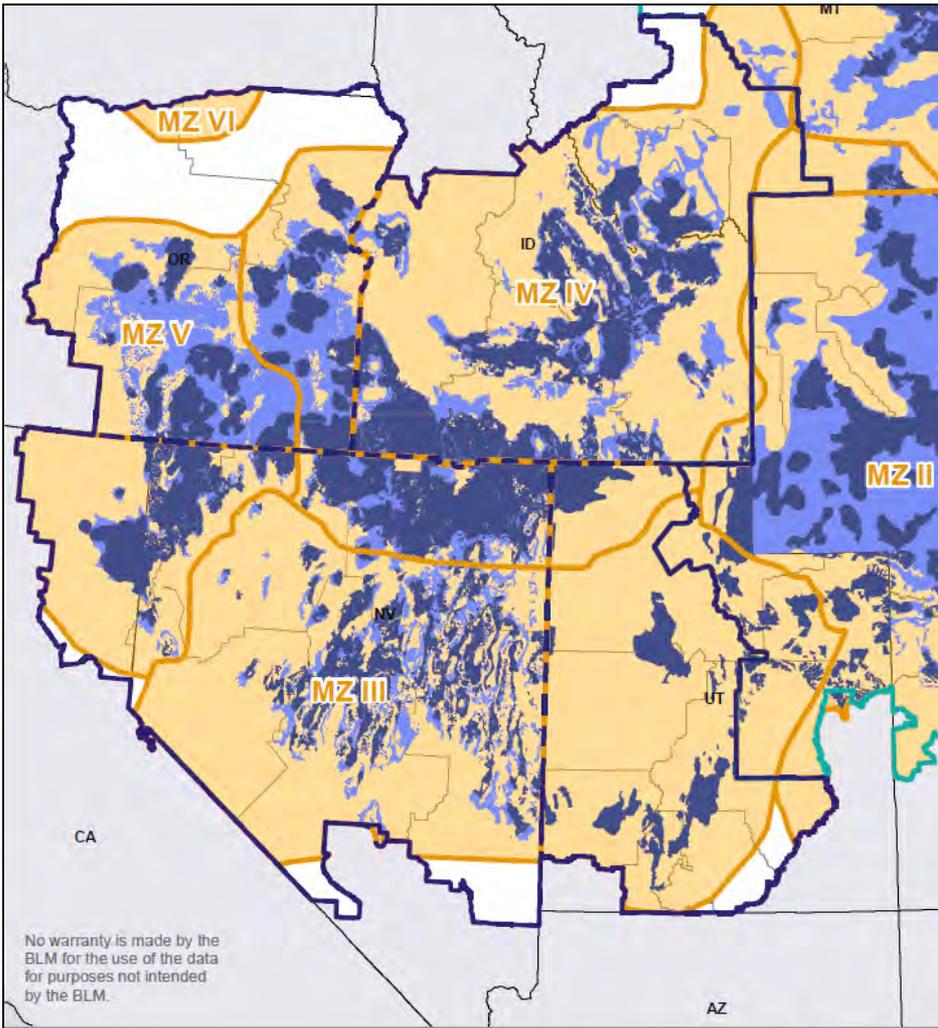




Greater Sage-Grouse Draft Land Use Plan Amendments and EIS

GREAT BASIN REGION – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT OVERVIEW

Great Basin GRSG Habitat Overview



No warranty is made by the BLM for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.



-  Great Basin
-  Rocky Mountain
-  Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Management Zone
-  Preliminary priority habitat
-  Preliminary general habitat

IDMT_0019395



Great Basin GRSB Habitat Overview

- **Total Great Basin Habitat Area:** 61 million acres
- **Subregions:**
 - Idaho and southwestern Montana
 - Nevada and northeastern California
 - Oregon
 - Utah
- **Land management:**
 - BLM: 50% of habitat
 - FS: 7% of habitat
- **Land Use Plan (LUP) Revisions:**
 - 41 BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs)
 - 12 Forest Service Forest Plans



Purpose and Need

of all Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse EISs

Purpose

Identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures in LUPs to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat.

Need

Respond to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) March 2010 "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing petition decision, which identified inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms as a significant threat to GRSG.

The principal regulatory mechanism for BLM and FS is conservation measures in BLM's and FS's LUPs.



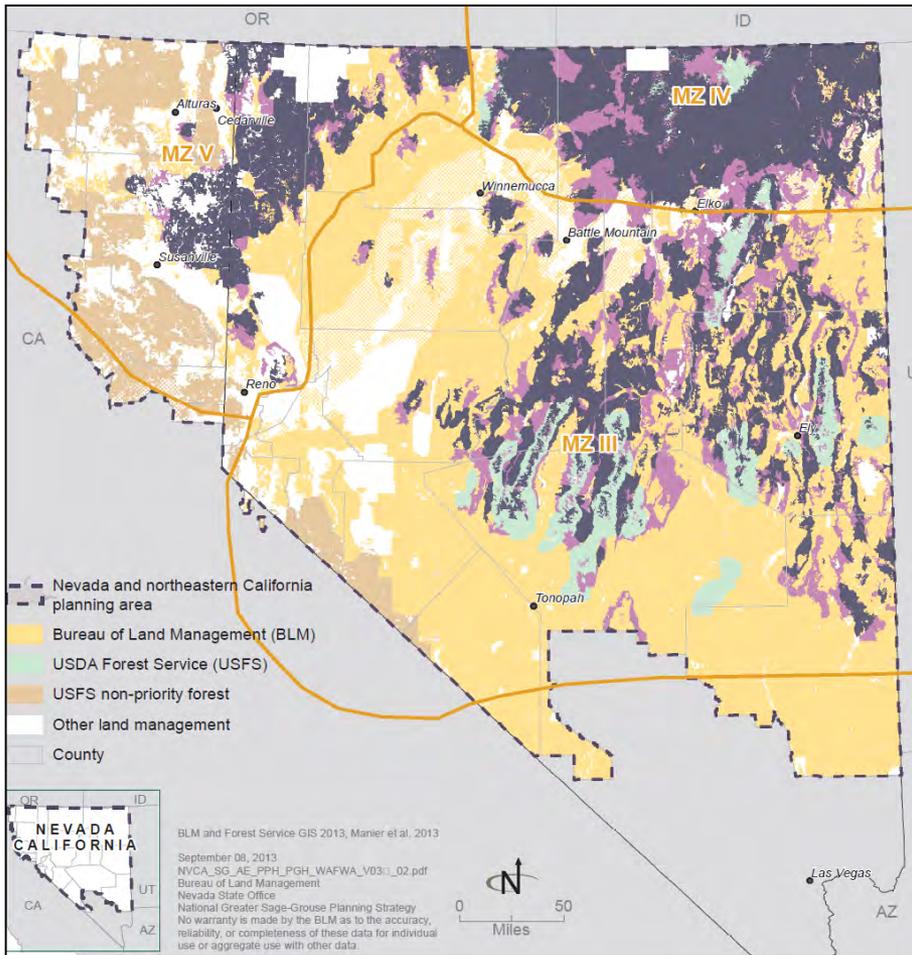


Greater Sage-Grouse Draft Land Use Plan Amendments and EIS

NEVADA AND NORTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA SUBREGION



Subregional GRSG Habitat Overview



Preliminary priority habitat
 Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
 USDA Forest Service (USFS)
 USFS non-priority forest
 Other land management
 County
 Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Management Zone
 Preliminary general habitat

Land Management by Habitat (In Millions of Acres)			
	BLM	FS	Total
Planning Area	45.36	4.508	49.94
Priority (PPH)¹	11.5	1.17	12.67
General (PGH)²	4.5	0.54	5.04

¹PPH: Preliminary Priority Habitat

²PGH: Preliminary General Habitat



Nevada/ Northeast California GRSG Habitat Overview

- **Total Habitat Area:** 21 million acres
- **Land management:**
 - BLM: 76% of habitat (16 million acres)
 - FS: 8% of habitat (1.7 million acres)
- **Land Use Plan (LUP) Revisions:**
 - 12 BLM Resource Management Plans
 - 2 Forest Service Forest Plans



Identified Threats to GRSG Habitat

Threat	Effect on GRSG Habitat in the NV & NE CA Subregion
Climate Change	habitat fragmentation due to climate stress
Conifer Invasion	encroachment of pinyon and/or juniper
Grazing	loss of habitat components due to livestock and wild horse and burro use
Hard Rock Mining	habitat fragmentation due to mineral exploration and development
Human Uses	habitat fragmentation and/or modification of GRSG behavior due to human presence and activities (e.g. recreation and OHV use)
Infrastructure	Habitat fragmentation from right-of-ways and renewable energy development
Invasive Species	conversion of GRSG habitat (e.g. to cheatgrass)
Oil and Gas Development	habitat fragmentation due to mineral exploration and development
Wildfire	loss of GRSG habitat due to wildfire



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternative*	Description
Alternative A	No Action
Alternative B	Based on conservation measures in the National Technical Team (NTT) Report
Alternative C	Based on recommendations from individuals and conservation groups
Alternative D	BLM and FS subregional alternative; DEIS preferred alternative
Alternative E	Nevada State alternative
Alternative F	Based on recommendations from individuals and conservation groups

*Alternative A identifies PPH and PGH, but does not apply new management to those areas. Alternatives B - F propose new management to protect GRSG habitat. Depending on the alternative, proposed management actions apply to Preliminary Priority Management Areas (PPMAs), Preliminary General Management Areas (PGMAs), or Sage Grouse Management Areas (SGMAs).



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternatives Comparison by Resource Area						
Resource Area	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Vegetation	Maintain current management	Improve and restore sagebrush communities	Passive restoration and limited vegetation treatments	Maintain and enhance sagebrush ecosystems	Landscape-scale sagebrush enhancements	Similar to B
Fire	Maintain current management	Focus fire suppression and increase fuels reduction in GRSG habitat	Limited fuels reduction and suppression in GRSG habitat	Similar to B with site specific applications as appropriate	Focus on reducing threats from large wildfire while increasing suppression, and rehabilitation	Similar to B, but only for PPMAs and not PGMAs
ACECs¹	Maintain current management	Same as A.	Designate GRSG habitat as new ACECs	Same as A.	Same as A.	Designate portions of GRSG habitat as new ACECs

¹ACECs: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternatives Comparison by Resource Uses

Resource Use Area	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Grazing	Maintain current management	Same as A.	Close all allotments containing GRSG habitat to grazing	Additional closures possible in riparian areas	Similar to A, but with adjustments to standards.	25% reduction in occupied habitat
Lands and Realty	Maintain current management	Exclude new ROWs in PPMAs; avoid in PGMAs	Exclude new ROWs in all GRSG habitat	Avoid new ROWs in all GRSG habitat	Same as D.	Same as C.
Locatable Minerals	Maintain current management	Petition for withdrawal in PPMAs	Petition for withdrawal in all GRSG habitat	Same as A.	Same as A.	Same as B.
Fluid Minerals	Maintain current management	Close PPMAs to leasing	Close all GRSG habitat to leasing	Apply no surface occupancy stipulations in GRSG habitat	Avoid, minimize, and mitigate features over 32 acres	Same as C.
Travel Mngmt.	Maintain current management	Manage PPMAs as limited to existing routes	Manage all GRSG habitat as limited to existing routes	Same as C.	Same as C.	Same as B, plus no new routes within 4 miles of leks

Selecting a Preferred Alternative

- The agencies selected a preferred alternative based on:
 - meeting the purpose and need
 - the agencies' multiple use and sustained yield missions
 - interdisciplinary team recommendations
 - environmental consequences analysis of the alternative
 - comments on the Administrative Draft EIS
- The BLM and Forest Service will select the final preferred alternative as part of the Final EIS, which may include elements of other alternatives.



Preferred Alternative

Alternative D

- Emphasizes balancing resources and resource use among competing human interests, land uses, and the conservation of natural and cultural resource values, while sustaining and enhancing ecological integrity across the landscape.
- Designates and applies management to PPMAs and PGMAs,
- Seeks to provide a balanced level of protection, restoration, enhancement, and use of resources and services to meet ongoing programs and land uses.



Preferred Alternative

Alternative D

GRSG Habitat Protection Measures

- Maintain or enhance sagebrush and perennial grass ecosystems
- Increase fire suppression and restoration
- Adjust livestock grazing standards to achieve GRSG habitat objectives
- Decrease surface disturbance from new ROWs and cross-country OHV use
- Eliminate future surface disturbance from wind and solar energy development



Summary of Effects

from GRSG habitat protection measures by action alternative

Effects Comparison by Program Area

Program Area	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D (preferred)	Alternative E	Alternative F
Vegetation	Enhanced conditions	Potential impacts from fire	Enhanced conditions	Enhanced conditions	Enhanced conditions
Fire	Reduced threat	Increased threat	Reduced threat	Reduced threat	Reduced threat
Grazing	Maintained opportunities	Eliminated opportunities	Minimal reduction in opportunities	Maintained opportunities	Decreased opportunities
Lands and Realty	Decreased development opportunities	No new development opportunities	Decreased development opportunities	Decreased development opportunities	Little to no development opportunities
Locatable Minerals	Decreased new development opportunities	Decreased new opportunities	Maintained development opportunities	Maintained development opportunities	Decreased new opportunities
Fluid Minerals	Decreased new development opportunities	No new opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities	No new opportunities
Travel Mngt.	Decreased travel opportunities	Decreased travel opportunities	Decreased travel opportunities	Decreased travel opportunities	Decreased travel opportunities



View the Document

Online:

http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/prog/wildlife/greater_sage-grouse.html

In Person:

BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd.
Reno, NV 89502



Submitting Comments

Electronically:

Website: <http://on.doi.gov/14ZD3Rb>

E-mail: blm_nv_ca_sagegrouse_eis_comments@blm.gov

US Mail:

BLM-Greater Sage-Grouse EIS

Attn: Joe Tague

1340 Financial Blvd.

Reno, NV 89502

Deadline to submit comments on the DEIS:
January 29, 2014.



Timeline of Critical Steps

Action	When
Draft EIS Released	November 1, 2013
90-day Public Comment Period Ends	January 29, 2014
Final EIS/LUPA Released	June 2014*
Record of Decision Signed	September 2014*

* Dates are subject to change.



Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 2:15 PM
To: 'Ashley Liggett (ashley.liggett@osc.idaho.gov)'; Cally Younger; 'Catherine Wightman (CWightman@mt.gov)'; 'Don Kemner'; 'Dustin T. Miller'; 'eugene.schock@id.usda.gov'; 'Fletcher, Tammy'; Jeff Bergland (jeff_berglund@fws.gov); 'jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov'; 'Karen Fullen'; 'Mike McDonald'; 'Pyron, Jason'; 'Rapley, Kathleen'; 'Aiello, Eric B'; 'Arnold, Jenifer L'; 'Beck, Jonathan M'; 'Blinn, Laurie A'; 'Brown, William B'; 'Farrell, Katherine'; 'German, Jesse S'; 'Guyer, Vincent L'; 'Haight, Scott S'; 'Haupt, Jon M'; 'Heide, Sarah C'; 'Hotaling, Richard M'; 'Jakovac, Gloria R'; 'Kershaw, Kathi G'; 'Knapton, Brandon L'; 'Kuyper, Michael W'; 'Leonard, Stephen P'; 'Moore, Kelley'; 'Prestwich, Kasey C'; 'Rawson, Jesse M'; 'Rice, Karen E'; 'Sampson, Dianna L'; 'Schoeberl, Bruce C'; 'Shaw, Elena A'; 'Tolness, Denise R'; 'Wood, David'; 'Wright, Jason S'; 'Adamski, Joseph J'; 'Bockting, Kelly D'; 'Bohn, Bryce A'; 'Braun, Christa M'; 'Brooks, Sandra S'; 'Burkhardt, Glen H'; 'Carlson, John C'; 'Chi, Danielle K'; 'Collins, Rodney J'; 'Cooper, Natalie M'; 'Danly, Lynn A'; Dick Todd (rtodd@blm.gov); 'Fehlau, Robin S'; 'Foss, Jeffery L'; 'Gardetto, Jessica D'; 'Halford, Fredrick K'; 'Jirik, Steven J'; Jonathan Norred; 'Knauth, Kevin S'; 'Lepak, Dominika'; 'Major, Donald J'; 'Makela, Paul D'; 'McCarthy, Clinton'; 'McConnaughey, Diane L'; 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com)'; 'Mickelsen, Robert'; 'Porter, Karen F'; 'Quamen, Frank R'; 'Ralston, Brent E'; 'Rinkes, Earl T'; Tanya Thrift (tthrift@blm.gov); 'Thompson, John H'; 'Wiedenmann, Kurt R'
Cc: 'Foss, Jeffery L'; Kurt Wiedenmann; Lauren Mermejo
Subject: FW: SG - document tracking
Attachments: ID SG MZ to do.xlsx

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Meredith Zaccherio [<mailto:meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com>]
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 1:00 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: SG - document tracking

Meredith Zaccherio
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tel: 415-544-0440 fax: 866-698-4836
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Chapter	Status	Who is in control	Task
Chapter 1 Chapter 1 Chapter 1	Drafted and in ePlanning	MZ	Table 1-3, add commas, round numbers 4 changes. Save any unsure changes for Brent Insert text re: BER Do anything about text re: COT? - cross check with provided text Rob to send USFS cmts
Chapter 2	Partial draft in word	BR	Check references to other sections
Chapter 2			Section 2.3 needs added language
Chapter 2			MZ: Pull together tables for each resource/threat
Chapter 2			Cut and paste monitoring text (edited from CO) Alt A - MT - give to them to describe. Rob deal with B/DL
			Pull in Paul's revision to rule set. MZ RFDS/BMPs in an appendix
Chapter 3	Partial drafts in word	BR	Bring BER tables into Ch 3
Chapter 3			Drop in introductory text
			BLM/EMPSi revise & refine No major changes for Ch 3 for this draft - need to add FS info
Chapter 4	Partial drafts in word	MZ	BLM/EMPSi revise & refine - what about beneficial/negligible Tie GRSG impacts to # or % of breeding birds by population area
Other chapters Other chapters	Not drafted	MZ	Draft irretrievable/irrevokable Draft consultation/coordination
Appendices	??	MZ/BR	Which ones to include?
Acronyms	Partial draft in word	BR	BR to send to MZ
References	Partial draft in word	BR	BR to send to MZ

Glossary

Partial draft in word

BR

BR to send to MZ

Tech edit

Ch 1 tech edited

EMPSi

Make metric/english consistent

MZ add language where possible -
Alts considered - WO may provide some text actions, go thru letters and double check
Brent - incorp new Alt E language

Habitat management object - get from Paul for Alt D; Brent to pull for Alt

Areas
populate vegetation tables - ask Rob for #s
Use new population areas for GRSG. Include % population of breeding
EMPSi oversee the teams, do with Ch 4
Diane to send GIS to MZ

RDFs/BMPs - MZ
Maps
where their management assumptions

Map - COT PAC, PH/GH,
population areas, etc -
crosswalk these
RFDs

Brent Ralston

From: Burkhardt, Glen
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2014 3:14 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Re: Comment report, version 2.1
Attachments: gbIDMTSG_Cmt_Sum_Rpt_V2.1_20140725 (2).docx

My comments again. Thanks, Glen

On Tue, Jul 29, 2014 at 12:23 PM, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov> wrote:

Well I shared the report but I didn't really communicate the assignment that goes along with it. So here goes...

Everyone needs to take a look at this again, particularly noting any highlighted areas, and make sure these responses are good to go. If there are some edits or adjustments to the response please make that in track changes and send back to me by August 8th. If there is additional insight you can provide in resolving any of the highlighted areas also include that in track changes.

I've reattached the report again in case you misplaced it!!

Brent Ralston

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office

208-373-3812

From: Brent Ralston [mailto:bralston@blm.gov]
Sent: Monday, July 28, 2014 10:04 AM
To: 'Adamski, Joseph J'; Anne Halford; 'Bockting, Kelly D'; 'Bohn, Bryce A'; 'Braun, Christa M'; 'Brooks, Sandra S'; 'Burkhardt, Glen H'; 'Carlson, John C'; Charles Tuss (ctuss@blm.gov); 'Chi, Danielle K'; 'Collins, Rodney J'; Colt, Chris J - FS; 'Cooper, Natalie M'; 'Danly, Lynn A'; 'Elizabeth Maclean'; 'Fehlau, Robin S'; 'Foss, Jeffery L'; 'Gardetto, Jessica D'; 'German, Jesse S'; 'Halford, Fredrick K'; 'Jirik, Steven J'; 'Lepak, Dominika'; 'Makela, Paul D'; 'McConnaughey, Diane L'; 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empso.com)'; 'Mickelsen, Robert'; 'Porter, Karen F'; 'Ralston, Brent E'; 'Wiedenmann, Kurt R'; Tanya Thrift (tthrift@blm.gov)
Subject: FW: Comment report, version 2.1

Here is the update comment response summary report.

Brent Ralston

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion

Idaho State Office

208-373-3812

From: Meredith Zaccherio [<mailto:meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com>]
Sent: Friday, July 25, 2014 2:35 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Comment report, version 2.1

Hi Brent,

Attached is the latest comment report. It is pretty similar to the report I gave you earlier in the month, but the planning related (NEPA, FLPMA, other laws) and minerals issues and responses have been updated. Let me know if you'd like anything else.

Meredith

Meredith Zaccherio
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--

Glen Burkhardt
BLM Idaho Fuels Management Specialist
Office: (208) 373-4047
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Section 3 - Edits Total

Number of Submissions: 27
Total Number of Comments: 62

Section 4 – NEPA

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

The FEIS needs to identify an Environmentally Preferred Alternative, evaluate the plan according to the USFWS's Evaluation Criteria for Conservation Plans, and provide a summary comparison of the population effects under each alternative.

Response

1. Section 1505.2(b) requires that, in cases where an EIS has been prepared, the Record of Decision (ROD) must identify all alternatives that were considered, ". . . specifying the alternative or alternatives which were considered to be environmentally preferable." This alternative(s) will be identified in the ROD.
2. The Policy for the Evaluation of Conservation Efforts (PECE) is the USFWS responsibility and will be used by USFWS during their evaluation of BLM/FS land use plans as appropriate.
3. The FEIS includes discussion of population effects. For instance, [refer to chapter 4 section] incorporates consideration of Greater Sage-grouse populations in the cumulative effects analysis, which is organized by WAFWA MZ.

Section 4.1 - Public Notification

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

BLM needs to publish the statistics for people that provided comment letters on the Draft EIS, as well as the comments, their responses, and changes made to the document in the FEIS.

Response

All substantive comments received on the Draft EIS were considered and reviewed for information that would result in changes to the document. Comments simply stating a preference for or against a specific alternative or opinions without reasonable basis were considered non-substantive since they do not meet the substantive comment requirement of BLM Handbook H-1790-1, Section 6.9.2.1. The substantive comments, along with the commenter and associated issue statements and responses, are presented in the Proposed LUPA/Final EIS in Chapter XX [or Appendix XX], along with a complete explanation of the procedures followed for analyzing comments. See Section XXX for

additional details on the comment analysis process.

[NOTE TO BLM: Section/Appendix numbers will be updated by EMPSi once this section has been added to the FEIS.]

Form letters, or identical letters submitted by different commenters, were identified as part of the DLUPA/DEIS comment response effort. Since these submissions are identical in nature, it is adequate for only one “master” form letter to be included as part of the comment response effort and reviewed for substantive comments. All form letters will be entered into the project decision file and all commenters will be entered into the project decision file as having submitted a comment during the DLUPA/DEIS comment period.

Index of parties, comments, and responses are provided in the FEIS. Changes made to the EIS are noted as... [NOTE TO BLM: Waiting on direction from national team on how will changes be noted between the DEIS and FEIS. EMPSi will include language on this topic in this response.]

Section 4.2 - Cooperating Agency Relationships

Total Number of Submissions: 5

Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

The BLM did not coordinate with state and local agencies that would be affected by the actions considered in the EIS, as required by NEPA and FLPMA. Several agencies requested cooperator status for review and revisions to the Final EIS.

[NOTE to BLM: inserted UT issue statement and response for use in ID report. Meredith to talk to ID PM to make sure this accurately reflects the comments. If not, rewrite to make it accurate.]

Response

Both the CEQ and BLM Planning regulations define cooperating agency status, including what it is, who is eligible to become a cooperating agency, and how the lead agency should invite participation as a cooperating agency (40 CFR 1501 and 1508; 43 CFR 1601.0-5). Cooperating relationships are limited to government entities, state agencies, local governments, tribal governments, and other Federal agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise. Additionally, per the regulations and BLM policy, there is no coordinating agency status (BLM Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners, pages 21 and 31, respectively). To be a cooperating agency, the local agency must meet the eligibility criteria set out in the regulations and policies. The specific role of each cooperating agency is based on jurisdiction by law or special expertise, which is determined on an agency-by-agency basis and identified in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Cooperating agency relationships are described in the Final EIS in Section 5.XX, Cooperating Agencies. In December 2011, the BLM sent letters to XX tribal governments inviting them to be cooperating agencies. The BLM also sent letters to XX local, state, and federal agencies inviting them to participate as cooperating agencies for the LUPA/EIS. [NOTE TO BLM: use this if applies to ID subregion or delete: Subsequently, the State of Wyoming and 4 local government agencies in Wyoming requested and were granted cooperating agency status for the Idaho Sub-regional LUPA/EIS effort, given the portions of two National Forests that overlap into Wyoming and their proximity to the Idaho planning area.] To date, XX agencies agreed to participate on the EIS as designated cooperating agencies, XX of which have signed Memoranda of Understanding with the BLM's Idaho State Office (Table 5.XX, Cooperating Agencies).

In addition to the BLM's invitations to a wide variety of agencies to participate as Cooperating Agencies, DOI regulations (43 CFR 46.225(c)) require the BLM, as lead agency, to consider any request by a government entity to participate as a Cooperating Agency (BLM Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental

Partners, pages 8-9). From the time that the Notice of Intent was published and throughout the development of the EIS, an agency could notify the BLM requesting Cooperating Agency status. Section 202 of FLPMA requires the BLM and Forest Service, to the extent consistent with the laws governing the administration of the public lands, coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management activities of or for such lands with the land use planning and management programs of other Federal departments and agencies and of the States and local governments within which the lands are located.

All agencies participating as cooperating agencies have been given opportunities to participate during various steps of the planning process, including regular briefings, requests for input on draft alternatives and the administrative draft EIS, and identification of issues and data during scoping and the DEIS comment periods, as required by 40 CFR 1503.2 and 40 CFR 1506.10. Further, coordination will continue with cooperating agencies in order to identify consistency issues and to be compliant with the relevant laws and regulations. While the laws and regulations associated with cooperating agencies and coordination with other federal agencies and state, local, and tribal governments state that coordination must occur, they do not prescribe the methods necessary to meet the legal or regulatory requirements. Based on the coordination efforts describe above, the BLM and Forest Service have met the legal and regulatory requirements for coordination to date, as described in [Section 5.XX](#).

Section 4.3 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 29

Total Number of Comments: 80

Summary

1. The alternatives fail to meet NEPA adequacy because:

- a. they (individually or collectively) do not meet the purpose and need for the action
- b. alternatives were all largely the same, and that the BLM needed to provide more distinction (range) between them
- c. BLM needs to consider the alternatives presented by Cooperating Agencies and Environmental Organizations, including the County alternatives, the Conservation Groups' alternative, and alternatives for the listing of the species or not listing the species.
- d. specifically that Alternative D needed to include the Ecological Site Descriptions to provide adequate understanding of the current management
- e. and the BLM and Forest Service failed to adequately define the No Action Alternative.

2. Commenters also suggested that BLM and Forest Service did not provide adequate rationale for the need of the project.

Response

1. a. In accordance with NEPA, the BLM and FS have discretion to establish the purpose and need for action (40 CFR 1502.13). CEQ regulations direct that an EIS "...shall briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action" (40 CFR 1502.13). Also, under the CEQ regulations, the BLM and the Forest Service are required to "study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources as provided by section 102(2)(E) of the Act [NEPA]." (40 CFR 1501.2(c)). The breadth or narrowness of the purpose and need statement has a substantial influence on the scope of the subsequent analysis. The purpose and need statement provides a framework for issue identification and will inform the rationale for alternative selection. The range of alternatives developed are intended to meet the purpose and need and address the issue; thereby, providing a basis for eventual selection of an alternative in a decision (BLM NEPA handbook and Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 – National Environmental Policy Act Handbook Chapter 10 – Environmental Analysis).

As stated in the DLUPA/EIS, the BLM and the Forest Service prepared the Idaho LUP amendment with an associated EIS to be applied to lands with greater sage-grouse habitat. This effort responds to the FWS's March 2010

b. The BLM and the Forest Service considered a reasonable range of alternatives during the greater sage-grouse planning process in full compliance with the NEPA. The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require that the BLM and the Forest Service consider reasonable alternatives that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment. While there are many possible alternatives or actions to manage public lands and greater sage-grouse in the planning area, the BLM and the Forest Service fully considered the management opportunities presented in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) and the planning issues and criteria developed during the scoping process to determine a reasonable range of alternatives. As a result, four alternatives were analyzed in detail in the DLUPA/EIS that best addressed the issues and concerns identified by the affected public. The range of alternatives in the DLUPA/EIS represented a full spectrum of options including a no action alternative (current management, Alternative A).

Additionally, the resulting action alternatives offer a range of possible management approaches for responding to planning issues and concerns identified through public scoping, and to maintain or increase GRSG abundance and distribution in the planning area. While the goal is the same across alternatives, each alternative contains a discrete set of objectives and management actions and constitutes a separate RMPA with the potential for different long-range outcomes and conditions.

The relative emphasis given to particular resources and resource uses differs as well, including allowable uses, restoration measures, and specific direction pertaining to individual resource programs. When resources or resource uses are mandated by law or are not tied to planning issues, there are typically few or no distinctions between alternatives. Meaningful differences among the four alternatives are described in Table 2-2, Comparative Summary of Alternatives, in Section 2.8, Summary Comparison of Alternatives, of the Draft EIS.

c. Based on this alternative development process, the BLM considered input from cooperating agencies, environmental organizations, and the public. As described in 2.4.2, Alternative B, the BLM used the GRSG conservation measures in A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures (NTT 2011) were used to form BLM management direction under Alternative B, which is consistent with the direction provided in BLM Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 2012-044 (the BLM must consider all applicable conservation measures developed by the NTT in at least one alternative in the land use planning process).

During scoping for the Idaho GRSG RMPA/EIS, individuals and conservation groups submitted management direction recommendations for protection and conservation of GRSG and their habitat, including the Sage-grouse Recovery Alternative and proposed disturbance cap. The recommendations, in conjunction with resource allocation opportunities and internal sub-regional BLM input, were reviewed in order to develop BLM management direction for GRSG under Alternative C.

Alternative D incorporates adjustments to the NTT report (NTT 2011) to provide a balanced level of protection, restoration, enhancement, and use of resources and services to meet ongoing programs and land uses, and was developed in full cooperation with the Cooperating Agencies taking note of the agencies' concerns with socioeconomic issues.

The BLM and Forest Service considered the State of Idaho's Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan in its cumulative effects analysis (Draft EIS Chapter 5, Cumulative Effects, [Section 5.4](#), Special Status Species).

Whether the Greater Sage-grouse is determined for listing by the USFWS is outside the jurisdiction of the BLM and beyond the scope of this EIS. As noted in the Purpose and Need, the BLM was to consider regulatory mechanisms that would protect the species and its habitat. As such, the BLM did not develop alternatives should the USFWS choose to list or not list the Greater Sage-grouse.

e. Ecological Site Descriptions are provided for in Chapter 3, Affected Environment as part of the baseline studies; additionally, current management is described in Alternative A.

f. As clarified by the CEQ, the “no action alternative” for a land use plan amendment or revision means “no change” from current management or level of management intensity (CEQ 40 Questions, Question 3). The no action alternative may be thought of in terms of continuing with the present course of action. The No Action Alternative is described in Alternative A, and includes the current management for the programs within the scope of the analysis. However, the FWS determined that the current regulatory mechanisms were not “adequate” in their 2010 warranted but precluded for listing decision. Therefore, the No Action Alternative provides a baseline for comparison of the four action alternatives to the existing planning decisions.

2. The purpose and need is provided in chapter 1. Under FLPMA, the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the BLM has the discretion to engage in land use planning whenever appropriate for management of the public lands.

Section 4.4 - Best Available Info Baseline Data

Total Number of Submissions: 4
Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

The EIS fails to meet NEPA adequacy for baseline data because the scale of baseline data used is too broad, the EIS failed to include the State and Transition models as part of the baseline information, and the No Action management actions, as presented, do not explain the regulatory mechanisms that are currently available to preserve sage grouse habitat.

Response

The CEQ regulations require an environmental impact statement to “succinctly describe the environment of the area(s) to be affected or created by the alternatives under consideration. The description shall be no longer than is necessary to understand the effects of the alternatives. Data and analyses in a statement shall be commensurate with the importance of the impact, with less important material summarized, consolidated, or simply referenced. Agencies shall avoid useless bulk in statements and shall concentrate effort and attention on important issues” (40 CFR 1502.15). Additionally, the [name of particular amendment] is a programmatic NEPA effort to conserve greater sage-grouse and its habitat across a broad geographic area. As such, the BLM and the Forest Service described the current conditions and trends in the affected environment broadly, across a range of conditions, appropriate to program-level land use planning actions.

The BLM and the Forest Service complied with these regulations in describing the affected environment. The requisite level of information necessary to make a reasoned choice among the alternatives in an EIS is based on the scope and nature of the proposed decision. The affected environment provided in [Chapter XX] and various appendices including [cite appendix(ces)] in the [name of particular amendment] is sufficient to support, at the general land use planning-level of analysis, the environmental impact analysis resulting from management actions presented in the DLUPA/EIS. For example, [use relevant example for the particular issue...here’s one provided: listing every water quality-impaired stream within the planning area by name would not provide useful information at this broad-scale analysis, particularly where the proposed plan alternatives did not vary the level of riparian protections to provide reduced levels for non-impaired streams. The riparian protections within each alternative were applied to all streams, whether or not they were water quality-impaired. However, understanding the miles of impaired BLM streams, as presented in the DLUPA/EIS at Section 3.5.7, is useful in establishing a baseline by which the BLM may analyze the relative effects of each alternative’s broad-based approach.]

As specific actions come under consideration, the BLM and the Forest Service will conduct subsequent NEPA analyses that include site-specific project and implementation-level actions. Site-specific concerns and more detailed environmental descriptions will be addressed when project-level reviews are tiered to the analysis in this EIS (40 CFR 1502.20, 40 CFR 1508.28). In addition, as required by NEPA, the public will be offered the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for any site-specific actions.

Section 4.5 - GIS Data and Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 8

Total Number of Comments: 13

Summary

Commenters noted several issues with the GIS data and analysis conducted in the Draft EIS:

- The maps and data layers do not provide enough detail to address "local ecological site variability". The data are too coarse and do not provide assurances to more localized decision making; some habitat type areas are inaccurately identified in the maps.
- BLM used old data layers to develop maps; BLM should use the newer data layers.
- the BLM needs to be consistent in their edge-mapping across state boundaries when there are different data sets used.

NOTE TO BLM: some comments relate to specific changes for the maps presented in the DEIS, and for the data layers to be made available for download from the BLM website.

Response

Before beginning the Idaho Sage grouse EIS and throughout the planning effort, the BLM and the Forest Service considered the availability of data from all sources, adequacy of existing data, data gaps, and the type of data necessary to support informed management decisions at the land-use plan level. The data needed to support broad-scale analysis of the planning area are substantially different than the data needed to support site-specific analysis of projects. The LUPA/EIS data and information is presented in map and table form and is sufficient to support the broad scale analyses required for land use planning.

Additionally, the BLM and the Forest Service consulted with, collected, and incorporated data from other agencies and sources, including but not limited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state agencies, including the state wildlife agency. Considerations included but were not limited to [list the types of data or GIS layers that were gathered/used. A few examples: threatened and endangered species and their habitats, water quality- limited (303d) streams, deer and elk herd management areas, invasive plants, and uses on State lands]. The Draft EIS notes that the BLM and FS would incorporate any refinements or updates if or when the data were made available.

As a result of these actions, the data gathered by the BLM and the Forest Service is of the appropriate scale and provided an adequate analysis that led to an adequate disclosure of the potential environmental consequences of the alternatives.

A land use planning-level decision is broad in scope and, therefore, does not require an exhaustive gathering and monitoring of baseline data. The baseline data provides the necessary basis to make informed land use plan-level decisions. Land use plan-level analyses are typically broad and qualitative rather than quantitative or focused on site-specific actions (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1, Chapter II, A-B at 11-13 and Chapter IV, B at 29; Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 – Land Management Planning). The BLM and the Forest Service will conduct subsequent project-specific NEPA analyses for projects proposed for implementation under the land use plan, which may include but

are not limited to fuels treatment, habitat restoration, [etc.; list others as applicable]. The subsequent NEPA analyses for project-specific actions will tier to the land-use planning analysis and evaluate project impacts at the appropriate site-specific level (40 CFR 1502.20, 40 CFR 1508.28). As required by NEPA, the public will have the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for site-specific actions.

NOTE TO BLM: Need to respond to the last comment related to consistency across state boundaries for our mapping efforts. There is no national response for this issue.

Section 4.6 - Indirect Impacts

Total Number of Submissions: 4

Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

BLM's overall impact analysis is deficient in the following areas:

1. lack of discussion for where, when, and how BLM will have sufficient funding to implement the actions;
2. the analysis does not distinguish between the effects of each alternative;
3. did not fully analyze the No Action alternative by not acknowledging the existing laws and actions already in place that would manage the habitat;

Response

1. As a landscape level planning effort, none of the alternatives authorize site specific activities on public lands. The agencies' selection of an alternative does not authorize funding to any specific project or activity nor does it directly tie into the agencies' budgets as appropriated annually through the Federal budget process. As a consequence, agencies' costs and differences in program costs across alternatives have not been quantified. Information has been presented in several resource impact sections on the types of costs that might be associated with various sage-grouse conservation measures.

2. Direct the reader to the Effects Summary table in ch 2. Determine whether revisions to the table would be necessary to distinguish more between the effects.

3. All alternatives are subject to existing laws, even the no action (cite chapter 1 where those laws are listed). The no action was fully analyzed; however, the Purpose and Need for this effort responds to the FWS's 2010 finding that existing regulatory mechanisms in existing land use plans are inadequate to protect the species, therefore, the no action is not sufficient to meet this Purpose and Need.

Section 4.7 - Cumulative Impacts

Total Number of Submissions: 6

Total Number of Comments: 7

Summary

The EIS cumulative impacts analysis is inadequate because it does not adequately identify the reasonably foreseeable future actions, present a comprehensive listing of the effects across ALL subregions, nor analyze how the alternatives' actions would affect actions and decisions in neighboring states/jurisdictions.

Response

The BLM and the Forest Service thoroughly explained its consideration and analysis of cumulative effects in the Draft and Final LUPA/EIS in Section 4.24. The Draft and Final LUPA/EISs considered the present effects of past actions, to the extent that they are relevant, and present and reasonably foreseeable (not highly speculative) Federal and non-Federal actions, taking into account the relationship between the proposed alternatives and these reasonably foreseeable actions. This discussion summarizes CEQ guidance from June 24, 2005, stating that "[g]enerally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historical details of individual past actions." This is because a description of the current state of the environment inherently includes the effects of past actions. Information on the current conditions is more comprehensive and more accurate for establishing a useful starting point for cumulative effects analysis. The BLM and the Forest Service explicitly described their assumptions regarding proposed projects and other reasonably foreseeable future actions. On Forest Service-administered lands, reasonably foreseeable actions are those that would occur under their current land use plans from a broad-scale perspective.

The BLM and the Forest Service have complied fully with the requirements of 40 CFR 1508.7 and prepared a cumulative impact analysis to the extent possible based on the broad nature and scope of the proposed management options under consideration at the land use planning level.

The DLUPA/EISs contains a qualitative discussion of cumulative effects at the WAFWA Management Zone scale to set the stage for a more quantitative analysis to be contained in the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment/FEIS. Additional quantitative cumulative analysis was added to the Final EIS in [Section 4.XX](#), Cumulative Impacts.

Section 4.8 – Disturbance Cap

No comments are associated with this issue.

Summary

Commenters felt there was no methodology or scientific backing for establishing the disturbance cap in the alternatives, and that the BLM/FS needed to demonstrate more range in the disturbance cap amounts presented in the alternatives.

Response

In determining the disturbance cap level for each alternative, the BLM utilized the recommendations and input specific to each alternative. For example, for Alternative B, the BLM utilized the cap levels recommended in the NTT Report. Conservation measures included in Alternative B focus primarily on GRSG PPH and include a 3-percent disturbance cap in PPH. PPH areas have the highest conservation value to maintaining or increasing GRSG populations.

For Alternative C, conservation measures were mostly focused on ADH (PPH, PGH, and linkage/connectivity habitat). These areas have been identified by CPW in coordination with respective BLM offices, and include a 3-percent cap on disturbance in ADH. This disturbance cap number for Alternatives B and C were incorporated as-is from the NTT Report and conservation group alternatives; the BLM did not modify the caps in the alternatives.

For Alternative D, the BLM intended to protect those areas that were most important for sage-grouse within PPH; in other words, the alternative would protect the best of the best habitat. The BLM utilized information from the Wyoming Core Strategy to support consideration of the five-percent disturbance cap, with the goal to represent the reasonable edge of the range of alternatives with a higher percentage.

While the caps would set a particular level of disturbance, the implementation of the disturbance caps would occur after the RMPA is approved in the Record of Decision. The BLM inventoried the habitat with the best available info at the

time of the DEIS, but would also do additional in-depth analysis & inventory within management zones at the implementation stage.

Section 4.9 - Mitigation Measures

Total Number of Submissions: 13

Total Number of Comments: 18

Summary

1. The BLM needs to include a monitoring, mitigation, and adaptive management plan/framework in the FEIS that will include specific criteria for determining sage grouse conservation success and how the disturbance percentages will be calculated.
2. BLM needs to clarify the relationship between the disturbance thresholds and the monitoring framework.
3. The BLM needs to release the mitigation strategy for public review.

Response

Mitigation and monitoring frameworks were introduced in the DE IS in Chapter 2 and in [Appendices X and X](#). An Adaptive Management strategy was also introduced in Chapter 2 of the DEIS. A more detailed mitigation framework, monitoring framework, and adaptive management strategy has been incorporated into chapter 2 of the FEIS, [section X](#) and [Appendices X, X, and X](#).

Mitigation will be applied to all implementation actions/decisions that take place on Federal lands within greater sage-grouse habitat during the life of this plan. Mitigation has been further defined as Regional Mitigation and the Framework is in [Appendix X](#). The Regional Mitigation Framework was developed to follow the BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794, Forest Service Handbook FSH 1909.15, and CEQ 40 CFR 1508.20.

The Mitigation Framework, through the mitigation hierarchy, guides the BLM and Forest Service. The hierarchy direction is to first, avoid impacts entirely by not taking a certain action or parts of an action, second, if unable to avoid, minimize impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of an action or parts of an action, and lastly, if avoidance or minimizing is not possible, compensate impacts associated with future implementation actions. If residual impacts to greater sage-grouse from implementation-level actions remain after applying avoidance or minimization measures, then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to offset the residual impacts in an effort to achieve the land use plan goals and objectives. As articulated in [Appendix X](#), compensatory mitigation will occur on sites that have the potential to yield the greatest conservation benefit to the greater sage-grouse, regardless of land ownership. These sites should be sufficiently "durable." According to BLM Manual Section 1794, durability is defined as "the administrative, legal, and financial assurances that secure and protect the conservation status of a compensatory mitigation site, and the ecological benefits of a compensatory mitigation project, for at least as long as the associated impacts persist.

Specific mitigation strategies, based on the Framework, will be developed by regional teams (at the WAFWA Management Zone level) within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. These strategies will guide the application of the mitigation hierarchy to address greater sage-grouse impacts within that WAFWA Management Zone. The WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy will be applicable to BLM and Forest Service lands within the zone's boundaries. Subsequently, the BLM/FS's NEPA analyses for implementation-level decisions that might impact greater sage-grouse will include analysis of mitigation recommendations from the relevant WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy(ies).

The Monitoring Framework in [Appendix X](#) outlines the methods that the BLM and Forest Service will use to monitor

and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the planning strategy and the land use plans to conserve the species and its habitat. The regulations for the BLM (43 CFR 1610.4-9) and the Forest Service (36 CFR 219.12) require that land use plans establish intervals and standards, as appropriate, for monitoring and evaluations, based on the sensitivity of the resource to the decisions involved.

Implementation monitoring results will provide information to allow the BLM and FS to evaluate the extent that the decisions from the BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service land and resource management plans (LRMPs) to conserve greater sage-grouse and their habitat have been implemented. Effectiveness monitoring will provide the information to evaluate whether BLM and Forest Service actions achieve the objective of the planning strategy (BLM IM 2012-044) and the conservation measures contained in the land use plans to conserve greater sage-grouse populations and their habitats.

Monitoring efforts will include data for measurable quantitative indicators of sagebrush availability, anthropogenic disturbance levels, and sagebrush conditions. This information will assist the BLM and the Forest Service with identifying whether or not they are achieving their land use plan goals and objectives, reaching an adaptive management soft or hard trigger, as well as providing information relative to the disturbance cap. Specifically, habitat degradation (percent of human activity in a biologically significant unit), habitat availability (percent of sagebrush in a biologically significant unit), and habitat degradation intensity (density of energy facilities and mining locations) will be gathered to inform the disturbance cap objective (insert PRMP/FEIS management action for disturbance cap here).

Adaptive management is a systematic approach for improving resource management by learning from management outcomes. An adaptive approach involves exploring alternative ways to meet management objectives, anticipating the likely outcomes of alternatives based on the current state of knowledge, implementing one or more of these alternatives, monitoring to learn about the impacts of management actions, and then using the results to update knowledge and adjust management actions accordingly.

Incorporating adaptive management into the [insert name of plan] will ensure a degree of certainty that the decisions in the plan will effectively contribute to the elimination or adequate reduction of one or more threats to the greater sage-grouse and its habitat. The adaptive management approach incorporates a set of triggers in the plan, a soft and hard trigger. These triggers were developed to inform the BLM/FS as to when the Federal agency needs to respond (take action) to address a declining trend in sage-grouse or sage-grouse habitat figures.

Soft triggers represent an intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are needed at the project/implementation level to address habitat and population losses. Hard triggers represent a threshold indicating that immediate action is necessary to stop a severe deviation from greater sage grouse conservation goals and objectives as set forth in the BLM/FS plans. The adaptive management soft and hard triggers and land use planning responses to these triggers are described and analyzed fully in this EIS [insert management action where the triggers and responses are referenced].

The agencies will use the data collected from monitoring (Appendix X) to identify any changes in habitat conditions related to the goals and objectives of the plan. The BLM/FS will use the information collected through monitoring to determine when adaptive management triggers are met."

Section 5 – FLPMA

Total Number of Submissions: 7
Total Number of Comments: 12

Summary

The DLUPA/EIS has failed to comply with the multiple-use mandates found in the BLM's FLPMA and the Forest Service's

Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act because it has put protecting greater sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat above legal requirements for balanced management.

Response

FLPMA (Section 103(c)) defines "multiple use" as the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people. Accordingly, the BLM is responsible for the complicated task of striking a balance among the many competing uses to which public lands can be put. The BLM's multiple-use mandate does not require that all uses be allowed on all areas of the public lands. The purpose of the mandate is to require the BLM to evaluate and choose an appropriate balance of resource uses which involves tradeoffs between competing uses. The FLPMA also directs the United States (US) Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop and periodically revise or amend its Resource Management Plans (RMPs), which guide management of BLM-administered lands, and provides an arena for making decisions regarding how public lands would be managed and used.

Consistent with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528–531) (MUSYA), the Forest Service manages National Forest System land to sustain the multiple use of its renewable resources in perpetuity while maintaining the long-term health and productivity of the land. Resources are managed through a combination of approaches and concepts for the benefit of human communities and natural resources. Land management plans guide sustainable, integrated resource management of the resources within the plan area in the context of the broader landscape, giving due consideration to the relative values of the various resources in particular areas. The Forest Service is required by statute to have a national planning rule: the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976, requires the Secretary of Agriculture to issue regulations under the principles of the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 for the development and revision of land management plans.

The [name of particular amendment] is a targeted amendment specifically addressing goals, objectives, and conservation measures to conserve greater sage-grouse and to respond to the potential of its being listed (see Section I.XX, Purpose and Need). Both, the Forest Service's and BLM's planning processes allow for analysis and consideration of a range of alternatives in the DLUPA/EIS that identified and incorporated conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore greater sage-grouse habitat and to eliminate, reduce, or minimize threats to this habitat to ensure that a balanced management approach was recommended. The DLUPA/EIS includes alternatives that provide a greater and lesser degree of restrictions in various use programs, but would not eliminate or invalidate any valid existing development rights. For example, [insert one or more examples of the range of actions considered, include references to sections/table where they can be found].

Additionally, the BLM and the Forest Service developed the [name DLUPA/EIS] with involvement from cooperating agencies, including [name various agencies, including the state wildlife agency, state's governor's office, other fed agencies, any local agencies/governments] to ensure that a balanced multiple-use management strategy to address the protection of greater sage-grouse while allowing for utilization of renewable and nonrenewable resources on the public lands.

Section 5.1 - Inventories

No comments are associated with this issue.

Section 5.2 - Consistency with other state, county, or local plans

Total Number of Submissions: 8

Total Number of Comments: 14

Summary

The BLM's actions considered in the alternatives conflict with local and state agency plans and policies; furthermore, the BLM did not review all of the county and state plans to ensure that conservation measures are as consistent as possible with other planning jurisdictions.

Response

To the extent possible under existing law, the BLM's land use plans must be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans of Indian tribes, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments (see 43 CFR 1610). The BLM has worked closely with State and local governments during preparation of the Draft LUPA/EIS. The Draft LUPA/EIS lists the cooperating agencies actively involved in the planning process in Section 5.3. As described in Section 5.4, Coordination and Consistency, the BLM requested the state, county, and tribal government cooperating agencies assist in the consistency reviews by reviewing the range of alternatives associated with the draft LUPA/EIS and identify potential inconsistencies between the alternatives and each agency's applicable plans. This allows the state, local, and tribal cooperating agencies to use their special expertise regarding the familiarity with their own state, local, or tribal plans. On the local level, it is a county's responsibility to accurately identify and communicate any inconsistencies between that county's plan and the proposed alternative.

The BLM works to find a balance among uses and needs as reflected in these local government plans and has done so in the preparation of the LUPA/EIS; a list of these plans can be found in Section 1.8, Relationship to Other Policies, Plans, and Programs. The BLM is aware that there are specific State or local laws relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, BLM is bound by Federal law. As a consequence, there may be inconsistencies that cannot be reconciled. The FLPMA requires that BLM's land use plans be consistent with State and local plans "to the extent practical". In a situation where State and local plans conflict with Federal law, there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved. Thus, while State County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. While the BLM is not obligated to seek consistency, the agency is required to describe the inconsistencies between the proposed action and the other plans, policies, and/or controls within the EIS, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. This information has been updated in the FEIS in Section 1.8.

The BLM coordinates with cooperating agencies commensurate with each agency's recognized jurisdiction or expertise. In areas where the States of Idaho and Montana has clear jurisdiction, such as wildlife populations, the BLM has worked closely with that State agency. In cases where a county or agency has expertise, such as local county socioeconomic information, the BLM has worked closely with the group to incorporate the information into the EIS.

[NOTE TO BLM from WO: plans, policies that commenters felt needed to be reviewed for consistency:

Gooding conservation district sage grouse conservation plan
National Academy of Sciences 2013 recommendations for the WHB program
State of MT sage-grouse management strategy
Custer County plans
Owyhee County plans]

Section 5.4 - Planning Regs 43 CFR 1600

Total Number of Submissions: 2

Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

The BLM did not provide an explanation for how and why they defined the planning area as they did.

Response

[NOTE TO BLM: This is from a national response.]

The framework for the scope of analysis for the project is based upon the BLM and the Forest Service Planning and NEPA manual and handbooks definitions of the planning, decision, and analysis areas. Specifically, Forest Service Manual 1900-Planning Chapter, Zero Code defines the Area of Analysis as “The geographic area within which ecosystems, their components, or their processes are evaluated during analysis and development of one or more plans, plan amendments, or plan revisions. This area may vary in size depending on the relevant planning issue. For a plan, an area of analysis may be larger than a plan area. For development of a plan amendment, an area of analysis may be smaller than the plan area and include multiple ownerships.”

For this environmental impact statement, decision areas are those public lands and mineral estates within the planning area that are encompassed by all designated habitat (ADH) (which includes preliminary priority habitat [PPH], preliminary general habitat [PGH], and linkage/connectivity habitat).

The definition of a Planning Area is the geographic area within which the BLM will make decisions during a planning effort. A planning area boundary includes all lands regardless of jurisdiction; however the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under the BLM’s jurisdiction (including subsurface minerals). Unless the State Director determines otherwise, the planning area for a RMP is the geographic area associated with a particular field office (43 CFR 1610.1(b)). State Directors may also establish regional planning areas that encompass several field offices and/or states, as necessary.

[SOL comments: Seems that this response needs to include more about the relationship between the Great Basin planning area boundaries (esp. the ID/SV MT boundary) and GRSG habitat. In other words, was there a biological + practical reason that the plans have been separated in this way? Relationship to WAFWA zone? Needs more explanation. Also, I see that this refers to PPH and PGH, and linkage/connectivity habitat...but what about Idaho’s other types of habitat-core, medial/important? Should they be explained here in the context of the planning area question? NOTE: Plan areas. National Forest System lands covered by land use plans. (36 CFR 219.16). If not included in DEIS already, make a notation that the FEIS will be updated to note definitions of planning, decision, and analysis areas to clarify these terms.]

Section 6 - Other Laws

Total Number of Submissions: 11
Total Number of Comments: 15

Summary

The BLM has failed to document how the EIS and/or actions considered in the EIS comply with other laws, including all Onshore Orders regulating oil and gas development, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2000, the Taylor Grazing Act, the Mining and Minerals Policy Act, the Information Quality Act, the Wild Horse and Burro Act, other multiple use mandates (e.g., Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, National Forest Management Act of 1976), and compliance with other federal agency regulations (e.g., XXX).

Response

The Draft and Final EIS Section 2.5, Management Common to All Alternatives, state that all alternatives would comply with state and federal laws, regulations, policies, and standards, and implement actions originating from laws, regulations, and policies. Additionally, in Section XX.XX, Planning Criteria, the BLM has a criterion stating that all BLM alternatives would comply with existing laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM and FS have reviewed all actions in the Proposed LUPA and found them to be consistent and within the bounds of all required laws, regulations, and policies.

Section 7 - Sage Grouse

No comments are associated with this issue.

Section 7.1 - NTT report/findings

Total Number of Submissions: 11
Total Number of Comments: 32

Summary

Commenters contended that the NTT report is not based on the best available science, contains technical and methodological errors, is not based on local conditions, and has not undergone adequate peer review. Commenters questioned why the NTT report was used when the IM requiring its use has expired.

Response

A National Technical Team (NTT) was formed as an independent, science-based team to ensure that the best information about how to manage the greater sage-grouse is reviewed, evaluated, and provided to the BLM and the Forest Service in the planning process. The group produced a report in December 2011 that identified science-based management considerations to promote sustainable greater sage-grouse populations. The NTT report (NTT 2011) used the best current scientific knowledge to guide the BLM planning efforts through management considerations to ameliorate threats, focused primarily on priority greater sage-grouse habitats on public lands. The NTT report cited 122 references including published papers from the formal scientific literature such as Journal of Wildlife Management, Conservation Biology, Biological Conservation, Wildlife Biology, BioScience and others, as well as graduate theses and dissertations, conservation strategies, FWS 2010 finding, and others representing the best available science. The NTT report was intended to be used at a programmatic scale and may not reflect local conditions.

The BLM used the NTT report per BLM IM 2012-044 to construct an alternative that would meet the purpose and need. This report was not the only source of information for developing a range of alternatives (see Section 7.5, Range of Alternatives).

[NOTE TO BLM- Clarify in FEIS the policy requirements for Administrative Procedure Act (APA), NEPA relative to IM, and NTT and clarify the NTT process and FACA in the FEIS.]

BLM is implementing IM 2012-044 through the Greater Sage-grouse planning effort. When an IM expires without being superseded, it can still be applicable and provide guidance to the BLM. The fact that IM 2012-044 expired does not mean the BLM has no authority to continue to analyze the conservation measures identified in the NTT Report. The BLM is appropriately considering and evaluating the measures in the NTT Report, in addition to any other relevant science, through the Greater Sage-grouse planning process.

{Note: Suggest asking for National justification of why the NTT was an appropriate source}

Section 7.2 – BER

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

The BER contains outdated baseline literature and should be updated with suggested literature.

Response

[NOTE TO BLM: The BLM is reviewing suggested literature and will include where necessary.]

A baseline environmental report, titled Summary of Science, Activities, Programs, and Policies That Influence the Rangewide Conservation of Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) (referred to as the BER), was released on June 3, 2013, by the U.S. Geological Survey. The peer-reviewed report summarizes the current scientific understanding about the various impacts to greater sage-grouse populations and habitats and addresses the location, magnitude, and extent of each threat. The data for this report were gathered from BLM, Forest Service, and other sources and were the best available at the range-wide scale at the time collected. The report provides a framework for considering potential implications and management options, and demonstrates a regional context and perspective needed for local planning and decision-making.

The BLM reviewed the literature sources provided by commenters to determine if there were new or updated sources that should be considered in the EIS. BLM's findings of this review were... [insert the results from the literature review. While it doesn't directly address the BER report being updated, it's addressing the point that BLM did make the effort to consider new or updated info in the EIS in addition to the BER report.]

While there was consistent direction provided in alternative develop, such as BLM WO IM 2012-044, variation across sub-regionals was needed to accommodate the local issues and specific state and Forest Service requirements. Alternative D was developed by the BLM in coordination with the Forest Service and local FWS. This alternative includes modifications to the conservation measures identified in the NTT report and is designed to address local ecological site variability. This alternative also emphasizes balancing resources and resource use among competing human interests, land uses, and the conservation of greater sage-grouse habitat. Alternative E was developed from recommendations by the State of Idaho's greater sage-grouse task force and would apply to all BLM-administered and National Forest System lands located in the state. See Section 2.1.2 regarding alternative development and explanation of components of each alternative. {Note: Suggest including more justification of the BER in response}

Section 7.3 – COT

Total Number of Submissions: 9
Total Number of Comments: 17

Summary

Commenters had two distinct views regarding the COT report. One group considered the report overly biased and not representative of the best available information. The other group suggested the DEIS was not fully consistent with the COT report habitat mapping and therefore requires revision to address those deficiencies.

Response

In March 2012, the FWS initiated a collaborative approach to develop range-wide conservation objectives for the greater sage-grouse to inform the 2015 decision about the need to list the species and to inform the collective conservation efforts of the many partners working to conserve the species. In March 2013, this team released the Conservation Objectives Team (COT) report based upon the best scientific and commercial data available at the time that identifies key areas for greater sage-grouse conservation, key threats in those areas, and the extent to which they need to be reduced for the species to be conserved. The report serves as guidance to Federal land management agencies, State greater sage-grouse teams, and others in focusing efforts to achieve effective conservation for this species.

Table 2-20 demonstrates how the BLM and Forest Service management actions under each alternative address the threats to the populations in the Idaho and southwestern Montana sub-region. In Idaho, Core and Important Habitat Zones under Alternative E were used to derive the PACs in the COT. The BLM and Forest Service have continued to work with the USFWS and State agencies to develop a proposed plan.

[NOTE TO BLM: Clarify in the FEIS the validity of NTT, COT, and BER as relative to the established standards of scientific integrity under the ESA, the Data Quality Act, and the Presidential and DOI memoranda and orders. Ensure the FEIS clarifies how PACs were delineated (IDFG delineated based on Core and Important zones, and provided to FWS). Clarify MZs and population monitoring efforts in the FEIS.]

Section 7.4 - Policy Guidance

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The BLM and Forest Service should include additional information to improve consistency with USFWS's Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts.

Response

The BLM and Forest Service are working closely with the USFWS to ensure certainty of implementation and effectiveness to the extent possible. However, certain management actions, such as restoration activities, are contingent on funding availability and thus some uncertainty remains.

Section 7.5 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 28
Total Number of Comments: 90

Summary

Commenters proposed revisions or requested additional details and clarifications to the alternatives related to GRSG.

Topics of concern included:

- The size of lek buffers
- Level of predator control
- Need for and size of disturbance cap
- Restrictions on wind energy development
- Noise restrictions
- Livestock grazing management changes
- Inadequate description of adaptive management and monitoring
- Need for an improved definition of no net unmitigated loss
- Leasable mineral restrictions
- Juniper removal
- Existing and new fencing as they relate to sage-grouse strikes and mortality
- Lack of active habitat restoration
- Habitat monitoring

Commenters were concerned about greater sage-grouse habitat mapping, including suggesting clarifications or revisions to the habitat map and concerns about using the map for site-scale projects.

Commenters were also concerned that Manual 6840 was not used as the baseline policy governing present GRSG conservation in the No Action alternative.

Response

As noted above in the response in Section 4.3, Range of Alternatives, Section 2.1 of the Draft EIS describes how the Idaho and southwestern Montana GRSG LUPA/EIS planning team employed the BLM and Forest Service planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA and worked closely with the State with assistance from the USFWS.

Meaningful differences among the six alternatives are described in Table 2-2, Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted, and in Section 2.6, Detailed Description of Alternatives, of the Draft EIS. [Specify where changes have been made to the FEIS regarding each of the bullets below]. Refer to tab 32 regarding predator control. All of these issues have been addressed in new management actions prepared for the proposed plan and analyzed in Chapter 4 (and reference relevant appendices regarding AM and monitoring, etc.).

Regarding the following issues:

The size of lek buffers -lek buffers will be revised in final plan/FEIS reflecting additional review of best science.

- Level of predator control
- Need for and size of disturbance cap- Additional specificity regarding the disturbance cap has been further explained in the FEIS.
- Restrictions on wind energy development
- Noise restrictions. Noise and seasonal stipulations for both construction and long-term implementation of land use activities has been included in the final EIS. [NOTE TO BLM (from Makela)- Project leads should discuss how to consistently address impacts from military flights and firm up discussion at 4-15. Consider adding additional detail from Mt. Home AFB Integrated Resource Mgt. Plan.]
- Livestock grazing management changes
- Inadequate description of adaptive management and monitoring. The BLM and FS believe the management actions described in the Proposed Plan will adequately address sage-grouse conservation needs without the need for additional large scale designations.
- Need for an improved definition of no net unmitigated loss- Additional specificity regarding the no net habitat loss objectives has been further explained in the FEIS.

- Leasable mineral restrictions
- Juniper removal
- Existing and new fencing as they relate to sage-grouse strikes and mortality. The BLM and FS used the latest science in developing management actions relative to fences that adequately address collision risk. No change has been made to the document regarding this issue in the FEIS.
- Lack of active habitat restoration- Site specific projects are not identified in the broad scale plan, but there are a number of restoration actions described in Table 2-18 Vegetation/Restoration section in the DEIS and in the Proposed Plan.
- Habitat monitoring- The BLM and FS, in coordination with the state, have clarified monitoring and mapping expectations in the FEIS.

A description of the habitat mapping process for each alternative is presented in Section 2.6, Detailed Description of Alternatives. The Proposed Plan will contain a mechanism that allows for evaluation of circumstances on case by case basis at the site specific scale that would be addressed via subsequent project level NEPA analysis.

Manual 6840 is referenced in Chapter 1, Section 1.x, Planning Criteria, and provides general guidance for special status species, but it does not provide language relative to specific conservation actions for specific species. [BLM- ensure Manual 6840 is discussed in Alternative A and also relevant FS policy].

[NOTE TO BLM: Ensure Proposed Plan has appropriate provisions/clarity for actions in General management areas. Needs additional discussion.]

Section 7.6 - Best Available Info Baseline Data

Total Number of Submissions: 38

Total Number of Comments: 97

Summary

Commenters suggested new or additional literature for the BLM and Forest Service to consider in the DLUPA/EIS related to:

- Determination of GRSG population size and trends – inaccuracy of past counts; insufficient data to determine trend.
- Effects of livestock grazing, predation, drought, noise, and anthropogenic development
- Appropriate lek buffers and disturbance cap to incorporate
- Mitigation
- Hunting– outside scope but managed via the Idaho and Montana state plans
- GRSG habitat requirements
- Accuracy of the habitat mapping
- Infrastructure
- West Nile virus

Response

As described in Section 4.4 of this comment report, The BLM and the Forest Service used the most recent and best information available that was relevant to a land-use planning-level analysis including the Baseline Environmental Report (BER; Manier et al. 2013), NTT report (NTT 2011), and COT report (USFWS 2013). Additionally, the BLM and the Forest Service consulted with, collected, and incorporated data from other agencies and sources, including but not limited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, scientific literature, field and district office data. Considerations included but were not limited to [list the types of data or GIS layers that were gathered/used.].

Of the suggested studies and references put forth by the commenters, the BLM and Forest Service reviewed them to determine if they presented new information that would need to be incorporated into the FEIS, were references already included in the draft EIS, or if the references provided the same information as already used or described in the Draft EIS. The BLM determined that several of these references contained new or relevant information regarding xxx

resources and the analysis was clarified and references cited in Sections XXX of the FEIS. In some cases, the additional literature was essentially the same as existing sources and was not incorporated.

A description of the habitat mapping process for each alternative is presented in Section 2.6, Detailed Description of Alternatives.

Section 7.7 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 22

Total Number of Comments: 70

Summary

The BLM and Forest Service should conduct additional, more comprehensive analysis of the impacts on greater sage-grouse to provide more substantiated conclusions. Commenters provided suggestions on how to improve or modify the impact analysis for greater sage-grouse in several topic areas including:

- Hunting
- Predation
- Anthropogenic disturbance, disturbance caps, and lek buffers
- Expanding on beneficial effects on GRSG from range improvements
- Greater sage-grouse population size and trend
- Livestock grazing, fences, and trailing
- Noise as related to low-level military overflights
- Success of habitat improvement projects
- Prescribed fire
- Herbicides
- West Nile virus
- More detailed analysis of Alternative A
- Climate change
- Need to identify areas for restoration
- Coal suitability

The EIS fails to provide justification as to why “withdrawal from mineral entry” is necessary to protect GRSG and its habitat when the same objective can be achieved through avoidance, minimization of impacts, and mitigation of impacts within the designated areas.

Response

The LUPA/FEIS provides an updated and expanded discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives. As described in Chapter 2.3.2, coal was not an issue for analysis. As required by 40 CFR 1502.16, the LUPA/FEIS provides a discussion of the environmental impacts of the alternatives including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the alternatives be implemented, the relationship between short-term uses of man’s environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources should the proposal be implemented. The LUPA/FEIS provided sufficiently detailed information to aid in determining whether to proceed with the proposed plan in a manner such that the public could have an understanding of the environmental consequences associated with the alternatives, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.1.

Land use plan-level analyses are typically broad and qualitative rather than quantitative or focused on site-specific actions (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1, Chapter II, A-B at 11-13 and Chapter IV, B at 29; Forest Service

Handbook 1909.12 – Land Management Planning). The DLUPA/EIS contains only planning actions and does not include any implementation actions. Therefore, effects on GRSG population levels are not required to be quantified as part of the impact analysis. A more quantified or detailed and specific analysis would be required only if the scope of the decision included implementation actions. As specific actions that may affect the area come under consideration, the BLM and the Forest Service will conduct subsequent NEPA analyses that include site-specific project and implementation-level actions. The site-specific analyses will tier to the plan-level analysis and expand the environmental analysis when more specific information is known. In addition, as required by NEPA, the public will be offered the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for implementation actions.

[BLM: Eventually need to fill this in:] Impacts from XX on greater sage-grouse were considered in Section 4.x of the Draft EIS. Include discussion of what changes were made and where. If no change made, describe why the impact analysis is adequate for that topic. Some template text:

While a land use planning-level action is broad in scope and, therefore, does not require site specific impact analysis, a thorough review of the EIS's impact analysis relevant to [speak to the specific topic or theme of the issue statement, e.g., anticipated fluid mineral development of the planning area] was found to need additional information and support for the conclusions/findings. The BLM and the Forest Service have updated this information in the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment/FEIS to provide the necessary information to make informed land use plan-level decisions. Specifically, [insert a summary of the information that was updated and include a citation for where the reader could find it in the FEIS.]

The facts that sagebrush takes decades to re-establish and that disturbance from light and noise affect GRSG mean that avoidance, minimization of impacts and mitigation of impacts are not sufficient methods of protecting GRSG and sage brush habitat. Additionally, this concept was considered within the range of alternatives- Alternative D does not withdraw lands from mineral entry. No change to the EIS has resulted from this comment. [NOTE TO BLM: Consider whether inserting text to this effect into the EIS is appropriate.]

Section 7.8 - Cumulative Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 3
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

The BLM and Forest Service need to provide additional analysis regarding the cumulative effects of livestock grazing and land treatments. In addition, the agencies should predict greater sage-grouse population changes based on expected cumulative actions.

Response

As described in Section 4.7 of this comment report, the BLM and Forest Service analyzed cumulative effects to GRSG in the DLUPA/EIS in Section 4.16 of the EIS. The BLM and Forest Service expanded and quantified cumulative impacts for the proposed LUPA/FEIS. Section 7.7 of this comment report describes how land treatments and domestic livestock were addressed in the Environmental Consequences section of the DEIS. The DLUPA/EIS considered the present effects of past actions, to the extent that they are relevant, and present and reasonably foreseeable (not highly speculative) Federal and non-Federal actions, taking into account the relationship between the proposed alternatives and these reasonably foreseeable actions. This discussion summarizes CEQ guidance from June 24, 2005, stating that "[g]enerally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historical details of individual past actions." This is because a description of the current state of the environment inherently includes the effects of past actions. Information on the current conditions is more comprehensive and more accurate for establishing a useful starting point for cumulative effects analysis. The CEQ interpretation was accepted by the Ninth in *NW Envtl. Advoc. v. Nat'l Marine Fisheries Serv.*, 460 F.3d 1125, 1141 (9th

Cir. 2006). The BLM and the Forest Service explicitly described their assumptions regarding proposed projects and other reasonably foreseeable future actions. On Forest Service-administered lands, reasonably foreseeable actions are those that would occur under their current land use plans from a broad-scale perspective.

The BLM and Forest Service have complied with the requirements of 40 CFR 1508.7 and prepared a cumulative impact analysis to the extent possible based on the broad nature and scope of the proposed management options under consideration at the land use planning level. Therefore, effects on GRS population levels are not required to be quantified as part of the cumulative impact analysis.

The BLM and Forest Service added quantitative analysis to Section 4.16 related to XXX topics. [Note to BLM/FS: insert description of any revisions made]

Section 7.9 - Mitigation Measures

Total Number of Submissions: 12
Total Number of Comments: 34

Summary

The BLM and Forest Service mitigation strategy is inadequate or needs clarifications. Topics of concern include:

- Certainty that mitigation will be implemented
 - Lack of scientific evidence that mitigation and habitat restoration results in greater sage-grouse population increases
 - Adequacy of the monitoring program
 - Effectiveness of compensatory mitigation
 - How mitigation proposals will be evaluated
 - Siting of mitigation actions
 - Durability of mitigation investments
 - Consideration of using mitigation banks
 - Creation of a mitigation program
 - Framework behind exceptions and associated mitigation, e.g., science behind allowing exceptions; offsetting losses and prove mitigation is successful
 - Need for mitigation given the restrictive management in the alternatives
 - Link between compensatory mitigation and adaptive management
-

Response

The Mitigation, Monitoring, and Adaptive Management strategies are described more fully in Section XX of this comment report and included in Chapter 2 and Appendices X, X, and X of the DEIS. Refer to BLM Mitigation Manual.

Section 8 – ACECs

No comments are associated with this issue.

Section 8.1 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 9
Total Number of Comments: 10

Summary

Issue 1: In the Draft EIS/LUPA, the BLM/FS did not accurately or consistently represent the number of ACECs being proposed under each alternative, particularly Alternative C.

Issue 2: Alternatives in the Draft EIS/LUPA do not provide an adequate range of management actions for ACECs by only considering new ACECs under two of the action alternatives (C and F).

Issue 3: Whether ACECs or another administrative designation, the BLM/FS should ensure any administrative designation established for the protection of sage-grouse habitat will provide adequate non-discretionary protections.

Response

Response 1: The FEIS has been revised to ensure consistent representation of proposed ACECs under Alternatives C and F.

[NOTE TO BLM: Review EIS/LUPA for consistent representation of proposed ACECs under Alternatives C and F.]

Responses 2 and 3: As noted in section 4.3, NEPA Range of Alternatives, of this report, the alternatives, including the management actions for the fire ACEC program, meet the purpose and need for the EIS. Alternatives within the EIS have established that not all protective management for the Greater Sage Grouse is limited to ACEC designation. Only Alternatives C and F proposed to establish ACECs for the protection and management of the Greater Sage Grouse. While the other alternatives do not propose such designations, they still contain similarly specific management prescriptions to manage and protect the Greater Sage Grouse and its habitat that would be equivalent to protections afforded via an ACEC or other designations.

Section 10 - Climate Change

Section 10.4 - Cumulative Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2

Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

The EIS does not adequately address the cumulative effects of climate change on sage-grouse or sage-grouse habitat, including the cumulative effects of livestock grazing on vegetation communities and the likelihood of a changing climate to result in an increase in invasive weeds.

Response

Assessing the impacts of grazing on climate change is outside the scope of this document, except as it pertains to reducing impacts on GRS and GRS habitat within the planning area and in consideration of valid existing rights and the BLM's multiple use mandate under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The PRMP/FEIS does disclose the potential effects associated with global climate change on the Greater Sage-grouse in [Section XX](#). However, pursuant to 40 CFR 1500.1(b), information must be "of high quality" in order to be considered in the analysis. As explained in Section xx of the EIS, it is speculative to attempt to predict the specific nature or magnitude of such changes.

NOTE TO BLM: Based on the NEPA and CEQ guidance for cumulative impacts analysis, determine if the DEIS analysis is adequate or not. If not, make necessary corrections and note what was modified here. Include direction to reader where to find revised analysis (e.g., "See Section 5.XXX for additional information."). The BLM will review. Follow up needed with Bryce.

Section 12 - Fire and Fuels

Section 12.1 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 11
Total Number of Comments: 15

Summary

The BLM and the Forest Service should examine the location and size of proposed fuel breaks in further detail as fuel breaks in large areas of intact sagebrush limit fire and related habitat destruction. Specifically, one commenter requests use of green-strips, including non-native species, for fuel breaks. Use of prescriptive fire as a management tool should be further examined.

Timelines for long-term fire management measures should be established in the FEIS. One commenter recommends that measures be implemented one year after the ROD. Implementation details of fire control measures should be specified. The BLM/Forest Service should acknowledge the importance of flexibility in fire management plans in the FEIS and allow for on-the ground decision making for effective fire-management. Alternative language should be revised for clarity.

Response

Fuel breaks are site-specific - see Oregon response. Use of prescribed fire varies by alternative. [needs more subregional input].

Section 12.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 4
Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

The FEIS should include citations indicating that implementation of fuel breaks in sagebrush systems reduces the rate of spread of fire. In addition, citations should be provided to support the use of prescribed fire to improve GRSG habitat. The BLM and Forest Service should recognize livestock grazing as an effective fire management tool due to its role in controlling invasive plants and decreasing fuel loads.

Response

The EIS affected environment section provides the appropriate information for the scope and scale of the project (see section 4.4, NEPA Baseline Information of this report). However, upon BLM and Forest Service reviews and public comment suggestions, some sections in Chapter 3 have been updated and revised to include clarifications or new information. Section 3.XX, [insert section name], in the FEIS has been revised to update information regarding fuel

Commented [BGH1]: Location and size of fuel breaks will be dictated by fire behavior modelling of current fuel loading, height and expected weather conditions. Included is sideboards placed by other vegetation limiting factors such as Lepa guidelines, etc. Modelling will use industry standard Behave program. Prescribed fire will be utilized to assist in achieving desired future conditions of vegetation management projects as needed. All on the ground decisions for fire suppression operations reside with the incident commander.

breaks and **Section 3.XX, [insert section name]**, has been updated to clarify the relationship between livestock grazing and fire.

Commented [BGH2]: Livestock grazing falls under the Biological method of fuels treatments. It is a tool that may or may not be used, pending treatment objectives and Rangeland health standards and guides.

Section 12.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 6
Total Number of Comments: 7

Summary

The DEIS does not contain sufficient analysis of indirect impacts of reduced grazing on fuel loads and related wildfire risk. Additionally, the analysis of impacts of fire suppression activities should be reexamined. It is particularly important that this analysis is clarified as lack of sufficient regulatory mechanisms for wildland fire was cited as a primary threat to GRSG in the FWS listing decision.

Response

The impact analysis provides the appropriate information for the scope and scale of the project (see section 4.6, NEPA Impact Analysis, of this report). Upon BLM and Forest Service reviews and public comment suggestions, some sections in Chapter 4 have been updated and revised to include clarifications to the text. **Section 4.XX, [insert section name]**, in the FEIS has been revised to clarify the impacts of reduced grazing on fuel loads. **[BLM/Forest Service- need to add review impacts in Ch 4 for consistency with this language added to chapter 3 for relation between grazing and fire. Review impacts analysis to make sure that impacts analysis has sufficient info on impacts of reduced grazing on fuel loads]**

In addition, impacts analysis discussion has been modified to clarify the impacts of different suppression measures proposed by Alternative. **[BLM/Forest Service- need to review and modify discussion of impacts of fire suppression measures (i.e. specific conservation measures under B vs. approach under E)]**

Commented [BGH3]: Reduced grazing pressure and the possible reduced amount of introduction of invasive seed source may assist in land health by allowing the perennial vegetation to outcompete the invasive species. Perennial vegetation is not as available to ignition in the spring, thus shortening the current invasive dominated fire regime.

Section 13 - Fish and Wildlife

Section 13.1 - ESA Consultation

Total Number of Submissions: 3
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

The BLM fails to address avoiding the potential to list the GRSG under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and that the bird does not meet the criteria to be listed under the ESA.

Response

As stated in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, Background in the DRMP, this plan amendment effort is the result of the July 2011, BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy (BLM 2011). The Strategy responds to the March 2010, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 12-Month Finding for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus*

urophasianus) as Threatened or Endangered (75 Federal Register [FR] 13910, March 23, 2010) (2010 Finding). In the 2010 Finding, the USFWS concluded that GRSG was “warranted, but precluded” for listing as a threatened or endangered species.

Section 14 - Lands and Realty

Total Number of Submissions: 1

Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The BLM should prohibit the construction of new permanent infrastructure within lands specially designated for sage-grouse protection, because studies show GRSG avoid areas with development.

Response

The alternatives consider a range of alternatives regarding ROW avoidance and exclusion. Table 2-3 identifies existing ROW avoidance and exclusion areas in the lands and realty section.

Section 14.1 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 11

Total Number of Comments: 20

Summary

Commenters requested clarification regarding: types of exclusions, valid existing rights, aboveground fiber optic lines, and disposal under current land use plans.

Commenters also suggested additions to the range of alternatives considered and provided information on the feasibility of the alternatives (e.g., co-location, perch diverters, and burying lines).

Commenters noted that the document has contradicting management actions regarding geothermal development between lands and minerals sections.

Commenters noted that Alternative E did not adequately address the purpose and need.

Need to include:

Comment #14-0049-8: reclaim areas that have been developed for powerlines that are no longer in use.

Comment #14-0153-41: Comment stated that BLM did not evaluate the NTT recommendation that all electrical distribution lines be buried within Core Areas.

Response

The BLM and the Forest Service considered a reasonable range of alternatives during the greater sage-grouse planning process in full compliance with the NEPA. The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require that the BLM and the Forest

Service consider reasonable alternatives that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment. While there are many possible alternatives or actions to manage public lands and greater sage-grouse in the planning area, the BLM and the Forest Service fully considered the management opportunities presented in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) and the planning issues and criteria developed during the scoping process to determine a reasonable range of alternatives. As a result, six alternatives were analyzed in detail in the DLUPA/EIS that best addressed the issues and concerns identified by the affected public. The range of alternatives in the DLUPA/EIS represented a full spectrum of options including a no action alternative (Alternative A).

Proposed avoidance and exclusion area designations vary by alternative, as explained on page 2-33 in Table 2-3. Under Alternative D, all new ROWs, unless specifically excluded, would be avoided, whenever possible, see LR-3 (ex. wind facilities, etc). Required design features that would apply to specific types of facilities in greater sage-grouse habitat are located in Appendix C.

The EIS/LUP includes an alternative that allows for placement of fiber optic lines on existing infrastructure (Alternative D Action LR-6 and LR-7 in Table 2-18).

Under Alternative D Table 2-18, LR-9, new power lines outside of existing ROWs, would be buried, where feasible. Reclamation of lands, once facilities are removed, are part of standard BMPs, Appendix C. Amendments to existing facilities that are otherwise excluded may be allowed under Alternative D, LR-6. Under Alternative D, lands currently identified for retention within priority greater sage-grouse habitat would be retained unless disposal of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity of priority habitat (LR -19 and LR-21), Alternatives A through F propose retention of all utility corridors (Table 2-18).

Lands and Minerals management actions did contradict on the topic of geothermal development (D-LR-3, page 2-162 and D-MLM-1, page 2-180) and the FEIS will correct this contradiction.

The first of the assumptions under Lands and Realty Assumptions, Page 4-158, is that BLM and the Forest Service will protect valid existing rights, as long as those ROWs comply with the terms and conditions of their ROW grant. The agencies will consider all safety concerns into all decisions to authorize a pipeline, including burying a transmission line.

Section 14.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 5

Total Number of Comments: 9

Summary

Commenters raised concerns with the baseline assumption (as noted in Ellis 1984 and Connelly et al. 2000) that power lines and other vertical structures increase perching opportunities for raptors and increase the potential for GRSG to abandon leks).

Commenters suggested that the BLM and the FS should have considered several additional references in their analysis, related to the relationship between GRSG and transmission lines. For example, commenters noted the DEIS did not include studies that found underground powerlines have more environmental impacts than overhead powerline placement.

Commenters questioned the data in Table 3-36, which includes the acreage of transmission lines within greater sage-grouse habitat.

Need to include:

Comment #14-0049-25 requested the LUPA include a minimum four-mile buffer from active leks for new powerlines or

similar ROW developments.
Comment #14-0049-31 request to include that infrastructure would be co-located when possible.

Response

Many reports have been prepared for the development of management recommendations, strategies, and regulatory guidelines. The National Technical Team report (NTT 2011), Conservations Objectives Team (COT; FWS 2013), and the Summary of Science, Activities, Programs and Policies that Influence the Rangewide Conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse (also referred to as the Baseline Environmental Report [BER]; Manier et al. 2013) are the most widely used reports that have been incorporated in BLM and Forest Service EISs that address the effects of implementing greater sage-grouse conservation measures on lands they manage. Additionally, the BLM and the Forest Service developed the Idaho Draft Environment Impact Statement/Land Use Plan Amendment with involvement from cooperating agencies, including Idaho Department of Fish and Game to ensure that a balanced multiple-use management strategy to address the protection of greater sage-grouse while allowing for utilization of renewable and nonrenewable resources on the public lands.

Management actions included in the Draft EIS/LUPA for the underground placement of powerlines are intended to reduce the potential for long-term impacts on GRS habitat and species viability. Literature referenced in the FEIS demonstrates that overhead powerlines provide perching opportunities for ravens and other avian predators.

BLM and the Forest Service has reviewed scientific literature provided by commenters regarding the effects of powerlines on greater sage-grouse, buffers, perch diverters, and overhead versus burying lines, and the DEIS has been revised, as appropriate.

Transmission acreages came from the peer-reviewed Baseline Environmental Report (Manier et al. 2013).

Section 14.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

Commenters stated that the BLM/FS should have concluded that because of Alternative E's adaptive trigger strategy the impacts from wind energy would be reduced compared to Alternative A.

Commenters stated that the agencies should carefully evaluate the impacts of stipulating co-location of electrical powerlines.

Commenters requested information on the impact of transmission lines on a landscape level would be more appropriate to reference in relation to sage-grouse persistence in the landscape and that information from Walker et al. 2007 has been used selectively in regards to transmission infrastructure.

Include:
Comment #14-183-38: Request that BLM re-consider and evaluate the stipulation that electrical powerlines must be co-located

Response

The DLUPA/EIS provides an adequate discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts,

of the presented alternatives. As required by 40 CFR 1502.16, the DLUPA/EIS provides a discussion of the environmental impacts of the alternatives including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the alternatives be implemented, the relationship between short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved in the proposal should it be implemented. The DLUPA/EIS provided sufficiently detailed information to aid in determining whether to proceed with the preferred alternative or make a reasoned choice among the other alternatives in a manner such that the public could have an understanding of the environmental consequences associated with the alternatives, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.1.

Land use plan-level analyses are typically broad and qualitative rather than quantitative or focused on site-specific actions (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1, Chapter II, A-B at 11-13 and Chapter IV, B at 29; Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 – Land Management Planning). The DLUPA/EIS contains only planning actions and does not include any implementation actions. A more quantified or detailed and specific analysis would be required only if the scope of the decision included implementation actions. As specific actions that may affect the area come under consideration, the BLM and the Forest Service will conduct subsequent NEPA analyses that include site-specific project and implementation-level actions. The site-specific analyses will tier to the plan-level analysis and expand the environmental analysis when more specific information is known. In addition, as required by NEPA, the public will be offered the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for implementation actions.

Impacts from lands and realty to wind energy were discussed in DEIS/LUPA Chapter 4, page 4-331. BLM groups Alternative A and Alternative E together in regards to impacts on wind energy. Under Alternative E, the BLM and the Forest Service would limit impacts from wind and solar energy development through the use of triggers in addition to the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section, as well as required design features. This is clarified in the FEIS (see section).

Management actions included in the Draft EIS/LUPA for the co-location of new infrastructure in existing ROWs are intended to reduce the amount of surface disturbance in GRSG habitat and concentrate new development in habitat areas already affected by anthropogenic activities. The BLM and FS recognize that co-location is not feasible in all circumstances, particularly for new powerlines. Under all alternatives, the BLM and FS would continue to review proposed infrastructure projects on a case-by-case basis. Such a review would include preparation of the appropriate NEPA documentation and coordination with the responsible federal, state, and local permitting agencies.

Section 15 - Leasable Minerals

Section 15.1 - Range of alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 6

Total Number of Comments: 14

Summary

The DEIS needs a better explanation on how valid existing rights are defined and how they will be protected, including fringe or preference right leases. The alternatives need to follow the NTT report recommendations more closely, as well as reflect current USFWS policy recommendations.

The BLM needs to clarify the location of non-leased Known Phosphate Areas in relation to GRSG habitat. The plan is potentially more restrictive to phosphate leasing than a listing under the ESA and did not properly define the environmental baseline for leasable minerals. Without prohibiting new phosphate mining in GRSG habitat, the LUPA does not protect GRSG from the potential impacts of selenium being released to the environment and poisoning wildlife, including GRSG, through transport in air and water and subsequent bioaccumulation. The EIS fails to explain or discuss the authority that the BLM has to close public lands to leasable mineral prospecting and leasing under the LUPA process under Alternatives B, C and D.

The reliance upon vague RDFs under Alternative D is a failure of the BLM to adopt best science that calls for specific restrictions based on observed GRSG response to surface disturbances.

Response

[NOTE TO BLM: The BLM should examine the existing discussion of valid existing rights that will survive the proposed LUPA and should expand that discussion if it seems insufficient.]

The BLM and the Forest Service considered a reasonable range of alternatives during the greater sage-grouse planning process in full compliance with the NEPA. The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require that the BLM and the Forest Service consider reasonable alternatives that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment. While there are many possible alternatives or actions to manage public lands and greater sage-grouse in the planning area, the BLM and the Forest Service fully considered the planning issues and criteria developed during the scoping process to determine a reasonable range of alternatives. As a result, six alternatives were analyzed in detail in the DLUPA/DEIS that best addressed the issues and concerns identified by the affected public. The DLUPA/DEIS includes alternatives that provide a greater and lesser degree of restrictions in various use programs, but would not eliminate or invalidate any valid existing development rights. BLM agrees that it cannot impose an NSO on an existing lease. A definition of valid and existing rights has been added to the Glossary in the FEIS.

[NOTE TO BLM: Multiple changes were recommended to the FEIS by Porter- see separate tracking sheet.]

[NOTE TO BLM: Have minerals program elaborate on where the phosphate leases are relative to the management designations for the various Alternatives. Makela- is there an adequate baseline description for leasable minerals? Also, BLM look into the issue of restrictions in proposed plan relative to restriction under an ESA listing for minerals development.]

[NOTE TO BLM: determine whether there are mineral leases in the ACECs proposed by Alts C and F. Determine mineral potential in ACECs proposed by Alts. C and F.]

[NOTE TO BLM: Add to GLOSSARY- Valid Existing Rights]

Selenium bioaccumulation is not identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service or the NTT Report as a major threat to GRSG and is not part of the conservation strategy being applied by the BLM. No change to the EIS has resulted from this comment.

According to 43 CFR 3501.17 and H-1601-1, Land Use Planning, the BLM has the authority to close areas to non-energy leasable mineral prospecting and leasing. The regulations providing this authority do not need to be described in the EIS because they are outlined in the CFR and describing all governing regulations in the EIS would be impracticable.

[NOTE TO BLM: BLM to examine its jurisdiction to prioritize GRSG conservation over laws relating to KPLAs and to describe that result in the comment response, along with any appropriate changes to the EIS.]

[NOTE TO BLM: BLM's preferred alternative may be changed in the FEIS, to keep all lands in KPLAs open to future non-energy solid mineral leasing, but to close areas in PPMA and PMMA outside of KPLAs. An exception would be made when additional lands are needed to recover ore on the lease (fringe acreage leasing, lease modifications).]

The RDFs were adopted from BMPs in Appendix D of the NTT report. In that appendix, it states that "BMPs are continuously improving as new science and technology become available and therefore are subject to change. Include from the following BMPs those that are appropriate to mitigate effects from the approved action." Wording from NNT report has been added to the discussion of RDFs in the FEIS.

Section 15.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 1

Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The oil and gas conditions in the Payette area are different than those studied in the NTT report and should not be used as baseline data. The impacts described by Johnson et al 2011 are overstated and should be replaced by information from Coates et al 2013.

Response

The reasonably foreseeable development scenario for oil and gas assumes a conventional oil and gas field. The current development occurring in the Payette area of Idaho is not within sage grouse habitat. BLM's preferred management action has been changed in the FEIS to applying a year-round No Surface Occupancy stipulation in PPMA and PMMA. Seasonal restrictions would be applied in PGMA. Lands outside of GRSG habitat would not be subject to stipulations developed in this EIS.

[NOTE TO BLM: Review section on 4-8 for best available science for basis of decisions. Have a biologist help determine.]

Section 15.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 3
Total Number of Comments: 5

Summary

The impact analysis in the DEIS of management actions on leasable mineral development is insufficient.

Response

The acres of unleased KPLA land unavailable for development by alternative has been corrected in the Ch. 4 tables in the FEIS. The section describing the impacts from leasable minerals management for Alt E has been revised. The impacts of non-energy leasable minerals management actions to socio-economics have been included in the FEIS and the impacts with respect to disturbance caps have been analyzed in more detail.

[NOTE TO BLM: Tables of acres of unleased KPLA land unavailable for development by alternative in Ch. 4 need to be corrected.]

[NOTE TO BLM: Impacts from leasable minerals management in alt E needs to be revised.]

[NOTE TO BLM: Include a discussion of the effects of phosphate management actions to socio-economics in Ch 4. Also, references to section 4.1.1.2 should be corrected and should refer to section 4.1.2.2.]

[NOTE TO BLM: Distinguish between Impacts from Alts F and B. Note: This is a disturbance cap question.]

Section 15.4 - Cumulative impact analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 6

Summary

The DEIS did not adequately analyze cumulative impacts of management actions on leasable mineral development, including impacts to the Western Phosphate Field, the American agriculture industry, and national food security.

Response

The BLM and the Forest Service thoroughly explained their consideration and analysis of cumulative effects in the DLUPA/EIS in Section 4.24.20. The DLUPA/EIS considered the present effects of past actions, to the extent that they are relevant, and present and reasonably foreseeable (not highly speculative) Federal and non-Federal actions, taking into account the relationship between the proposed alternatives and these reasonably foreseeable actions. This discussion summarizes CEQ guidance from June 24, 2005, stating that "[g]enerally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historical details of individual past actions." This is because a description of the current state of the environment inherently includes the effects of past actions. Information on the current conditions is more comprehensive and more accurate for establishing a useful starting point for cumulative effects analysis. The CEQ interpretation was accepted by the Ninth in *NW Env'tl. Advoc. v. Nat'l Marine Fisheries Serv.*, 460 F.3d 1125, 1141 (9th Cir. 2006). The BLM and the Forest Service explicitly described their assumptions regarding proposed projects and other reasonably foreseeable future actions. On Forest Service-administered lands, reasonably foreseeable actions are those that would occur under their current land use plans from a broad-scale perspective.

Additional information on the cumulative impacts on the Western Phosphate Field, unleased KPLAs, socio-economic impacts from loss of phosphate resources, reasonably foreseeable actions, and proposed conservation measures have been added to Sections XXX and XXX (minerals and socio-economics cumulative impacts). [NOTE TO BLM: Review cumulative section and add necessary information.]

Section 16 - Livestock Grazing

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

[NEED SUMMARY]

Response

[NOTE TO BLM: May need to go up to solicitor's office for review.]

FLPMA grants the Interior Secretary the authority to make land use planning decisions, taking into consideration multiple use and sustained yield, areas of critical environmental concern, present and potential uses of the land, relative scarcity of values, and long-term and short-term benefits, among other resource values (43USC 1711 Sec 201 (a)). 43 CFR § 4100.0-8 provides that the BLM shall manage livestock grazing on public lands in accordance with applicable land use plans. Further, the BLM may designate lands as "available" or "unavailable" for livestock grazing through the land use planning process (H-1601, Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C). A decision to cease livestock grazing is not permanent. It is subject to reconsideration, modification and reversal in subsequent land use plan decisions. The Taylor Grazing Act requires that the Secretary "make such rules and regulations ... [and] do any and all things

necessary ... to insure the objects of ... grazing districts, namely, to regulate their occupancy and use, to preserve the land and its resources from destruction or unnecessary injury [and] to provide for the orderly use, improvement and development of the range." (43 USC § 315a).

FLPMA grants the Interior Secretary the authority to make land use planning decisions, taking into consideration multiple use and sustained yield, areas of critical environmental concern, present and potential uses of the land, relative scarcity of values, and long-term and short-term benefits, among other resource values (43USC 1711 Sec 201 (a)). 43 CFR § 4100.0-8 provides that the BLM shall manage livestock grazing on public lands in accordance with applicable land use plans. Actions taken under land use plans may include making some, or all of the land within grazing districts, unavailable for grazing during the life of the plan as well as imposing grazing use restrictions, limitations or other grazing management related actions intended to achieve such goals and objectives (H-1601, Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C).

A "chiefly-valuable-for-grazing" determination is required only when the Secretary is considering creating or changing grazing district boundaries. Such a determination is neither required nor appropriate when establishing grazing levels within a district. (See USDI Solicitor Memorandum Clarification of M-37008 (May 13, 2003)). This RMP is not considering creating or changing grazing district boundaries. Although lands have been identified as "chiefly-valuable-for-grazing" per the Taylor Grazing Act for purposes of establishing grazing districts within the public domain (see, 43 U.S.C. § 315) this does not negate the BLM's authority or responsibility to manage those lands to achieve resource condition goals and objectives under the principals of multiple use and sustained yield as required by FLPMA and its implementing regulations.

Section 16.1 - Range of alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 24

Total Number of Comments: 64

Summary

Multiple commenters requested that the alternatives require closure of voluntarily relinquished allotments. Commenters questioned why changes to grazing management are needed when livestock grazing is not listed as a primary threat to GRSG. More than one commenter noted that grazing should only be restricted where it can be shown that grazing is directly related to the failure to meet GRSG habitat objectives. Additionally, commenters stated that the DEIS failed to consider increased grazing and question the rationale behind this decision. Some commenters also requested additional consideration of reduced grazing levels and utilization levels, as well as temporary or permanent closure of all or some GRSG habitat to grazing.

Several commenters requested that the LUPA/EIS provide specifics regarding habitat assessments schedules and application of standards, and use of ecological site descriptions, require immediate application of certain terms and condition to permits, and impose grazing restrictions for priority or general habitat.

Response

The ID/SWMT LUPA/EIS planning team employed the BLM and Forest Service planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA. See response in section 4.3 NEPA Range of Alternatives of this report. The DEIS analyzed a range of alternatives including no grazing and a 25 percent reduction in grazing. Reduction in AUMs under Alternative F would be specified in site specific decisions at the permit renewal level. Language in the FEIS for Alternative F reduction has been clarified.

[BLM and Forest Service- need to review the language in Alt F mgmt. actions related to the 25% reduction and review related analysis. Determine if revision needed to table 4-5].

Livestock grazing is identified by USFWS as a threat to GRSG in the March 23, 2010 Federal Register Notice, and therefore it is addressed in this LUPA. Existing regulatory mechanisms, including the fundamentals for rangeland health, would continue to provide the basis for managing grazing in GRSG habitat. However, the preferred alternative would provide additional consistency in application of BLM rangeland health standards and guidelines relative to GRSG habitat, and would provide additional guidance for prioritizing land health assessments and review of grazing permits to ensure that grazing management is compatible with attainment of sage-grouse habitat objectives within the planning area. In addition, RDFs and best management practices would be adopted to reduce effects of range improvements and livestock trailing across public lands. Grazing use would be modified when it is identified as the cause for not meeting Sage Grouse objectives. The intent of the land use plan amendment is to change management under all resource programs, where necessary, to benefit Sage Grouse habitat. Standards and Guidelines assessments result in a determination of causal factors for non-achievement of any applicable standard, including standards for wildlife habitat. Where livestock management is determined to be a causal factor for non-achievement of a standard, management must be modified to conform with applicable guidelines.

The BLM is required to follow the grazing regulations, including the decision process at 43 CFR 4160, when modifying permit or leases. Therefore, modifications to terms and conditions of permits and leases would be applied as needed during the permit renewal process.

As stated in the preferred alternative [mgmt. action #] habitat objectives would be adjusted based on site potential. Site specific requirements would be specified in NEPA for permit renewal. Language in the preferred alt. has been modified to clarify (see section X.X.X).

Section 16.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 13

Total Number of Comments: 42

Summary

Multiple commenters asserted and presented citations supporting their position that grazing has the potential to benefits GRSG by controlling cheatgrass and reducing wildfire risk. Other commenters presented citations supporting the position that grazing damages GRSG habitat and increases cheatgrass risk.

Several commenters requested more detailed information about current grazing management and habitat conditions in the planning area.

Other commenters noted the importance of ranching in the local economy, and also that ongoing collaboration between private ranchers and federal agencies has helped preserve GRSG habitat and should be acknowledged in the EIS.

Response

Before beginning the LUPA/EIS and throughout the planning effort, the BLM and the Forest Service considered the availability of data from all sources, adequacy of existing data, data gaps, and the type of data necessary to support informed management decisions at the land-use plan level. The BLM and the Forest Service also used the most recent and best information available that was relevant to a land-use planning-level analysis (refer to response in section 4.4, NEPA Baseline data- Best Available Science for additional information). [NOTE TO BLM- review text in section 4.4 response once complete to ensure consistency]

Section 3.X, livestock grazing discusses the current level of grazing in the planning area and management systems in place. Impacts of current and historic grazing on other resource and resource uses are discussed under the appropriate

resource and resource use headings (i.e. [Section 3.X](#), Sage grouse Habitat). Section 4.2.2 in the DEIS provides an overview of the ecological impacts of livestock grazing. The DEIS analyzed the effects of no grazing and reduced grazing on components of sage-grouse habitat, including changes in wildfire risk and cheatgrass incursion. See changes to [Section 3.X](#), fire management, for additional discussion of cheat grass-wildfire dynamics. **[NOTE TO BLM/EMPSi-Review the text in Ch 3 veg related to fire/livestock.]**

Discussion of socioeconomic impacts of current grazing operations in the planning area is discussed in [Section 3.X](#), Socioeconomics.

Additional language has been added to the FEIS ([section X.X.X](#)) recognizing the role of Rural Fire Protection Districts and other collaboration efforts **[Note- need to add language to FEIS]**

Section 16.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 6

Total Number of Comments: 11

Summary

Some comments detailed beneficial impacts of grazing, and the adverse impacts of grazing restrictions on to livestock operations, Rangeland Fire Protection Associations, and the local economy.

One commenter notes that limitations on water developments can have impacts on grazing management and need to be clarified and analyzed in greater detail.

Response

Impacts to livestock grazing from current livestock grazing management are addressed in section 4.9.4 of the DEIS. Impacts to the socioeconomic aspect of livestock grazing are discussed in Section 4.19 of the DEIS.

While a land use planning-level action is broad in scope and, therefore, does not require site specific impact analysis, a thorough review of the EIS's impact analysis relevant to grazing and indirect socioeconomic impacts and was found to need additional information and support for the conclusions/findings. The BLM and the Forest Service have updated this information in the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment/FEIS to provide the necessary information to make informed land use plan-level decisions (see changes in section 4.19). Impacts to Rangeland Fire Protection Associations are discussed in [section 4.X](#), fire management. BMPs for livestock developments including water have been revised in the FEIS and related impacts on livestock grazing management have been clarified.

Section 17 - Locatable Minerals

Section 17.3 - Impact Analysis

No comments are associated with this issue.

Summary

The EIS fails to provide justification as to why “withdrawal from mineral entry” is necessary to protect GRSG and its habitat when the same objective can be achieved through avoidance, minimization of impacts, and mitigation of impacts within the designated areas. The current approach in the EIS does not meet FLPMA requirements for finding ways to remain flexible in balancing conservation and resource uses.

Response

This concept was considered within the range of alternatives, as explained under Section 4.3, NEPA Range of Alternatives in this section. No change to the EIS has resulted from this comment.

Section 17.4 - Cumulative impact analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The DLUPA/DEIS fails to adequately analyze the cumulative impact of locatable mineral withdrawals across the GRSG range.

Response

Additional information on the cumulative effect of withdrawals across GRSG range has been added to **Section XXX** (locatables cumulative effects section) of the EIS. **[NOTE TO BLM: Could include roll-up of withdrawals from plans for incorporation into EIS]**

Section 20 - Recreation

Section 20.1 - Range of alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

In the EIS/LUPA, the BLM/FS should incorporate additional management actions (e.g. SRP/SUP stipulations, OHV noise regulations, seasonal restrictions on OHV events near leks, and rerouting of OHV events away from leks, and hunting) to limit the potential for impacts on Sage-Grouse from recreation activities. Any management actions limiting recreation activities in sage-grouse habitat should be based on the best available science with proven habitat conservation results.

Response

The EIS considers an adequate range of alternatives to protect GRSG, including varying levels of restriction on recreational activities and special recreation permits/special use permits (insert correct management actions and table number). During subsequent implementation-level travel management planning, new travel management plans would evaluate vehicle routes and determine the need for permanent or seasonal road closures, and mode of travel (e.g. motorcycle, ATV, and UTV) restrictions, including speed. New travel management plans would evaluate vehicle routes and determine the need for permanent or seasonal road closures, and mode of travel (e.g. motorcycle, ATV, and UTV) restrictions during subsequent implementation level travel management planning. 43 CFR 8340 requires all OHVs to comply with state laws including noise and spark arrester requirements.

Contemporary hunting seasons in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-region are very conservative with respect to their length and bag limits. GRSG hunting and its effects are described in more detail in Sections XX and XX of the FEIS.

Section 22 - Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

Section 22.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 22

Total Number of Comments: 39

Summary

The socioeconomic analysis in the DEIS is overly broad and does not provide sufficient analysis of impacts to individuals, local communities or counties. The DEIS should also expand analysis of the restrictive management actions on planning area operators, communities and services including but not limited to grazing operators and mining.

Finally, the analysis methodology is inadequate to provide a comprehensive analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative analysis of the socioeconomic impacts on the planning area communities.

Response

The DLUPA/EIS provides an adequate discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives. As required by 40 CFR 1502.16, the DLUPA/EIS provides a discussion of the environmental impacts of the alternatives including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the alternatives be implemented, the relationship between short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved in the proposal should it be implemented. The DLUPA/EIS provided sufficiently detailed information to aid in determining whether to proceed with the preferred alternative or make a reasoned choice among the other alternatives in a manner such that the public could have an understanding of the environmental consequences associated with the alternatives, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.1.

Land use plan-level analyses are typically broad and qualitative rather than quantitative or focused on site-specific actions (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1, Chapter II, A-B at 11-13 and Chapter IV, B at 29; Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 – Land Management Planning). The DLUPA/EIS contains only planning actions and does not include any implementation actions. A more quantified or detailed and specific analysis would be required only if the scope of the decision included implementation actions. As specific actions that may affect the area come under consideration, the BLM and the Forest Service will conduct subsequent NEPA analyses that include site-specific project and

implementation-level actions. The site-specific analyses will tier to the plan-level analysis and expand the environmental analysis when more specific information is known. In addition, as required by NEPA, the public will be offered the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for implementation actions.

[BLM provide input on why county level analysis was not completed]

Impacts were considered on numerous resources, resource uses, and socioeconomic conditions, which included [list noted issues]. See Section 4.22 of the Draft EIS.

The DLUPA/EIS describes the methodology and assumptions used for conducting the impact analysis (see Section 4.22.2 of the Draft EIS). The methodology and assumptions provide an adequate starting point for discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives. As required by 40 CFR 1502.24, the DLUPA/EIS identified methodologies used and made reference to the scientific and other sources relied upon for conclusions in the analysis. Based on these methodologies and assumptions, the DLUPA/EIS provided sufficiently detailed information to aid in determining whether to proceed with the preferred alternative or make a reasoned choice among the other alternatives in a manner such that the public could have an understanding of the environmental consequences associated with the alternatives, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.1.

[Add language on budget issues as appropriate: As a landscape level planning effort, none of the alternatives prescribe project specific analysis on BLM or USFWS managed lands. Furthermore, the agencies' selection of an alternative does not authorize funding to any specific project or activity nor does it directly tie into the agencies budgets as appropriated annually through the federal budget process. As a consequence, agencies' costs and differences in differences in program costs across alternatives have not been quantified. Information has been presented in several resource impacts sections on the types of costs that might be associated with various sage-grouse conservation measures]

Section 23 - Soil

Section 23.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 1

Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

One commentor notes that the DEIS lacks references to support discussion of macrobiotic crusts.

Response

[BLM/Forest Service- review soils section to determine if references needed to support discussion]

Section 24 - Travel Management

Section 24.1 - Range of alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 8

Total Number of Comments: 11

Summary

The Draft EIS/LUPA failed to consider a full suite of travel management-related management actions that would protect sage grouse habitat while allowing for continued administrative access, particularly for existing livestock grazing permittees. Commenters proposed that management actions should be included in the proposed plan to prohibit and reclaim/restore roads in GRSG habitat, limit motorized events, close PPHP to OHV use, apply additional seasonal travel restrictions, and apply a maximum route density within proximity of leks in PPH and PGH. Commenters also requested that proposed management actions preserve motorized access on existing routes per the 3-State OHV and National Route Designation decisions and maintain administrative access in grazing allotments.

Response

Section 1.4 of the Draft EIS describes how the Idaho Montana GRSG LUPA/EIS planning team employed the BLM and Forest Service planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA. The BLM and Forest Service complied with NEPA and the CEQ implementing regulations at 40 CFR 1500 in the development of alternatives for this draft LUPA/EIS, including seeking public input and analyzing reasonable alternatives. The alternatives include management options for the planning area that would modify or amend decisions made in the field office RMPs, as amended, to meet the planning criteria, to address issues and comments from cooperating agencies and the public, or to provide a reasonable range of alternatives. Since this is a plan amendment to address GRSG conservation, many decisions from the field office RMPs are acceptable and reasonable. In these instances, there was no need to develop alternative management prescriptions.

During subsequent implementation-level travel management planning new travel management plans would evaluate vehicle routes and determine the need for permanent or seasonal road closures, and mode of travel (e.g. motorcycle, ATV, and UTV) restrictions, including noise levels and speed. The route designation process will be completed as subsequent implementation level planning using current Travel Management policies and will include public and local agency involvement. Addressing these issues at the implementation level allows the BLM and Forest Service to take new information into account as it becomes available.

Needs for administrative access to valid existing rights, grandfathered uses, or permitted activities would taken into consideration during site-specific NEPA analysis. Restrictions applied to recreational OHV use may not apply to permitted administrative uses.

The BLM and Forest Service have not added a restriction that would limit road densities to less than 0.09 km per km squared (Wisdom et al. 2011) in GRSG habitat because the threshold established by Wisdom used coarse road data. When taking into consideration actual road density information, use of this threshold is not appropriate. The BLM and Forest Service have included surface disturbance thresholds, which would restrict the density of disturbance tied to new and existing roads in GRSG habitat.

Section 24.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 2

Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

Chapter 3 of the Draft EIS/LUPA does not depict the number of acres designated as open to cross-country motorized travel.

Response

[NOTE TO BLM: Add current CTTM area designation acres to Chapter 3.]

Section 24.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 3

Total Number of Comments: 6

Summary

For various reasons, commenters assert that the Draft EIS/LUPA does not adequately analyze the impacts of proposed management actions on travel management. For example, commenters contend that the analysis is not based on sound science or is narrowly focused and biasedly uses studies that only demonstrate the negative effects from OHV use; does not adequately describe the magnitude of OHV vs. "naturally occurring" impacts across alternatives; and does not distinguish between motorized and non-motorized impacts. Commenters further request the BLM/FS consider conducting site-specific studies to support proposed management and assert that there would be indirect effects (e.g. ban on new road construction) incurred by existing ROW authorization holders by deferring travel management planning.

Response

As described in Section 4.6 of this comment report, the LUPA/FEIS provides an adequate discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives. Further, as described in Section 4.4. of this comment report, the BLM used the most recent and best available information that was relevant to a land-use planning-level analysis.

Land use plan-level analyses are typically broad and qualitative rather than quantitative or focused on site-specific actions (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-I, Chapter II, A-B at 11-13 and Chapter IV, B at 29). The DLUPA/EIS contains only planning actions and does not include any implementation actions. A more quantified or detailed and specific analysis would be required only if the scope of the decision included implementation actions. As specific actions that may affect the area come under consideration, the BLM will conduct subsequent NEPA analyses that include site-specific project and implementation-level actions. The site-specific analyses will tier to the plan-level analysis and expand the environmental analysis when more specific information is known. In addition, as required by NEPA, the public will be offered the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process for implementation actions.

The mechanism being used to determine landscape level travel area designations (open/limited/closed) is 43 CFR 8340 which regulates OHV travel on public lands. BLM does not have a similar regulation for non-motorized travel. Non-motorized travel can be regulated through supplementary rules. Supplemental rules and site specific route designations will be addressed at the implementation level in the future.

New construction related to power line access would be exempted under 43 CFR 8340.05 (3).

While multiple studies on OHV use have been cited, BLM is using the BLM Travel Management Manual and Handbook (M-1626 & H-83421) to address travel planning in the EIS and will continue to use the same policy for future implementation and planning.

Section 24.5 - Mitigation measures

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The LUPA/EIS should adopt additional travel-related mitigation measures to educate the public and prevent the spread of invasive species from travel-related sources through mitigation measures such as those described at playcleango.org.

Response

Appendix C of the DEIS/LUPA includes required design features and best management practices, including those that are based on the best available science to prevent the spread and effects of non-native plant species. See RDF # 290.

NCT note: ID and NV should use the same response as it is the same issue statement.

1. BLM reviewed the measures provided by commenters on playcleango.org
2. they were found to be the same as (similar as?) those already provided in Appendix XX.
3. Review of the impact analysis confirmed that the outcomes from the suggested mitigation measures would be the same as those described in the EIS (see section XX).
4. Conclusion (e.g., no changes needed).

Section 25 - Tribal Interest

Section 25.1 - Consultation requirements

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

The BLM should consider additional areas for ACEC designation and should consult with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes about these designations.

Response

The BLM and Forest Service recognize their responsibility to ensure that meaningful consultation and coordination concerning GRSG planning is conducted with federally recognized tribes, including the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, to consider tribal treaty rights and trust resources. [BLM-FS-include relevant legal citations. Note consultation efforts to date]

Section 25.4 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 1
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

The BLM must ensure tribes, in particular the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, maintain opportunities to access the public domain, exercise off-reservation treaty rights, and continue their traditional customs and practices.

Response

The BLM, Forest Service recognize their responsibility to consider potential impacts to Tribal resources.

Article 4 of the Fort Bridger Treaty, signed in 1868, retains the Eastern Band Shoshone and Bannock Tribes' rights to hunt, fish, gather natural resources, and provide other associative right necessary to effectuate these rights. Other treaties ensure similar rights for other tribes.

Section 26 - Vegetation Sagebrush

Section 26.1 - Range of alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 6

Total Number of Comments: 12

Summary

Commenters recommended that the preferred alternative include:

- Specific vegetation treatment acreage objectives
- Passive sagebrush restoration
- Limitations on vegetation treatments in sagebrush areas. To meet COT report objectives, include regulatory mechanisms to avoid sagebrush removal or manipulation in sage-grouse breeding or wintering habitats with minor exceptions.
- Establish Priorities for pinyon-juniper removal including reduced grazing in conjunction with pinyon-juniper treatment.
- Restore non-native seedings to increase GRSG habitat
- Apply additional restrictions for herbicide application in GRSG habitat
- Commit to a program to plan, fund, execute and monitor large scale integrated invasive species infestation and eradication projects in a measurable timeframe.
- Include specific objectives to measure success in invasive species eradication

Response

As described in Section 4.3, the ID/SWMT LUPA/EIS planning team employed the BLM and Forest Service planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA.

Some of the recommended components were addressed in the DEIS and additional info will be included in the FEIS as detailed below.

- Specific vegetation treatment acreage objectives [need National Policy team input- to decide how treatment objectives will be incorporated]
- Passive sagebrush restoration: In the DEIS Alternative C and management changes that allow progress towards standards and guidelines allow for passive sagebrush restoration. In some areas passive restoration may not be sufficient to improve GRSG habitat and active restoration may be necessary (Davies et al. 2011) (see pp 4-54 DEIS [check page]).

- Limiting vegetation treatments in sagebrush areas is covered under Alternative D ([provide pg reference]. To meet COT report objectives, include regulatory mechanisms to avoid sagebrush removal or manipulation in sage-grouse breeding or wintering habitats with minor exceptions. [include info from FEIS specific to meeting COT report objectives if appropriate]
- Establish Priorities for pinyon-juniper removal including reduced grazing in conjunction with pinyon-juniper treatment: Priorities for PJ removal are addressed in the DEIS ([check that preferred alt includes removal within 1000m of leks per COT report objectives, if not explain rationale]
- Restore non-native seedings when beneficial to GRSG habitat: Alternative C in the DEIS supports restoration of native vegetation to areas that have been seeded with non-native species when beneficial to GRSG [cite mgmt. action]. The preferred alternative provides direction for restoring non-native seedings. [provide mgmt. action number and check language to refine if needed in mgmt. action]
- Apply additional restrictions for herbicide application in GRSG habitat: Herbicide/Pesticide BMPs are covered under the Veg treatment PEIS (BLM 2007x). The IDMT GRSG EIS tiers to the analysis in this document.
- Commit to a program to plan, fund, execute and monitor large scale integrated invasive species infestation and eradication projects in a measurable timeframe. Include specific objectives to measure success: This EIS is intended to provide treatment methods, priority and objectives and the conditions under which these treatment objectives would occur. Specifics regarding treatment effectiveness, funding and implementation would be covered in site specific management actions. BLM and Forest Service would follow agency specific monitoring requirements.

Section 26.2 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 13
Total Number of Comments: 24

Summary

The DEIS fails to provide adequate baseline information related to sagebrush vegetation. Commenters questioned the source of BLM data and requested the FEIS utilize additional baseline data on cheatgrass extent and evaluate effectiveness of continuing programs against weeds and juniper encroachment. Commenters provided additional literature to consider. Commenters also advocated an adaptive approach to vegetation management based on site-specific habitats.

Response

As described in Section 4.4, the BLM and FS considered the availability of data from all sources, adequacy of existing data, data gaps, and the type of data necessary to support informed management decisions at the land use plan-level. Adaptive management would be incorporated into vegetation treatment and restoration programs under Alternatives D and E. Adaptive management would allow BLM increased flexibility to adjust programs based on data collected during operation, to respond to changing conditions and improve effectiveness of vegetation management programs.

[BLM: provide direction if any change to analysis is necessary. Notes during cmt response mtg: Clarify use of 70% cover from NTT; update EIS with new rare plant list.]

Change to make: Footnote in Table 3-4 change source to – ID team input and EIS vegetation model. Cite the VDDT appendix.]

The BLM and Forest Service has clarified the vegetation modeling and data sources in Chapter 3. [Insert details regarding location and changes made]

Section 26.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2

Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

Commenters express concern about unintended or undesirable impacts of vegetation management programs to control weeds or restore sagebrush habitat. The DEIS inadequately analyzes impacts from vegetation restoration

Response

As described in Section 4.6, the DLUPA/EIS provides an adequate discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives.

Contiguous blocks: Site-specific calculations will be conducted at the implementation level.

PJ: Clarification will be provided in [Section XX](#).

Section 26.4 - Cumulative impact analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 1

Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

BLM's cumulative impacts analysis for vegetation failed to consider the impacts of limited resources on sage-grouse protection.

Response

Funding and availability of resources is outside the scope of this EIS.

Section 26.5 - Mitigation measures

Total Number of Submissions: 3

Total Number of Comments: 7

Summary

Commenters requested detailed plans of action and clarification on mitigation and monitoring, including timing of re-seeding and restoration after fire.

Response

Mitigation has been further defined as a Regional Mitigation Framework and is detailed in **Appendix X**. The Framework is incorporated in the **[insert Proposed Plan/Proposed Plan Amendment]** and was developed to achieve a net conservation gain to the species by implementing conservation actions. Regional mitigation is a landscape-scale approach to mitigating impacts to resources. This involves anticipating future mitigation needs and strategically identifying mitigation sites and measures that can help achieve the greatest conservation benefit for greater sage-grouse and its habitats. If impacts to greater sage-grouse or its habitat from authorized land uses remain after applying avoidance and minimization measures, then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to fully offset impacts to achieve conservation benefits. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation.

Specific mitigation strategies, based on the Framework, will be developed by regional teams within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision and be consistent with the BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794, Forest Service Handbook FSH 1909.15, and CEQ regulations at 40 CFR 1508.20.

Mitigation measures for specific projects are implementation level decisions and will be included in site-specific analysis which is outside the scope of this EIS.

Section 27 - Vegetation Riparian

Section 27.1 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

Commenters suggested management approaches for riparian vegetation, including removal of invasive tamarisk, limitations on or removal of livestock grazing, and maintenance of sage-grouse habitat objectives.

Response

As described in Section 4.3, the Idaho and Southwestern Montana LUPA/EIS planning team employed the BLM and Forest Service planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA. **[BLM: provide direction if any change to analysis is necessary.]**

Section 27.2 - Best Available Info Baseline Data

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

Commenter requests baseline data related to Proper Functioning Condition of riparian areas in sage-grouse habitat. Commenter questions whether PFC protects stability of riparian habitat for sage-grouse.

Commenter notes that current PFC assessment methods should be modified to address sage-grouse needs. Commenter requests site-specific management of riparian habitat to balance competing uses.

Response

Comprehensive PFC data is not available on a sub-regional level but is displayed when available. Proper Functioning Condition of riparian systems according to BLM Manual 1737 includes stabilization of streambanks, maintenance of ponding, reduction in erosion, and other features beneficial to sage-grouse. Modifications to PFC methods are outside the scope of this planning effort.

Section 27.5 - Mitigation Measures

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

Commenter notes that current PFC assessment methods should be modified to address sage-grouse needs. Commenter requests site-specific management of riparian habitat to balance competing uses.

Response

Proper Functioning Condition of riparian systems according to BLM Manual 1737 includes stabilization of streambanks, maintenance of ponding, reduction in erosion, and other features beneficial to sage-grouse.

Under the proposed plan, adaptive management would be incorporated into vegetation treatment and restoration programs, including riparian management. Adaptive management would allow BLM increased flexibility to adjust programs based on data collected during operation, to respond to changing conditions and improve effectiveness of vegetation management programs.

[BLM: provide direction if any change to analysis is necessary.]

Section 29 - Water

Section 29.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

The EIS fails to address impacts on the soil and watershed conditions resulting from grazing-sourced manure, soil erosion and pathogen contamination under each alternative and to provide appropriate mitigation measures. Such an

analysis should include a list of impaired waters and the sources of contamination for those waters. The EIS also fails to address the negative impact on GRSG of restricting or removing water developments under Alternative D.

Response

NOTE TO BLM: BLM should review impact discussions under soil and water resources under each alternative and consider mentioning any appropriate beneficial impacts on soils and watersheds that would result from grazing restrictions.

NOTE TO BLM: BLM should review impacts on GRSG from grazing under Alternative D and consider whether it is appropriate to identify adverse impacts on GRSG through the restriction or removal of grazing-related water developments.

[NOTE TO BLM: Discuss with biologists the impacts of the removal of water development on Sage Grouse.]
303d listed streams are discussed in Section 3.16.2.

Section 30 - Wild Horse and Burros

Total Number of Submissions: 4

Total Number of Comments: 6

Summary

Commenters stated that livestock and wild horses were inappropriately grouped together in management actions. Some commenters were also concerned with the 25% proposed reduction of AML under Alternative F and the basis for reduction; they requested reevaluation of reduction based on the fact that wild horse habitat overlaps a minimal percentage of GRSG habitat.

Some commenters also stated that the proposed management should provide flexibility to increase AML/AUM and/or open HAs if data becomes available demonstrating that genetic viability of wild horses and burros is threatened.

Commenters also stated that the preferred alternative would give the BLM too much discretion to reduce AMLs or zero out HMAs which would violate the BLM's legal mandate to protect WHB.

Response

The BLM and the Forest Service considered a reasonable range of alternatives during the greater sage-grouse planning process in full compliance with the NEPA. See Section 4.3, NEPA Range of Alternatives, in this report for an expanded explanation on what constitutes a reasonable range of alternatives. **[NOTE TO BLM-check final response in section 4.3 for consistency]**

The BLM protects, manages, and controls wild horses in accordance with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195, as amended), the purpose of which is to "manage wild horses and burros within herd management areas (HMAs) designated for their long-term maintenance, in a manner designed to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance (TNEB) and multiple use relationships." The FLPMA directs the BLM to manage wild horses and burros as one of numerous multiple uses including mining, recreation, domestic grazing, and fish and wildlife. It also required a current inventory of wild horses and burros. Additional guidance is found in 43 CFR 4700, Protection, Management, and Control of Wild Free-roaming Horses and Burros.

Adjusting AML does fall within the legal mandate of the BLM to protect WHB and other resources. Through the BLMs program of monitoring and analysis of data, AMLs have been established and will continue to be adjusted based on the analysis of data. AMLs can be adjusted based on the limitations and capability of the range, including the four habitat components (forage, water, cover, and space), while managing for healthy populations of WHBs in balance with other uses and resources (including sage grouse). An explanation of the relationship between AMLs and AUMs has been

included in the FEIS in [section X.X.X](#).

Should the 25% reduction be carried forward in the preferred alternative, genetic viability would be considered in the adjustment of AMLs. Increasing AMLs and/or opening HAs is outside the purpose and need for this project.

Section 30.1 - Best available information baseline data

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 3

Summary

Commenters requested documentation of critical genetic data on each of the wild horse and burro herds in the planning area. This will provide BLM basis for identifying which HMAs would not be feasible to place AML reductions on while maintaining genetically viable herds. Commentors also requested exact population data for all wild horse populations in HMAs and HAs and clearly defined maps of HMAs and HAs. Finally, commenters stated that any land policy changes resulting from the sage grouse plan must be in conformance with the National Academy of Sciences 2013 recommendations for reform of the federal wild horse management program.

Response

The prerequisite level of information necessary to make a reasoned choice among the alternatives in an EIS is based on the scope and nature of the proposed decision. The baseline data provided in Chapter 3 and various appendixes in the Draft LUPA/DEIS is sufficient to support, at the general land use planning-level of analysis, the environmental impact analysis resulting from management actions presented in the Draft LUPA/DEIS. A land use planning-level decision is broad in scope and, therefore, does not require an exhaustive gathering and monitoring of baseline data (see response to section 4.4 in this report for more details). **[NOTE TO BLM- check final language in section 4.4 response for consistency]** Much of the data in the DLUPA/DEIS is presented in qualitative and map form, and is sufficient to support the gross scale analyses required for land use planning. The DEIS includes maps of HMAs and HAs. Population data is included in [Table 3.X](#) of the DEIS. These maps and tables have been reviewed for accuracy prior to inclusion in the FEIS. Genetic documentation of WHB is an ongoing implementation level process used to monitor the genetic health of BLM's wild horse and burro populations (see IM 2009-061).

The NAS report has been considered in the development of the FEIS and actions appropriate the land management planning level included as appropriate. Findings of the NAS would also be considered under separate site-specific NEPA actions.

Section 30.2 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 6
Total Number of Comments: 9

Summary

Commenters stated that the analysis on GRSG from wild horses and burros are not distinguished from livestock which inaccurately increases the threat.

Commenters identified contradictions in the document such as where the document states that "Under all alternatives, no direct change would occur to areas allocated as HMAs/WHBTs for wild horses and burros", then the report proceeds to summarize how every single alternative would restrict wild horse and burro usage in their own federally designated habitats.

Response

The DLUPA/EIS provides an adequate discussion of the environmental consequences, including the cumulative impacts, of the presented alternatives for a land use planning effort (see detailed response in section 4.6, NEPA Impacts Analysis).
[NOTE TO BLM- check final response in section 4.6 to ensure consistency]

The USFWS identified grazing as a threat in the NTT and COT report but did not specifically delineate between livestock and WHB grazing. However, within the DEIS, the BLM and Forest Service did analyze impacts on WHB and domestic livestock grazing separately and also analyzed the impacts on GRSG from WHB and domestic livestock grazing separately. Impacts on GRSG from WHB and domestic livestock grazing are identified in Section 4.X of the DLUPA/DEIS. Impacts on WHB from GRSG management strategies are identified in Section 4.X of the DLUPA/DEIS. BLM appropriately analyzed the impacts to WHB from actions not related to changes in AML.

Text in the WHB impact section has been reviewed and relationship between allocation and management actions clarified in the FEIS.

[NOTE TO BLM- insert the recommended text below in the FEIS: Under all alternatives, with the exception of Alternative XX, management actions for wild horses and burros would not result in direct changes to HMA status, to AMLs within designated HMAs, or acreage designated as HMAs. Impacts under all alternatives, with the exception of Alternative XX, would be limited to any future changes that may result in AML and/or acreage adjustment as well as reconsideration of HMA status that are based on achievement of GRSG habitat objectives for improving habitat conditions, as described in further detail below.

Under Alternative XX, in contrast, AMLs would be directly reduced by 25 percent for all HMAs within PPMAs. This would result in a reduction of the established AMLs for all HMAs that are located entirely or partially within mapped occupied GRSG habitat. As a result of AML reduction under Alternative XX, costs of wild horse and burro management would increase, due to a need for additional horse gathers for removal and/or population growth suppression (PGS) treatments.]

Section 31 – Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Section 31.1 - Range of Alternatives

Total Number of Submissions: 3
Total Number of Comments: 4

Summary

All lands with wilderness characteristics that overlap with Greater Sage-Grouse habitat represent good opportunities for Greater Sage-Grouse conservation and should be analyzed to see how managing those lands to protect wilderness characteristics would coincide with Greater Sage-Grouse conservation. The BLM should consider lands with wilderness protection as an alternative to ACEC protection for some areas.

The BLM should complete Lands with Wilderness Characteristics inventories and the DEIS should consider potential

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in the scope of this process.

Response

Per BLM Manual 6320, Considering Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process, “In some circumstances, consideration of management alternatives for lands with wilderness characteristics may be outside the scope of a particular planning process (as dictated by the statement of purpose and need for the planning effort). For example, a targeted amendment to address a specific project or proposal may not in all circumstances require consideration of an alternative that would protect wilderness characteristics. In these situations, the NEPA document associated with the plan amendment must still analyze effects of the alternatives on lands with wilderness characteristics.” Therefore, analysis in this planning document regarding lands with wilderness characteristics will not be completed.

As described in Section 8 of this comment report, Alternative C considers ACEC designation for Greater Sage Grouse habitat and species protection.

Section 3 I.2 - Best Available Info Baseline Data

Total Number of Submissions: 4

Total Number of Comments: 4

Summary

The BLM should work with Upper Snake staff to ensure lands with wilderness characteristics inventories and management are consistent between this EIS/LUPA and the Upper Snake RMP.

The BLM must provide a map of the lands with wilderness characteristics and where it overlaps with priority habitat. The FEIS should explain how the BLM will comply with the 2014 appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and with Secretary Salazar’s Secretarial Order No. 3310.

Response

BLM Upper Snake Field Office continues to evaluate lands with wilderness characteristics within the planning area. Decisions related to lands with wilderness characteristics will be addressed in the Upper Snake EIS/LUP. Per BLM Manual 6320, Considering Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process, “In some circumstances, consideration of management alternatives for lands with wilderness characteristics may be outside the scope of a particular planning process (as dictated by the statement of purpose and need for the planning effort). For example, a targeted amendment to address a specific project or proposal may not in all circumstances require consideration of an alternative that would protect wilderness characteristics. In these situations, the NEPA document associated with the plan amendment must still analyze effects of the alternatives on lands with wilderness characteristics.” Therefore, analysis in this planning document related to lands with wilderness characteristics will not be completed.

The BLM is not making decisions on lands with wilderness characteristics in this planning effort. Doing so is outside the purpose and need and scope of this EIS.

[NOTE TO BLM: Consider including a map displaying the overlap of lands with wilderness characteristics and priority habitat should be included in the EIS.]

NCT note: Consider using similar language to section 8 of this document. Language relevant to ACEC issues may be applicable to LWC and may help clarify why LWC is out of scope. It does not seem that the response fully addresses the issue statement. Answer to Secretary Salazar's Secretarial Order No. 3310? Possibly use some of the language developed by NVCA in section 31.0 of this document.

Section 31.3 - Impact Analysis

Total Number of Submissions: 2
Total Number of Comments: 2

Summary

If the BLM does not complete lands with wilderness characteristics inventories, the BLM should use GIS to inventory roadless areas and consider those as potential lands with wilderness characteristics for planning purposes.

Response

No decisions related to the management of lands with wilderness characteristics will be made at this part of the planning effort. Decision related to the management of lands with wilderness characteristics are out of the scope of this plan amendment process.

NCT note: It seems like this response could be combined with section 31.2 of this document. Responses are nearly identical and basically already included in the summary.

Section 32.1 - Predation

Total Number of Submissions: 5
Total Number of Comments: 6

Summary

Some commenters state that the BLM does not adequately address the threat of predation or fully analyze the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of predation on GRSG populations; Predation was identified as a threat by the state of Idaho. Others question the inclusion of analysis of impacts of anthropogenic structures on predators of GRSG, given that the USFWS did not identify predation as a primary threat to GRSG.

Response

As stated in Section 2.3.1 in the DRMPA/DEIS, predator removal is outside the scope of LUPA. The BLM and the Forest Service have updated the description of the threat of predation in Section 3.2.1 and addressed the potential effects of predation on GRSG populations in the [Section 4.x](#).

The BLM and the Forest Service have authority to manage the habitat and have provided an updated analysis in [Section 4.x](#) of the FEIS to describe how the numerous management actions across the range of alternatives could affect the habitat and indirectly the effects of predation. Altering the sagebrush habitat of the greater sage-grouse can create an influx of predators into an area and lead to a population decline. Roads, fences, power lines, and other infrastructure as well as the development of trails and other disturbances may improve access for potential predators near GRSG habitat

and increase risks to the species.

Section 32.2 – Noise

Total Number of Comments: 1

Summary

Commentor states that noise studies cited in the DEIS are not public and therefore the results are not reproducible; alternative data should be utilized.

Response

Blickley et al.'s research on noise and GRSG has since been published:

Blickley J.L, D. Blackwood, and G.L. Patricelli. 2012. Experimental evidence for the effects of chronic anthropogenic noise on abundance of greater sage-grouse at leks. Conservation Biology Vol 26. No 3. 461-471
This literature has been added to the noise section in the FEIS.

[Change to FEIS- add citation and data from this study in noise section. Consider addition of other data to support claims]

Section 32.3 - Weeds

Total Number of Submissions: 2

Total Number of Comments: 4

Summary

Issue 1: Commenters request analysis of past vegetation treatment programs and recommend scientific literature on effects of vegetation treatments.

Issue 2: One commenter requests baseline data on cheatgrass in planning area.

Issue 3: Partnerships with private landowners to control cheatgrass should be considered in the FEIS.

Response

Response 1: As described in Section 4.4, the BLM and FS considered the availability of data from all sources, adequacy of existing data, data gaps, and the type of data necessary to support informed management decisions at the land use plan-level.

As a result of these actions, the BLM and Forest Service gathered the necessary data essential to make a reasoned choice among the alternatives analyzed in detail in the DLUPA/DEIS. The BLM and Forest Service utilized the available data to provide an adequate analysis that led to an adequate disclosure of the potential environmental consequences of the alternatives. [Insert any changes that were made to the EIS as a result of comment received. If no changes necessary, reference the section in the EIS that contain the relevant information].

Analysis of proposed weed treatment methods tiers off of analysis in the Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides

on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) [BLM 2007x]

Response 2: Potential occurrence of cheatgrass has been modeled (section 3.3.5). Acre of cheatgrass potential in GRSG habitat are shown in the DEIS based on Manier et al. 2013 (see Ttable 3-15, Acres of Cheatgrass Potential within GRSG) [Can incorporate concept of limited info regarding cheatgrass mapping] Information presented is appropriate for the planning level actions and analysis. Further analysis will occur on a site-specific basis at the implementation level.

Response 3: Cooperation with all landowners would be undertaken as feasible and is included in the range of alternatives.

Brent Ralston

From: Dillon, Madelyn -FS
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 3:33 PM
To: Quincy Bahr
Cc: bclayton@blm.gov; Lauren Mermejo (lmermejo@blm.gov); Rodriguez, Ron -FS; Kralick, Kolleen M -FS; Stein, Glen -FS; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; Bode, Pam -FS; bralston@blm.gov; sharphay@att.net; Joe Tague (jtague@blm.gov); Munson, Johanna (jmunson@blm.gov); Pamela Murdock (pmurdock@blm.gov)
Subject: RE: current version RTC reports
Importance: High

Both David Batts and I agree that it is important that the comment reports have FS input; as such, it is critical that we're integrated now as the schedule will likely not allow a separate FS review period. We would appreciate an opportunity to review the report before it goes to our WO and OGC for their review, as BLM has done, to help alleviate any concerns on the part the WO or OGC.

While I understand that some changes might occur based on the FFM that would tier to responses, I think a review of a current version of the report now would help mitigate the time needed to do so later when time is tighter.

Given the process confusion, it's of concern to me that we're not providing NeST with sufficient time to complete the needed review. NWCO and UT RTC reports are farthest along, with NV and ID not far behind. We have the current versions of both NV and ID. Both Joe and Brent suggested that NeST review those versions now and get comments back to them next Friday, but it sounds like NWCO and UT should be first up for review, with ID and NV second. I spoke with Pam M earlier today, and I'm fine with that effort as concerns our opportunity for RTC review. I'm aware when to expect that report and what might affect that schedule, so no concerns on WY9. Also, Pam Bode has been keeping us informed of the WY9 schedule.

So, if Quincy and Bridgett can send me their current versions. I'll ask NeST to review those first, followed by ID and NV perhaps when their next versions are ready rather than what's currently available. As mentioned, we want an opportunity to review before AFEIS by the WO and OGC, and we don't want to hold up the process.

Thanks.

Madelyn Dillon
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970-619-0709 (cell)
970-295-5885 (fax)

[Click on image to visit our greater sage-grouse intranet site.](#)



From: Quincy Bahr [<mailto:qfbahr@blm.gov>]

Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 2:16 PM

To: Dillon, Madelyn -FS

Cc: bclayton@blm.gov; Lauren Mermejo (lmermejo@blm.gov); Rodriguez, Ron -FS; Kralick, Kolleen M -FS; Stein, Glen -FS

Subject: Re: current version RTC reports

It was my understanding that such a review will be inclusive of the review of the FEIS, not in addition to it. The responses will be included as an appendix in the FEIS, and BLM WO, DOI Solicitors, FS WO, and FS OGC would review them in the same review process as the FEIS. If I am in error on the timing, please clarify. One way or another, I don't want to hand over anything for review until we know what the proposed plan will be after the FFM, since some responses refer to the proposed plan.

Quincy Bahr

On Aug 1, 2014, at 1:57 PM, "Dillon, Madelyn -FS" <mdillon@fs.fed.us> wrote:

I've learned that your RTC reports are nearly ready for inclusion in the ADEIS, so please send a copy to me to provide an opportunity for FS NeST review before review by our WO and OGC.

Thanks!

Madelyn Dillon

Forest Service National Greater Sage Grouse

Deputy Project Manager

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<image003.png>

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Brent Ralston

From: Hildner, Michael
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 1:04 PM
To: Jonathan Beck; Johanna Munson; Brent Ralston; Jeffery Foss; Timothy Murphy
Cc: Edwin Roberson; Glen Stein; Dillon, Madelyn -FS; Stephanie Carman; Frank Quamen
Subject: Corrected GRSG Resolved Issues Document_v2
Attachments: SMA_of_NonHab_On_BLM_Surf_Sub_NCID_Named.pdf; Issues Resolved_ID 2.3.15 final.docx

IDMT_PUB_9772
6.3

Hi BLM-ID,

In coordinating with FS, we noticed that the GRSG guidance document you received was missing one piece of direction. I have added the following bullet point to your SFA guidance :

"· Do Include Forest Service Lost River Mountains North (~5,000 acres) Area and South Area (~6,000 acres)– these areas will be treated as PHMA, with the SFA management actions for this FS-land."

I've also attached a map that specifically identifies these two areas for your reference (please ignore all the other identified areas on the map with regard to the above bullet point).

I have reattached the guidance for purposes of version control, but this is the only change you will see in it. Sorry about the oversight, and thanks a lot as always. Let me know if you have any questions.

--

Michael Hildner
Planning and Environmental Analyst
BLM Washington Office
202-912-7231
mhildner@blm.gov

Surface Management Agency of Non ADPP Habitat on BLM Surface/ Subsurface Management within DRAFT FWS Areas of Significance/Sagebrush Focal Areas

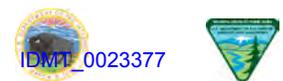
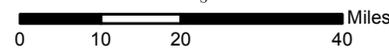
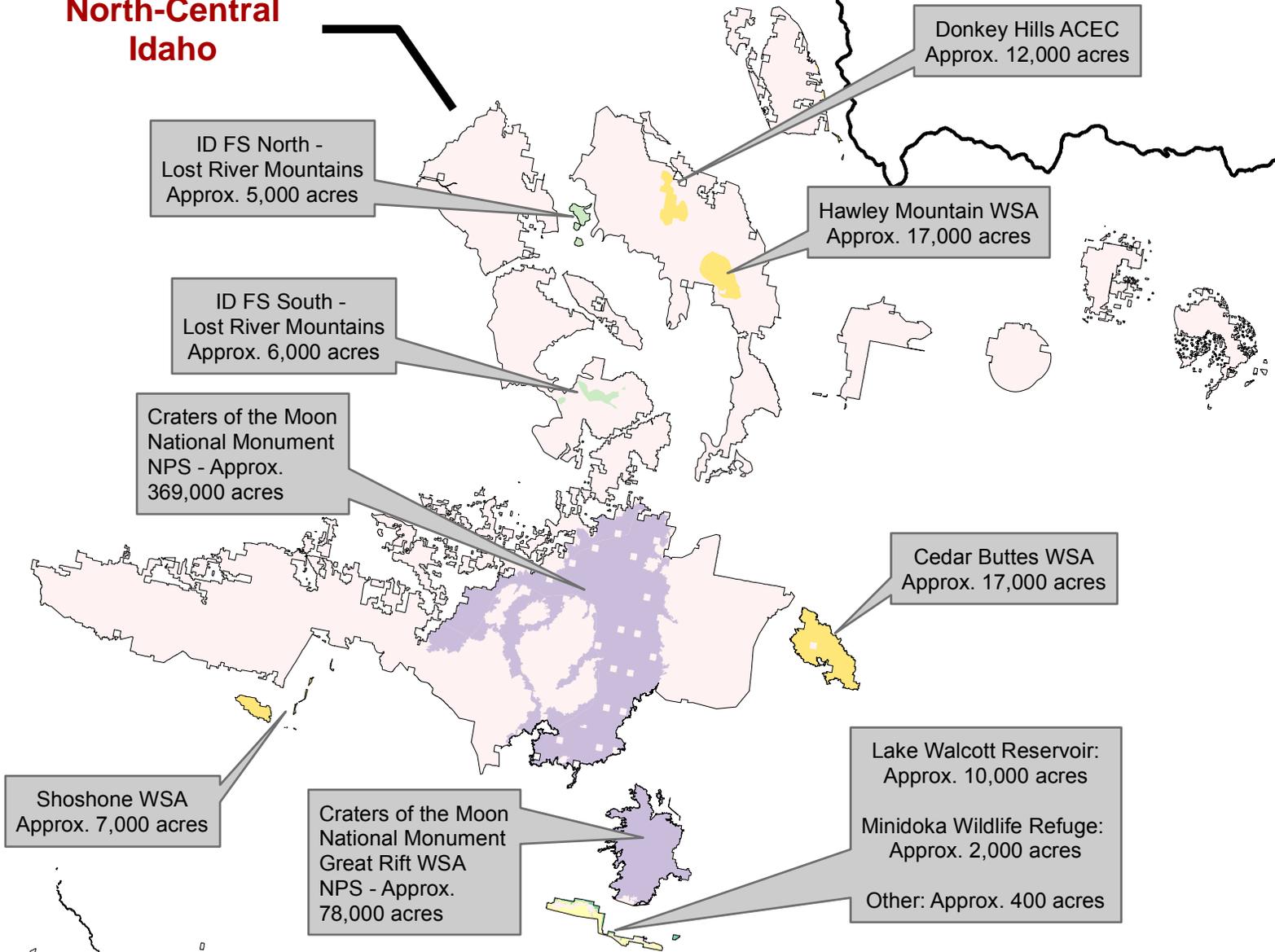
- North Central Idaho

Legend

- FWS Areas of Significance / Sagebrush Focal Areas
- Surface Management Agency**
- Non-Habitat, Bureau of Land Management
- Non-Habitat, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Non-Habitat, Forest Service
- Non-Habitat, National Park Service
- Non-Habitat, Bureau of Reclamation
- Non-Habitat, State
- Non-Habitat, Private
- Non-Habitat, Other/ Undetermined
- ADPP Habitat or Non-Habitat Outside of BLM Surface/ Subsurface Management

Data Sources:
Subsurface Estate: Acquired from BLM WY State Office for MT/ND/SD, WY, CO, UT, and Southern ID in August 2014. *Only surface estate is used for classification in NV, OR and CA.
Surface Management Agency: Downloaded from BLM Geocommunicator on December 13th, 2013 verified as current on March 6th, 2014.
BLM Administrative Draft Proposed Plan Habitat Category Data: Submitted by individual BLM EISs between March 5th, 2014 and December 2nd, 2014.
FWS Areas of Significance: Data provided by FWS, accompanying Memorandum FWS/AES/058711 (10/27/2014).

North-Central Idaho



BLM-IDAHO

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Issues for the BLM Planning Teams to Insert and Analyze in Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP)

January 30, 2015

*The March 4, 2010 decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the greater sage-grouse warranted listing but was precluded [Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 12-Month Findings for Petitions to list the Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered] set in motion the most comprehensive land-use planning initiative in the BLM's history.*

In 2011, the BLM began updating land-use plans across the West so as to ensure not only the long-term viability of the greater sage-grouse on public lands and the continued economic vitality of the West. This has been a complex and demanding process involving collaboration with an unprecedented number of stakeholders, including Governors, State Fish and Game agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and many others. The BLM's mandate of multiple use and sustained yield has required us to balance the full range of resource uses on public lands, including the conservation of crucial wildlife habitat. As we have worked through this process, public land managers throughout the BLM have made difficult resource management decisions.

These documents provide key guidance that will enable the BLM to finalize land use plans that will contribute to the conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse and other sagebrush associated species across the West. The guidance outlines a suite of tools, such as disturbance limits in key habitats and mitigation approaches, which will help us to reach this goal. These mechanisms will work in concert to conserve sage-grouse habitat so that we can achieve our twin goals of thriving Greater Sage-Grouse populations and robust Western economies.

Issue:

Development in Highly Important Landscapes

Direction:

As more specifically provided in this guidance, the ADPP will include Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA), consisting of the BLM and FS-managed lands within the area depicted in the October 27, 2014 USFWS memo, *Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendation to Refine Land Use Allocations in Highly Important Landscapes*. In the Special Status Species Section of Chapter 2, include the following management action drop in language (for the Proposed Plan only):

“Designate Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA) as shown on Map X (x acres). SFAs will be managed as PHMA, with the following additional management:

- 1) Recommended for withdrawal from the General Mining Act of 1872, subject to valid existing rights.*
- 2) Managed as NSO, without waiver, exception, or modification, for fluid mineral leasing.*

- 3) *Prioritized for management and conservation actions in these areas, including, but not limited to review of livestock grazing permits/leases (see livestock grazing section for additional actions)."*

The NOC will provide updated shapefiles that delineate the SFAs.

Except as otherwise provided below, the ADPP will provide that all BLM- and FS-managed lands (including subsurface) within SFAs will be allocated and managed as PHMA and include the management actions above.

- *Do Not Include the following in SFA Management*
 - Hawley Mountain WSA (ID), Shoshone WSA (ID), Cedar Buttes WSA (ID), Lower Salmon Falls Creek (ID), Little Jack Wilderness (ID), Bruneau-Jarbidge Wilderness (ID) in non-habitat – The current management in these areas is generally protective of GRSG. As applicable, these will continue to be managed so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness, or under the terms of the Wilderness Act to preserve wilderness character.
 - To the extent that these areas were analyzed for contingent management as general or priority habitat, the ADPP will include contingent allocations and management direction that would apply in the event that Congress releases the areas from WSA status
 - Non-habitat areas outside Little Jack and Bruneau-Jarbidge Wilderness and Salmon Falls Creek ACEC which were previously shown within the SFA –These areas will not be managed as PHMA or SFA.
- Do Include Forest Service Lost River Mountains North (~5,000 acres) Area and South Area (~6,000 acres)– these areas will be treated as PHMA, with the SFA management actions for this FS-land.
- Do Include Donkey Hills ACEC –In order to consolidate parcels for protection as SFAs, this area will be treated as PHMA and included for SFA management.
- *Do Not Include Other Agency Land in SFA Management* – while lands managed by other agencies will be shown on the SFA maps, BLM ADPP decisions will not be applied to them.
- *Do Not Include Private/State Lands in SFA Management* – while private lands may be within the SFA boundaries, ADPP decisions will not be applied to them, but may apply to Federal subsurface underlying such lands as provided below.
- *Subsurface Estate:*
 - Under private/state lands: subsurface estate in PHMA and GHMA should be treated as PHMA with SFA management actions.

- Under other Federal lands: subsurface state should be treated as PHMA with SFA management actions if it is not already withdrawn (such as in Refuges or Parks) and PHMA or GHMA management was analyzed in the DEIS.

Additional direction/drop in language for the ADPPs on SFAs will be forthcoming.

Issue:

Direction:

Mitigation

The ADPP will include the updated Mitigation Framework (Attachment I) and drop-in Chapter 2 language to reflect the following language:

“In all sage-grouse habitat, in undertaking BLM management actions, and, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third-party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions.”

Issue:

Direction:

Mapping

Not Applicable

Issue:

Direction:

Disturbance

Per the original April 2014 NPT guidance on disturbance, the ADPP will use the 3% disturbance cap at the Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) and project scale. The density calculation (an average of 1 facility per 640 acres) applies to energy and mining facilities. The disturbance cap will not be applied to foreclose development of locatable minerals on unpatented claims located under the 1872 Mining Law; the disturbance from locatable mining will be accounted for in determining the percent disturbance and whether the cap has been exceeded. BLM-ID will use the disturbance calculation methodology developed prior to this guidance (see Attachment II).

Planning units will include the following land use plan actions within their ADPPs that states:

- a. If the 3% anthropogenic disturbance cap is exceeded on lands (regardless of land ownership) within GRSB Priority Habitat Management Areas in any given Biologically Significant Unit, then no further discrete anthropogenic disturbances (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872 hard rock mining law, valid*

existing rights, etc.) will be permitted by BLM within GRSG Priority Habitat Management Areas in any given Biologically Significant Unit until the disturbance has been reduced to less than the cap.

- b. If the 3% disturbance cap is exceeded on all lands (regardless of land ownership) within a proposed project analysis area in a Priority Habitat Management Areas, then no further anthropogenic disturbance will be permitted by BLM until disturbance in the proposed project analysis area has been reduced to maintain the area under the cap (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872 hard rock mining law, valid existing rights, etc.).*

Issue:

Direction:

Vegetation Objectives

The ADPP will establish and incorporate vegetation and GRSG habitat objectives (see Attachment III for specific guidance and a GRSG Habitat Objectives Table template that follows the Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework Technical Reference-6710-1). The vegetation and GRSG habitat objectives guidance states that the values for the desired conditions in the GRSG Habitat Objectives Table are to be used, at a minimum, to meet the applicable land health standard in sage-grouse habitats. Planning units may include additional indicators and desired condition values as appropriate. The desired condition value for each indicator can be a range of values rather than a single value (e.g., the value for the desired condition for sagebrush canopy cover in breeding and nesting habitat could be 15-25%).

The GRSG Habitat Objectives table is to be placed in the Special Status Species section of the ADPP. The vegetation objective should be placed in the Vegetation section of the ADPP. Planning units will include the following land use plan vegetation objective within the Vegetation section of their ADPPs:

In all Sagebrush Focal Areas and Priority Habitat Management Areas, the desired condition is to maintain a minimum of 70% of lands capable of producing sagebrush with 10 to 30% sagebrush canopy cover. The attributes necessary to sustain these habitats are described in Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (BLM Tech Ref 1734-6).

Issue:

Direction:

Livestock Grazing

The following management actions will be included in the Livestock Grazing section of the ADPP.

- The BLM will prioritize (1) the review of grazing permits/leases, in particular to determine if modification is necessary prior to renewal, and (2) the processing of grazing permits/leases in Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) followed by PHMAs outside of the SFAs. In setting workload priorities, precedence will be given to existing permits/leases in these areas not meeting Land Health Standards, with focus on those containing riparian areas,*

including wet meadows. The BLM may use other criteria for prioritization to respond to urgent natural resource concerns (ex., fire) and legal obligations.

- *The NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing permits/leases that include lands within SFAs and PHMAs will include specific management thresholds based on GRSG Habitat Objectives Table and/or Land Health Standards (43 CFR 4180.2) and defined responses that will allow the authorizing officer to make adjustments to livestock grazing without conducting additional NEPA.*
- *Allotments within SFAs, followed by those within PHMAs, and focusing on those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows, will be prioritized for field checks to help ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grazing permits. Field checks could include monitoring for actual use, utilization, and use supervision.*
- *At the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease, the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was authorized should remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other resource management objectives.*

Attachment III provides guidance as to how the BLM will incorporate GRGS decisions from the Sage-Grouse RMP/Amendments into grazing permits/leases.

Issue:

Direction:

Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)

All Priority Habitat Management Areas will be closed to mineral materials development. All Important Habitat Management Areas and General Habitat Management Areas will be open to mineral materials development, consistent with the Idaho Anthropogenic Disturbance Criteria.

Issue:

Direction:

High-voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs and Corridors

1) Apply the recommended NPT allocation guidance for PHMA of avoidance.

2) GHMA will remain open. BLM-ID will employ a location and design process to ensure protection.

3) For sub-regions that have planned priority transmission lines that traverse their planning area (Gateway West, Boardman to Hemingway, and TransWest Express, including those portions of Gateway South that

are co-located), apply the following language as a management action in their ADPP:

“Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMAs) and General Habitat Management Areas (GHMAs) are designated as avoidance areas for high voltage transmission line ROWs, except for the transmission projects specifically identified below. All authorizations in these areas, other than the excepted projects, must comply with the conservation measures outlined in this proposed plan, including the RDFs and avoidance criteria presented in [insert citation here] of this document. The BLM is currently processing an application for [Insert name of transmission project] and the NEPA review for this project is well underway. The BLM is analyzing GRSG mitigation measures through the project’s NEPA review process, which will include analysis of the following conservations measures.”

Issue: Coal Suitability
Direction: Not Applicable in Idaho

Issue: Fluid Mineral Resources (Including Geothermal)
Direction: All ADPPs will include the following as a conservation objective:

“Priority will be given to leasing and development of fluid mineral resources, including geothermal, outside of PHMA and GHMA. When analyzing leasing and authorizing development of fluid mineral resources, including geothermal, in PHMA and GHMA, and subject to applicable stipulations for the conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse, priority will be given to development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse. The implementation of these priorities will be subject to valid existing rights and any applicable law or regulation, including, but not limited to, 30 U.S.C. 226(p) and 43 C.F.R. 3162.3-1(h).”

“Where a proposed fluid mineral development project on an existing lease could adversely affect GRSG populations or habitat, the BLM will work with the lessees, operators, or other project proponents to avoid, reduce and mitigate adverse impacts to the extent compatible with lessees' rights to drill and produce fluid mineral resources. The BLM will work with the lessee, operator, or project proponent in developing an APD for the lease to avoid and minimize impacts to sage-grouse or its habitat and will ensure that the best information about the GRSG and its habitat informs and helps to guide development of such Federal leases.”

Issue: No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Exception Language
Direction: Follow NPT guidance for Priority Habitat Management Areas. No-surface-occupancy stipulations will be included in new fluid mineral

leases at the time of leasing only and may not be applied to existing fluid mineral leases that did not include no-surface-occupancy stipulation at the time of leasing. Include the following language into the ADPP:

“No waivers or modifications to a fluid mineral lease no-surface-occupancy stipulation will be granted. The Authorized Officer may grant an exception to a fluid mineral lease no-surface-occupancy stipulation only where the proposed action:

- (i) Would not have direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on GRSG or its habitat; or,*
- (ii) Is proposed to be undertaken as an alternative to a similar action occurring on a nearby parcel, and would provide a clear conservation gain to GRSG.*

Exceptions based on conservation gain (ii) may only be considered in (a) PHMAs of mixed ownership where federal minerals underlie less than fifty percent of the total surface, or (b) areas of the public lands where the proposed exception is an alternative to an action occurring on a nearby parcel subject to a valid Federal fluid mineral lease existing as of the date of this RMP [revision or amendment]. Exceptions based on conservation gain must also include measures, such as enforceable institutional controls and buffers, sufficient to allow the BLM to conclude that such benefits will endure for the duration of the proposed action’s impacts.

Any exceptions to this lease stipulation may be approved by the Authorized Officer only with the concurrence of the State Director. The Authorized Officer may not grant an exception unless the applicable state wildlife agency, the USFWS, and the BLM unanimously find that the proposed action satisfies (i) or (ii). Such finding shall initially be made by a team of one field biologist or other GRSG expert from each respective agency. In the event the initial finding is not unanimous, the finding may be elevated to the appropriate BLM State Director, USFWS State Ecological Services Director, and state wildlife agency head for final resolution. In the event their finding is not unanimous, the exception will not be granted. Approved exceptions will be made publically available at least quarterly.”

Issue:

Direction:

Adaptive Management

Follow the NPT Adaptive Management Guidance and Sideboards. When a hard trigger is hit in a BSU, the designated response will be put in place in that BSU. Triggers and responses have been developed with local state and FWS experts.

When a hard trigger is hit in a BSU within a PAC that has multiple BSUs, including those that cross state lines, the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team will convene to determine the causal factor, put project level responses in place, as appropriate and discuss further appropriate actions to be applied. The team will also investigate the status of the hard triggers in other BSUs within the PAC and will invoke the appropriate plan response. Adoption of any further actions at the plan level may require initiating a plan amendment process.

Issue:

Direction:

Application of Lek Buffers

The ADPP will require the use of lek buffer-distances for all new BLM-managed and BLM-authorized anthropogenic disturbances in both GHMA and PHMA (see Attachment IV) through this drop-in Chapter 2 language:

“In undertaking BLM management actions, and consistent with valid and existing rights and applicable law in authorizing third-party actions, the BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances identified in the USGS Report Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse – A Review ([Open File Report 2014-1239](#)) in accordance with Appendix X.”

Allocation Direction

*Southwest Montana will follow the allocations designated for the MT ADPP

	Idaho/SW MT*
Solar - Priority	Exclusion <i>Imp - Avoid</i>
Solar – General	Open
Wind – Priority	Exclusion <i>Imp – Avoid</i>
Wind – General	Open <i>Screening process</i>
HV Transmission Lines and Large Pipeline ROWs - Priority	Avoidance <i>Imp - Avoid Screening process</i>
HV Transmission Lines and Large Pipeline ROWs - General	Open
Minor ROWs – Priority	Avoidance <i>Imp - Avoid</i>
Minor ROWs – General	Open
Fluids – Priority	NSO <i>Imp - NSO</i>
Fluids – General	Open with Moderate constraints
Non-energy Leasables - Priority	Closed <i>Imp - Open</i>
Non-energy Leasables - General	Open
Mineral Materials – Priority	Closed <i>Imp - Open</i>
Mineral Materials – General	Open

Attachment I

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE RMPA/FEIS TEMPLATE LANGUAGE FOR ADDRESSING MITIGATION

[] = Instructions

[] = Fill in the blank

[This mitigation language addresses greater sage-grouse. However, if you are working on a plan revision, you may need to add additional language to be more inclusive of other resource and value objectives (e.g. cultural resources, national historic trails, recreation values, other special status species) that may need to be mitigated.]

Chapter 1 - Introduction

[Nothing new to add to EIS]

Chapter 2 – Alternatives – [Proposed Plan/Proposed Plan Amendment]

- Add these two new sections (below) to the **Chapter 2 Alternatives** section.
- Replace the Regional Mitigation placeholder language that was included in the draft EIS with the new “Mitigation” section, below.
- Ensure a degree of consistency between this nationally standardized language and that found in the rest of the EIS.
- Fine tune this language, if necessary, but maintain consistency with the other BLM/USFS plan amendments.
- Remove references to USFS for plans that do not address US Forest Service lands

Consistent with the proposed plan’s goal outlined in [Table 2-X – Description of Alternatives], the intent of the [Proposed Plan/Proposed Plan Amendment] is to provide a net conservation gain to the species. To do so, in undertaking BLM/USFS management actions, and, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. This is also consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management, Section .02B, which states “to initiate protective conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to Bureau sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of the need for listing of these species under the ESA.”

Mitigation

Mitigation Standards. In undertaking BLM/USFS management actions, and, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. Mitigation will follow the regulations from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20; e.g. avoid, minimize, and compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If impacts from BLM/USFS management actions and authorized third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation remain after applying avoidance and minimization measures (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to provide a net conservation gain to the species. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see the concepts of durability, timeliness, and additionality as described further in Appendix X).

Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team. The BLM/USFS will establish a WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide the conservation of greater sage-grouse, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. This Team will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy (hereafter, Regional Mitigation Strategy). The Team will also compile and report on monitoring data (including data on habitat condition, population trends, and mitigation effectiveness) from States across the WAFWA Management Zone (see Monitoring section). Subsequently, the Team will use these data to either modify the appropriate Regional Mitigation Strategy or recommend adaptive management actions (see Adaptive Management section).

The BLM/USFS will invite governmental and Tribal partners to participate in this Team, including the State Wildlife Agency and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in compliance with the exemptions provided for committees defined in the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the regulations that implement that act. The BLM/USFS will strive for a collaborative and unified approach between Federal agencies (e.g. FWS, BLM, and USFS), Tribal governments, state and local government(s), and other stakeholders for greater sage-grouse conservation. The Team will provide advice, and will not make any decisions that impact Federal lands. The BLM/USFS will remain responsible for making decisions that affect Federal lands.

Developing a Regional Mitigation Strategy. The Team will develop a Regional Mitigation Strategy to inform the mitigation components of NEPA analyses for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation. The Strategy will be developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 will serve as a framework for developing the Regional Mitigation Strategy. The Regional Mitigation Strategy will be applicable to the States/Field Offices/Forests within the WAFWA Management Zone's boundaries.

Regional mitigation is a landscape-scale approach to mitigating impacts to resources. This involves anticipating future mitigation needs and strategically identifying mitigation sites and measures that can provide a net conservation gain to the species. The Regional Mitigation Strategy developed by the Team will elaborate on the components identified above (i.e.

avoidance, minimization, and compensation; additionality, timeliness, and durability) and further explained in Appendix [X].

In the time period before the Strategy is developed, BLM will consider regional conditions, trends, and sites, to the greatest extent possible, when applying the mitigation hierarchy and will ensure that mitigation is consistent with the standards set forth in the first paragraph of this section.

Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into NEPA Analyses. The BLM/USFS will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations from the Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation and the appropriate mitigation actions will be carried forward into the decision.

Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program. Consistent with the principles identified above, the BLM/USFS need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically implemented to provide a net conservation gain to the species, as identified in the Regional Mitigation Strategy. In order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this compensatory mitigation program will be implemented at a State-level (as opposed to a WAFWA Management Zone, a Field Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the BLM/USFS will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help manage the State-level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator will conform to all relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM/USFS will remain responsible for making decisions that affect Federal lands.

Chapter 3 – Affected Environment

[Nothing to add]

Chapter 4 – Environmental Consequences – [Proposed Plan/Proposed Plan Amendment]

Mitigation

This Chapter describes the environmental consequences associated with the impacts to greater sage-grouse and its habitat from activities carried out in conformance with this plan, in addition to BLM/USFS management actions. In undertaking BLM/USFS management actions, and consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM/USFS will require mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and

compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. In addition, to help implement this [Proposed Plan / Proposed Plan Amendment], a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy (per Appendix [X]) will be developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The Strategy will elaborate on the components identified in Chapter 2 (avoidance, minimization, compensation, additionality, timeliness, and durability), and will be considered by the BLM/USFS for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation. The implementation of a Regional Mitigation Strategy will benefit greater sage-grouse, the public, and land-users by providing a reduction in threats, increased public transparency and confidence, and a predictable permit process for land-use authorization applicants.

Appendix [X]

- Add this new Appendix.
- Ensure a degree of consistency between this nationally standardized language and that found in the rest of the EIS.
- Fine tune this language, if necessary, but maintain consistency with the other BLM/USFS plan amendments.
- Remove references to USFS for plans that do not address US Forest Service lands

Appendix (X) – Mitigation – [Proposed Plan/Proposed Plan Amendment]

General

In undertaking BLM/USFS management actions, and, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM/USFS will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. Mitigation will follow the regulations from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20; e.g. avoid, minimize, and compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If impacts from BLM/USFS management actions and authorized third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation remain after applying avoidance and minimization measures (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to provide a net conservation gain to the species. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see glossary).

The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team, will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy that will inform the NEPA decision making process including the application of the mitigation hierarchy for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation. A robust and transparent Regional Mitigation Strategy will contribute to greater sage-grouse habitat conservation by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats and compensating for residual impacts to greater sage-grouse and its habitat.

The BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 serves as a framework for developing and implementing a Regional Mitigation Strategy. The following sections provide additional guidance specific to the development and implementation of a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy.

Developing a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy

The BLM/USFS, via the WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team, will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy to guide the application of the mitigation hierarchy for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation. The Strategy should consider any State-level greater sage-grouse mitigation guidance that is consistent with the requirements identified in this Appendix. The Regional Mitigation Strategy should be developed in a transparent manner, based on the best science available and standardized metrics.

As described in Chapter 2, the BLM/USFS will establish a WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide the conservation of greater sage-grouse, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The Strategy will be developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision.

The Regional Mitigation Strategy should include mitigation guidance on avoidance, minimization, and compensation, as follows:

- Avoidance
 - Include avoidance areas (e.g. right-of-way avoidance/exclusion areas, no surface occupancy areas) already included in laws, regulations, policies, and/or land use plans (e.g. Resource Management Plans, Forest Plans, State Plans); and,
 - Include any potential, additional avoidance actions (e.g. additional avoidance best management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- Minimization
 - Include minimization actions (e.g. required design features, best management practices) already included in laws, regulations, policies, land use plans, and/or land-use authorizations; and,
 - Include any potential, additional minimization actions (e.g. additional minimization best management practices) with regard to greater sage-grouse conservation.
- Compensation
 - Include discussion of impact/project valuation, compensatory mitigation options, siting, compensatory project types and costs, monitoring, reporting, and program administration. Each of these topics is discussed in more detail below.
 - Residual Impact and Compensatory Mitigation Project Valuation Guidance
 - A common standardized method should be identified for estimating the value of the residual impacts and value of the compensatory mitigation projects, including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of the projects.

- This method should consider the quality of habitat, scarcity of the habitat, and the size of the impact/project.
- For compensatory mitigation projects, consideration of durability (see glossary), timeliness (see glossary), and the potential for failure (e.g. uncertainty associated with effectiveness) may require an upward adjustment of the valuation.
- The resultant compensatory mitigation project will, after application of the above guidance, result in proactive conservation measures for Greater Sage-grouse (consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management, section .02).
- **Compensatory Mitigation Options**
 - Options for implementing compensatory mitigation should be identified, such as:
 - Utilizing certified mitigation/conservation bank or credit exchanges.
 - Contributing to an existing mitigation/conservation fund.
 - Authorized-user conducted mitigation projects.
 - For any compensatory mitigation project, the investment must be additional (i.e. additionality: the conservation benefits of compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and would not have resulted without the compensatory mitigation project).
- **Compensatory Mitigation Siting**
 - Sites should be in areas that have the potential to yield a net conservation gain to the greater sage-grouse, regardless of land ownership.
 - Sites should be durable (see glossary).
 - Sites identified by existing plans and strategies (e.g. fire restoration plans, invasive species strategies, healthy land focal areas) should be considered, if those sites have the potential to yield a net conservation gain to greater sage-grouse and are durable.
- **Compensatory Mitigation Project Types and Costs**
 - Project types should be identified that help reduce threats to greater sage-grouse (e.g. protection, conservation, and restoration projects).
 - Each project type should have a goal and measurable objectives.
 - Each project type should have associated monitoring and maintenance requirements, for the duration of the impact.
 - To inform contributions to a mitigation/conservation fund, expected costs for these project types (and their monitoring and maintenance), within the WAFWA Management Zone, should be identified.
- **Compensatory Mitigation Compliance and Monitoring**
 - Mitigation projects should be inspected to ensure they are implemented as designed, and if not, there should be methods to enforce compliance.
 - Mitigation projects should be monitored to ensure that the goals and objectives are met and that the benefits are effective for the duration of the impact.

- Compensatory Mitigation Reporting
 - Standardized, transparent, scalable, and scientifically-defensible reporting requirements should be identified for mitigation projects.
 - Reports should be compiled, summarized, and reviewed in the WAFWA Management Zone in order to determine if greater sage-grouse conservation has been achieved and/or to support adaptive management recommendations.
- Compensatory Mitigation Program Implementation Guidelines
 - Guidelines for implementing the State-level compensatory mitigation program should include holding and applying compensatory mitigation funds, operating a transparent and credible accounting system, certifying mitigation credits, and managing reporting requirements.

Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into NEPA Analyses

The BLM/USFS will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations from the Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for BLM/USFS management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation and the appropriate mitigation actions will be carried forward into the decision.

Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program

The BLM/USFS need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically implemented to provide a net conservation gain to the species, as identified in the Regional Mitigation Strategy. In order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this compensatory mitigation program will be managed at a State-level (as opposed to a WAFWA Management Zone, a Field Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the BLM/USFS will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help manage the State-level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator will conform to all relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM/USFS will remain responsible for making decisions that affect Federal lands.

Glossary Terms

Additionality: The conservation benefits of compensatory mitigation are demonstrably new and would not have resulted without the compensatory mitigation project. (adopted and modified from BLM Manual Section 1794).

Avoidance mitigation: Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action. (40 CFR 1508.20(a)) (e.g. may also include avoiding the impact by moving the proposed action to a different time or location.)

Compensatory mitigation: Compensating for the (residual) impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments. (40 CFR 1508.20)

Compensatory mitigation projects: The [restoration](#), [creation](#), [enhancement](#), and/or [preservation](#) of impacted resources (adopted and modified from 33 CFR 332), such as on-the-ground actions to improve and/or protect habitats (e.g. chemical vegetation treatments, land acquisitions, conservation easements). (adopted and modified from BLM Manual Section 1794).

Compensatory mitigation sites: The durable areas where compensatory mitigation projects will occur. (adopted and modified from BLM Manual Section 1794).

Durability (protective and ecological): the maintenance of the effectiveness of a mitigation site and project for the duration of the associated impacts, which includes resource, administrative/legal, and financial considerations. (adopted and modified from BLM Manual Section 1794).

Minimization mitigation: Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation. (40 CFR 1508.20 (b))

Residual impacts: Impacts that remain after applying avoidance and minimization mitigation; also referred to as unavoidable impacts.

Timeliness: The lack of a time lag between impacts and the achievement of compensatory mitigation goals and objectives (BLM Manual Section 1794).

Attachment II

Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Land Use Plans Disturbance Caps Guidance

Purpose

- I. Provide the planning units with land use planning actions that need to be incorporated into the administrative draft proposed plans to respond to the 3% disturbance cap once it is exceeded in either the Biologically Significant Units (BSU) or at the project scale.
- II. Provide guidance on the use of the west-wide habitat degradation (disturbance) data layers as well as the use of locally collected disturbance data for BSUs to determine if the disturbance cap has been exceeded as the land use plans (LUP) are being implemented.
- III. Provide guidance on the use of locally collected disturbance data for project authorizations to determine if the disturbance cap has been exceeded as the LUPs are being implemented.
- IV. Provide guidance on the inclusion of fire in disturbance calculations.
- V. Provide guidance on the use of the density of energy and mining facilities during authorizations
- VI. Provide guidance on the use of the BER analysis in the land use plans (Chapter 2, Affected Environment) and the use of the “west-wide” sagebrush availability and habitat degradation data/estimates for the Priority Habitat Management Areas in each population for monitoring and management purposes as the LUPs are being implemented.
- VII. Provide guidance on what is considered in the disturbance calculations versus what is considered for the disturbance cap.

Guidance

- I. Planning units will include the following land use plan actions within their administrative draft proposed land use plans (ADPPs) that states:
 - a. *If the 3% anthropogenic disturbance cap is exceeded on lands (regardless of land ownership) within GRSG Priority Habitat Management Areas in any given Biologically Significant Unit, then no further discrete anthropogenic disturbances (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872 hard rock mining law, valid existing rights, etc.) will be permitted by BLM within GRSG Priority Habitat Management Areas in any given Biologically Significant Unit until the disturbance has been reduced to less than the cap.*
 - b. *If the 3% disturbance cap is exceeded on all lands (regardless of land ownership) within a proposed project analysis area in a Priority Habitat Management Areas, then no further anthropogenic disturbance will be permitted by BLM until disturbance in the proposed project analysis area has been reduced to maintain*

the area under the cap (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872 hard rock mining law, valid existing rights, etc.).

- II. Use of west-wide habitat degradation data as well as the use of locally collected disturbance data to determine the level of existing disturbance:
 - a) In the GRSG Priority Habitat Management Areas in any given Biologically Significant Unit, use the west-wide data at a minimum and/or locally collected disturbance data as available (e.g., DDCT) for the anthropogenic disturbance types listed in Table 1.

- III. Use of locally collected disturbance data for project authorizations:
 - a) In a proposed project analysis area, digitize all existing anthropogenic disturbances identified in the GRSG Monitoring Framework and the 7 additional features that are considered threats to sage-grouse (Table 2). Using 1 meter resolution NAIP imagery is recommended. Use local data if available.

- IV. Fire-burned and habitat treatment areas will not be included in the project scale degradation disturbance calculation for managing sage-grouse habitat under a disturbance cap. These areas will be considered part of a sagebrush availability when rangewide, consistent, interagency fine- and site-scale monitoring has been completed and the areas have been determined to meet sage-grouse habitat requirements. These and other disturbances identified in Table 3 will be part of a sagebrush availability evaluation and will be considered along with other local conditions that may affect sage-grouse during the analysis of the proposed project area.

- V. Planning units are directed to use a density cap related to the density of energy and mining facilities (listed below) during project scale authorizations. If the disturbance density in a proposed project area is on average less than 1/ 640 acres, proceed to the NEPA analysis incorporating mitigation measures into an alternative. If the disturbance density is greater than an average of 1/ 640 acres, either defer the proposed project or co-locate it into existing disturbed area (*subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872 Mining Law, valid existing rights, etc.*).
 - Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)
 - Energy (coal mines)
 - Energy (wind towers)
 - Energy (solar fields)
 - Energy (geothermal)
 - Mining (active locatable, leasable, and saleable developments)

- VI. Planning units are directed to continue using the baseline data from the 2013 USGS Baseline Environmental Report (BER) in the Affected Environment section of the proposed plans/ FEISs. West-wide sagebrush availability and habitat degradation data layers will be used for the Priority Habitat Management Areas in each population for monitoring (see the GRSG Monitoring Framework in the Monitoring Appendix of the EIS) and management purposes as the LUPs are being implemented. The BER reported on individual threats across the range of sage-grouse while the west-wide disturbance calculation consolidated the anthropogenic disturbance data into a single measure using formulas from the GRSG Monitoring Framework. These calculations will be completed on an annual basis by the BLM's National Operation Center. Planning units will be provided the 2014 baseline disturbance calculation derived from the west-wide data once the RODs are signed that describe the Priority Habitat Management Areas.
- VII. Planning units are directed to use the three measures (sagebrush availability, habitat degradation, density of energy and mining) in conjunction with other information during the NEPA process to most effectively site project locations, such as by clustering disturbances and/or locating facilities in already disturbed areas. Although locatable mine sites are included in the degradation calculation, mining activities under the 1872 mining law may not be subject to the 3% disturbance cap. Details about locatable mining activities should be fully disclosed and analyzed in the NEPA process to assess impacts to sage-grouse and their habitat as well as to BLM goals and objectives, and other BLM programs and activities.

Additional Information/Formulas

A collaborative effort in Idaho developed a disturbance calculation method that includes the 3% disturbance cap plus a modifier that includes effective habitat and is described in Appendix G of their ADPP. The formulas below are excerpted from that Appendix.

Disturbance Calculations for the BSU:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Disturbance Percentage} \\ & = \left(\frac{\text{Footprint Acres from Anthropogenic Disturbance}^1}{\text{Acres within the BSU} * \left(\frac{\text{Acres of Effective Habitat within the BSU}}{\text{Acres within the BSU}} + 0.3 \right)} \right) \times 100 \end{aligned}$$

Disturbance Calculations for Project Analysis Areas (PAAs):

$$\text{Disturbance Percentage} = \left(\frac{\text{Footprint Acres from Anthropogenic Disturbance}^{1,2}}{\text{Acres within the PAA} * \left(\frac{\text{Acres of Effective Habitat within the PAA}}{\text{Acres within the PAA}} + 0.3 \right)} \right) \times 100$$

¹ see Table 3. ² see Table 2.

Project analysis area (PAA) method for permitting surface disturbance activities:

1. Determine potentially affected occupied leks by placing a four-mile buffer around the project boundary as defined by the proposed area of physical disturbance related to the project. All occupied leks within this buffer will be considered affected by the proposed project.
2. Next place a four mile boundary around each of the occupied leks identified in item 1, above.
3. The polygon formed by the merging and dissolving of polygons from step 1 and 2 creates the Project Analysis Area (PAA) for surface disturbance activities.
4. Map existing disturbances within the analysis area or use locally available spatial data. Use of digitized NAIP imagery is recommended.
5. Calculate percent existing disturbance using the formula above. If existing disturbance is less than 3%, proceed to next step. If existing disturbance is greater than 3%, defer the project.
6. Add proposed project disturbance footprint area and recalculate the percent disturbance. If disturbance is less than 3%, proceed to next step. If disturbance is greater than 3%, defer project.
7. Calculate the disturbance density of energy and mining facilities (listed above). If the disturbance density is less than 1 facility per 640 acres, averaged across project analysis area, proceed to the NEPA analysis incorporating mitigation measures into an alternative. If the disturbance density is greater than 1 facility per 640 acres, averaged across the project analysis area, either defer the proposed project or co-locate it into existing disturbed area.
8. If a project that would exceed the degradation cap or density cap cannot be deferred due to valid existing rights or other existing laws and regulations, fully disclose the local and regional impacts of the proposed action in the associated NEPA.

Table 1. Anthropogenic disturbance types for disturbance calculations. Data sources are described for the west-wide habitat degradation estimates (Table copied from the GRSG Monitoring Framework)

Degradation Type	Subcategory	Data Source	Direct Area of Influence	Area Source
Energy (oil & gas)	Wells	IHS; BLM (AFMSS)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	5.0ac (2.0ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (coal)	Mines	BLM; USFS; Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; USGS Mineral Resources Data System	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri/Google Imagery
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Energy (wind)	Wind Turbines	Federal Aviation Administration	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
Energy (solar)	Fields/Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	7.3ac (3.0ha)/MW	NREL
Energy (geothermal)	Wells	IHS	3.0ac (1.2ha)	BLM WO-300
	Power Plants	Platts (power plants)	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Mining	Locatable Developments	InfoMine	Polygon area (digitized)	Esri Imagery
Infrastructure (roads)	Surface Streets (Minor Roads)	Esri StreetMap Premium	40.7ft (12.4m)	USGS
	Major Roads	Esri StreetMap Premium	84.0ft (25.6m)	USGS
	Interstate Highways	Esri StreetMap Premium	240.2ft (73.2m)	USGS
Infrastructure (railroads)	Active Lines	Federal Railroad Administration	30.8ft (9.4m)	USGS
Infrastructure (power lines)	1-199kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	100ft (30.5m)	BLM WO-300
	200-399 kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	150ft (45.7m)	BLM WO-300
	400-699kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	200ft (61.0m)	BLM WO-300
	700+kV Lines	Platts (transmission lines)	250ft (76.2m)	BLM WO-300
Infrastructure (communication)	Towers	Federal Communications Commission	2.5ac (1.0ha)	BLM WO-300

Table 2. The seven additional features to include in the disturbance calculation at the project scale

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coalbed Methane Ponds 2. Meteorological Towers 3. Nuclear Energy Facilities 4. Airport Facilities and Infrastructure 5. Military Range Facilities & Infrastructure 6. Hydroelectric Plants 7. Recreation Areas Facilities and Infrastructure

Table 3. Relationship between the 18 threats and the three habitat disturbance measures for monitoring and disturbance calculations.

USFWS Listing Decision Threat	Sagebrush Availability	Habitat Degradation	Energy and Mining Density
Agriculture	X		
Urbanization	X		
Wildfire	X		
Conifer encroachment	X		
Treatments	X		
Invasive Species	X		
Energy (oil and gas wells and development facilities)		X	X
Energy (coal mines)		X	X
Energy (wind towers)		X	X
Energy (solar fields)		X	X
Energy (geothermal)		X	X
Mining (active locatable, leasable, and saleable developments)		X	X
Infrastructure (roads)		X	
Infrastructure (railroads)		X	
Infrastructure (power lines)		X	
Infrastructure (communication towers)		X	
Infrastructure (other vertical structures)		X	
Other developed rights-of-way		X	

Background

In the USFWS's 2010 listing decision for sage-grouse, the USFWS identified 18 threats contributing to the destruction, modification, or curtailment of the sage-grouse's habitat or range (75 FR 13910 2010). In April 2014, the Interagency GRSG Disturbance and Monitoring Sub-Team finalized the Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework (hereafter, framework) to track these threats. The 18 threats have been aggregated into three measures to account for whether the threat predominantly removes sagebrush or degrades habitat. The three measures are:

Measure 1: Sagebrush Availability (percent of sagebrush per unit area)

Measure 2: Habitat Degradation (percent of human activity per unit area)

Measure 3: Density of Energy and Mining (facilities and locations per unit area)

The BLM is committed to monitoring the three disturbance measures and reporting them to the FWS on an annual basis. However, for the purposes of calculating the amount of disturbance to provide information for management decisions and inform the success of the sage-grouse planning effort, the data depicting the location and extent of the 12 anthropogenic types of threats will be used at a minimum in the BSUs and those same 12 anthropogenic and the additional 7 types of features that are threats to sage-grouse will be used in the project analysis areas.

		Scales		
		Broad/Mid (Populations)	Intermediate (BSU)	Local/Project (Seas. Hab.)
Habitat Degradation	Unit:	WAFWA Populations	Biologically Significant Unit	Project/Local Habitat Area ⁵
	Area of Interest:	PHMAs	PHMAs	PHMAs
	Data:	Westwide degradation data	Westwide ³ , State, Local	State, Local
	Formula (Measure 2a):	<u>12 Degradation Threats</u> PHMAs in Populations	<u>12 Degradation Threats</u> PHMAs in BSUs	<u>12 Degradation Threats + 7</u> PHMAs in Proj. ⁷
	Management:	Internal BLM & FS estimates	3% Cap, Adapt. Mgmt ⁴	3% Disturbance Cap
	All Lands:	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Fire Included:	No	No	No
	Who:	BLM NOC	BLM NOC ³ or State Offices	State Offices or Field Offices
Sagebrush Availability	Unit:	WAFWA Populations	Biologically Significant Unit	n/a
	Area of Interest:	PHMAs	PHMAs	
	Data:	LANDFIRE Updated EVT ¹	Updated EVT or State data	
	Formula (Measure 1a):	<u>Existing Updated Sagebrush</u> PHMAs in Populations	<u>Existing Updated Sagebrush</u> PHMAs in BSUs	
	Management:	Internal BLM & FS estimates	Adaptive Management ⁴	
	All Lands:	Yes	Yes	
	Fire Included:	Yes	Yes	
	Who:	BLM NOC	BLM NOC ³ or State Offices	
Energy and Mining	Unit:	WAFWA Populations	n/a	Project Area & Seasonal Hab.
	Area of Interest:	PHMAs		PHMAs
	Data:	Westwide well & mine data		Westwide ² , State data
	Formula (Measure 3):	<u>Well Pads and Mines</u> ¹ Square Mile		<u>Well Pads and Mines</u> ¹ Square Mile
	Management:	Internal BLM & FS estimates		Project Authorization
	All Lands:	Yes		Yes
	Fire Included:	No		No
	Who:	BLM NOC		BLM NOC or SOs or FOs
ACRONYMS				
PHMA = Priority Habitat Management Area BSU = Biologically Significant Unit				
EVT = Existing Vegetation Type EpS = Areas of Biotic Potential				
¹ Only mines with a Plan of Operation (>5 acres of disturbance) will be included.				
² Westwide data will be used only if state or local data are not available.				
³ This footnote was removed from the table. January 2015.				
⁴ This may be one of several variables used to inform Adaptive Management. The BSU is the scale at which Adaptive Management will be applied.				
⁵ A moving window analysis will be conducted at this scale by the NOC using westwide data. If available, state and local data/analysis should be used for Adaptive Management				
⁶ The project analysis area will be based on a 4-mile radius polygon around the project area combined with a 4-mile buffer around any lands within the project boundary in PHMA (Idaho methodology).				
⁷ See Table 2				

Attachment III

Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Land Use Plans Vegetation Objectives Guidance

Purpose

- I. Provide the planning units with land use planning vegetation objectives that need to be incorporated into the administrative draft proposed plans.
- II. Provide guidance on the use of a template for GRSG habitat objectives in the Special Status Species section of the ADPPs.
- III. Provide guidance on prioritizing land health assessments in sage-grouse habitats and conducting assessments at the watershed scale using the sage-grouse habitat objectives.

Guidance

- I. Planning units will include the following land use plan vegetation objective within the Vegetation section of their administrative draft proposed land use plans (ADPPs) that states:

In all Sagebrush Focal Areas and Priority Habitat Management Areas, the desired condition is to maintain a minimum of 70% of lands capable of producing sagebrush with 10 to 30% sagebrush canopy cover. The attributes necessary to sustain these habitats are described in Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (BLM Tech Ref 1734-6).
- II. Planning units will populate the GRSG Habitat Objectives table template to provide vegetation objectives for sage-grouse life history stages based on the ecology in your region to be used to meet the applicable land health standard in GRSG habitats. Planning units are encouraged to work across boundaries when developing the objectives to ensure regional continuity and will provide appropriate peer-reviewed science to support the habitat values for the indicators. These desired condition value can be a range of values rather than a single value (e.g., the value for the desired condition for sagebrush canopy cover in breeding and nesting habitat could be 15-25%). Planning units may include additional indicators and desired condition values as appropriate (see the Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF, *Technical Reference 6710-1*) for appropriate indicators). The HAF contains values for habitat suitability indicators in sage-grouse seasonal habitats from the Connelly et al. (2000) sage-grouse guidelines and has incorporated many of the core indicators in the AIM strategy (Toevs et al. 2011) as well. Planning units may use the indicator values from Connelly et al. (2000) while developing the land use plan Sage-Grouse Habitat Objectives table.

When using the indicators to guide management actions or during land health assessments, consider that the indicators are sensitive to the ecological processes operating at the scale of interest and that a single habitat indicator does not necessarily define habitat suitability for an area or particular scale. Indicators must be collectively reviewed, assessed based on the site potential, and put into spatial and temporal context to correctly determine habitat suitability which will include more than one scale and multiple indicators. Assessment and evaluation of these objectives will follow the steps described in the HAF.

The GRSG Habitat Objectives table is to be placed in the Special Status Species section of the ADPP and is to be used as a minimum to meet the applicable land health standard in sage-grouse habitats.

Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Objectives

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATORS	DESIRED CONDITION	Reference
BREEDING AND NESTING (Seasonal Use Period March 1-June 15)			
Lek Security	Proximity of trees		
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks		
Cover	% of seasonal habitat meeting desired conditions		
	Sagebrush canopy cover		
	Sagebrush height Arid sites Mesic sites		
	Predominant sagebrush shape		
	Perennial grass cover Arid sites Mesic sites		
	Perennial grass and forb height		
	Perennial forb canopy cover Arid sites Mesic sites		
BROOD-REARING/SUMMER¹ (Seasonal Use Period June 16-October 31)			
Cover	% of Seasonal habitat meeting desired condition		
	Sagebrush canopy cover		
	Sagebrush height		
	Perennial grass canopy cover and forbs		
	Riparian areas/mesic meadows		
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability		
WINTER¹ (Seasonal Use Period November 1-February 28)			
Cover and Food	% of seasonal habitat meeting desired conditions		
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow		
	Sagebrush height above snow		

- III. The BLM will prioritize land health assessments in Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) followed by PHMAs outside of the SFAs. Field offices are to conduct land health assessments at the watershed scale and use the GRSG habitat objectives when assessing the applicable standard in GRSG habitats.

When conducting land health assessments, the BLM should follow, at a minimum, “Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health” (Pellant et. al. 2005) and the “BLM Core Terrestrial Indicators and Methods” (MacKinnon et al. 2011). For assessments being conducted in GRSG designated management areas, the BLM should collect additional data to inform the HAF indicators that have not been collected using the above methods. Implementation of the principles outlined in the AIM strategy will allow the data to be used to generate unbiased estimates of condition across the area of interest; facilitate consistent data collection and rollup analysis among management units; help provide consistent data to inform the classification and interpretation of imagery; and provide condition and trend of the indicators describing sagebrush characteristics important to sage-grouse habitat.

Attachment IV

Incorporating GSGR RMP Decisions into Grazing Authorizations

Purpose

The purpose is to provide recommended ADPP language; outline the process for prioritizing the review and processing of grazing permits/leases to determine if modification is necessary (prior to renewal and in accordance with prioritization criteria); provide direction for including specific management thresholds and defined responses that will allow adjustments to livestock grazing within the terms and conditions of permits; and provide a process for prioritizing compliance monitoring within Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) and Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMAs).

Background

The BLM manages approximately 18,000 livestock grazing permits and leases on the public lands. Livestock grazing is an integral part of the BLM multiple-use mission and is authorized by the Taylor Grazing Act (1934), the Federal Land Policy Management Act (1976) and the Public Rangeland Improvement Act (1978). By statute and regulation, grazing leases and permits are normally issued for 10-year periods. Annually, a range of 1,200 to 3,200 grazing permits expire and the BLM receives 500 to 1,500 grazing permit/lease transfer requests.

The BLM currently issues permits/leases in accordance with:

- All applicable law, regulation, policy (NEPA, consultation, proposed/final grazing decision-also known as a fully processed permit); or
- Various appropriation authorities enacted between 1999 and 2014 extending terms and conditions of expiring or transferred permits/leases that the BLM is unable to fully process before their expiration; or
- Section 402(c)(2) of FLPMA (as amended by Public Law 113-291, enacted December 19, 2014).

Congress has acted to ensure that grazing permittees could continue to graze if the BLM is unable to complete the environmental analysis mandated by the NEPA and other applicable laws. Since 1999, a provision (“the rider”) has been included in the Interior Appropriations bill that, in various forms, generally authorizes the BLM to renew grazing permits and leases under their same terms and conditions until it fully processes the permit renewal in compliance with NEPA, ESA, and other legal or regulatory requirements. The most recent rider is contained in Section 411, Public Law 113-76.¹ The FLPMA amendment to Section 402 (c) allows BLM to renew

¹ The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 includes the provision Section 411 which states: “Section 415 of division E of Public Law 112–74 is amended by striking “and 2013” and inserting “through 2015.” The terms and conditions of section 325 of Public Law 108-108 (117 stat. 1307), regarding permits at the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service, shall remain in effect through fiscal year 2015. A grazing permit or lease issued by the Secretary of the Interior for lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management that is the subject of a request for a grazing preference transfer shall be issued, without further processing, for the remaining time period in

grazing permits and leases under the same terms and conditions. This relieves the BLM's renewal processing workload, allowing the BLM to prioritize permit processing based on sensitivity of the resources at issue.²

The BLM may modify terms and conditions of a permit or lease at any time following completion of appropriate analysis and consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected lessees or permittees, the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public.³ Under 43 C.F.R. 4160.1, the BLM must serve a proposed decision on any affected applicant, permittee or lessee, any agent and lien holder of record. Copies of the decisions are provided to the interested publics.

Recommended Language to be incorporated as Livestock Grazing Management Actions within the GRSG ADPPs:

- The BLM will prioritize the review of grazing permits/leases, including those prior to renewal to determine if modification is necessary, and processing of grazing permits and leases, in Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) followed by PHMAs outside of the SFAs. In setting workload priorities, precedence will be given to existing permits/leases in areas not meeting Land Health Standards, with focus on those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows. The BLM may use other criteria for prioritization to respond to urgent natural resource conditions (ex., fire) and legal obligations.
- The NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing permits/leases that include lands within SFAs and PHMAs will include specific management thresholds based on GRSG Habitat Objectives Table and/or Land Health Standards (43 CFR 4180.2) and defined responses that will allow the authorizing officer to make adjustments to livestock grazing without conducting additional NEPA.
- Allotments within SFAs, followed by those within PHMAs, and focusing on those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows, will be prioritized for field checks to

the existing permit or lease using the same mandatory terms and conditions. If the authorized officer determines a change in the mandatory terms and conditions is required, the new permit must be processed as directed in section 325 of Public Law 108-108.” Where a FO is unable to fully process a permit renewal in compliance with all applicable laws prior to the permit expiration, Section 411 extends the authority to renew the grazing permit with the same terms and conditions as the expiring permit. Section 325 provides the process for authorizing grazing until a permit or lease is issued in compliance with all applicable law and regulatory processes.

² The newly amended section 402(c) of FLPMA provides permanent authority to BLM to renew expiring permits. That section states, “The terms and conditions in a grazing permit or lease that has expired, or was terminated due to a grazing preference transfer, shall be continued under a new permit or lease until the date on which the Secretary concerned completes any environmental analysis and documentation for the permit or lease required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and other applicable laws.”

³ 43 CFR 4130.3-3 states: Following consultation, cooperation and coordination with the affected lessees or permittees, the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the permit or lease when the active grazing use or related management practices are not meeting the land use plan, allotment management plan or other activity plan, or management objectives, or is not in conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 (Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration).

help ensure compliance with the terms and conditions within the grazing permits. Field checks could include monitoring for actual use, utilization, and use supervision.

- At the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease, the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was authorized should remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other resource management objectives.

Addressing GRSG RMP Amendments/Revisions Objectives in Grazing Permits/Leases

BLM will develop criteria to prioritize the workload to process permits/leases (either fully processed or reauthorized based on the Appropriations rider, or issued under Section 402(c)(2) of FLPMA) and determine whether modification is necessary prior to renewal within PHMAs, beginning with those in SFAs. In setting priorities, those containing riparian areas and areas not meeting Land Health Standards (43 C.F.R. 4180) will take precedence. Potential criteria for prioritizing permit modifications could include:

- Are there riparian areas or wet meadows in the permit/lease area?
- Was current livestock grazing identified as a causal factor for not meeting Land Health Standards?
- Since the last allotment/watershed evaluation, is there current monitoring information to determine that the watershed/allotment is currently achieving or making significant progress towards achieving land health standards?
- Does the permit have terms and conditions adequate to ensure proper grazing practices to meet GRSG habitat objectives found in the Special Status Species section of the land use plan?
- Is there data that indicates that the GRSG habitat objectives, including the Habitat Objectives table, found in the Special Status Species section of the land use plan are being met?
- Is there a request from the permittee to modify the terms and conditions of his/her permit?

Additionally, if an existing permit/lease within PHMAs requires modification because current grazing is a significant causal factor for not meeting the Land Health Standards, the BLM will prepare the appropriate NEPA analysis and issue the proposed/final grazing decision under 43 C.F.R. Subpart 4160, subject to administrative appeal and potential judicial challenge.

The NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing permits/leases that include lands within SFAs and PHMAs will include specific management thresholds based on GRSG Habitat Objectives Table and/or Land Health Standards (43 CFR 4180.2) and defined responses that will allow the authorizing officer to make adjustments to livestock grazing without conducting additional NEPA. Adjustments to meet seasonal Sage-Grouse habitat requirements could include:

- Season or timing of use;
- Numbers of livestock (includes temporary non-use or livestock removal);
- Distribution of livestock use;
- Intensity of use; and
- Type of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, llamas, alpacas and goats).

Compliance Monitoring

The BLM will monitor grazing permits/leases renewed or modified in accordance with the direction contained in this guidance as follows: Allotments within SFAs, followed by those in other PHMA, and focusing on those with riparian areas, will be prioritized for monitoring to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions in the permits. The BLM will collect, at a minimum, the following monitoring data:

- Vegetation Condition
- Actual Use
- Utilization
- Use Supervision

Concerning Voluntary Relinquishments

All ADPPs will include the following language:

At the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease, the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was authorized should remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other resource management objectives.

For completing this, BLM offices should use [WO IM 2013-184 Relinquishment of Grazing Permitted Use](#) or the most recent policy guidance.

Attachment V

Applying Lek Buffer-Distances When Approving Actions

- *Buffer Distances and Evaluation of Impacts to Leks*

Evaluate impacts to leks from actions requiring NEPA analysis. In addition to any other relevant information determined to be appropriate (e.g. State wildlife agency plans), the BLM will assess and address impacts from the following activities using the lek buffer-distances as identified in the USGS Report *Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse – A Review* ([Open File Report 2014-1239](#)). The BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances specified as the lower end of the interpreted range in the report unless justifiable departures are determined to be appropriate (see below). The lower end of the interpreted range of the lek buffer-distances is as follows:

 - linear features (roads) within 3.1 miles of leks
 - infrastructure related to energy development within 3.1 miles of leks.
 - tall structures (e.g., communication or transmission towers, transmission lines) within 2 miles of leks.
 - low structures (e.g., fences, rangeland structures) within 1.2 miles of leks.
 - surface disturbance (continuing human activities that alter or remove the natural vegetation) within 3.1 miles of leks.
 - noise and related disruptive activities including those that do not result in habitat loss (e.g., motorized recreational events) at least 0.25 miles from leks.

Justifiable departures to decrease or increase from these distances, based on local data, best available science, landscape features, and other existing protections (e.g., land use allocations, state regulations) may be appropriate for determining activity impacts. The USGS report recognized “that because of variation in populations, habitats, development patterns, social context, and other factors, for a particular disturbance type, there is no single distance that is an appropriate buffer for all populations and habitats across the sage-grouse range”. The USGS report also states that “various protection measures have been developed and implemented... [which have] the ability (alone or in concert with others) to protect important habitats, sustain populations, and support multiple-use demands for public lands”. All variations in lek buffer-distances will require appropriate analysis and disclosure as part of activity authorization.

In determining lek locations, the BLM will use the most recent active or occupied lek data available from the state wildlife agency.

- *For Actions in GHMA*

The BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances identified above as required conservation measures to fully address the impacts to leks as identified in the NEPA analysis.

 - Impacts should first be avoided by locating the action outside of the applicable lek buffer-distance(s) identified above.
 - If it is not possible to relocate the project outside of the applicable lek buffer-distance(s) identified above, the BLM may approve the project only if:
 - Based on best available science, landscape features, and other existing protections, (e.g., land use allocations, state regulations), the BLM determines that a lek buffer-distance other than the applicable distance identified above offers the same or a greater

level of protection to GRSG and its habitat, including conservation of seasonal habitat outside of the analyzed buffer area; or

- The BLM determines that impacts to GRSG and its habitat are minimized such that the project will cause minor or no new disturbance (ex. co-location with existing authorizations); and
- Any residual impacts within the lek buffer-distances are addressed through compensatory mitigation measures sufficient to ensure a net conservation gain, as outlined in the Mitigation Strategy (Appendix X).

- *For Actions in PHMA*

The BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances identified above as required conservation measures to fully address the impacts to leks as identified in the NEPA analysis. Impacts should be avoided by locating the action outside of the applicable lek buffer-distance(s) identified above.

The BLM may approve actions in PHMA that are within the applicable lek buffer distance identified above only if:

- The BLM, with input from the state fish and wildlife agency, determines, based on best available science, landscape features, and other existing protections, that a buffer distance other than the distance identified above offers the same or greater level of protection to GRSG and its habitat, including conservation of seasonal habitat outside of the analyzed buffer area.
- The BLM will explain its justification for determining the approved buffer distances meet these conditions in its project decision.



USDA Forest Service
Intermountain Region
Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
www.fs.fed.usda.gov/htnf



USDI Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
1387 South Vinnell Way
Boise, Idaho 83709-1657
www.blm.gov/nv
Montana State Office
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101
www.blm.gov/ca

June 2015

Dear Reader:

Enclosed is the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-regional Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment (Proposed LUPA) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), one of fifteen sub-regional efforts being conducted as part of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service National Greater-Sage Planning Strategy. The BLM and Forest Service prepared the Proposed LUPA/FEIS in consultation with cooperating agencies, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort.

The purpose of the Proposed LUPA is to amend the following: (1) BLM Idaho Resource Management Plans (RMPs) Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) (2008); Bruneau RMP revision (and existing 1983 Bruneau RMP); Challis RMP (1999); Craters of the Moon National Monument RMP (2006); Four Rivers RMP revision (and existing 1988 Cascade and 1983 Kuna RMPs); Jarbidge RMP revision; Jarbidge RMP Revision, Lemhi RMP (1987); Owyhee RMP (1999); Pocatello RMP; Shoshone-Burley RMP revision (and existing 1980 Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, 1985 Cassia, 1975 Magic, 1985 Monument, 1981 Sun Valley, and 1982 Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (MFPs)/RMPs); Upper Snake RMP revision (and existing 1983 Big Lost, 1985 Medicine Lodge, 1981 Big Desert, 1981 Little Lost-Birch Creek MFPs/RMPs) and the Dillon (MT) RMP; and (2) the following Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) Boise Revised Forest Plan (2010), Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Plan (2009), Revised Caribou Forest Plan (2003), Curlew National Grassland Plan (2002), Challis Forest Plan (1987), Salmon Forest Plan (1988), Sawtooth Revised Forest Plan (2012), Targhee Revised Forest Plan (1997), to identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance and/or restore GRSG habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. The need for action is in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) March 2010, "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act listing petition. The USFWS found that the inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms was identified as a significant threat to GRSG in their finding on the petition to list the GRSG. Land use plan conservation measures were identified as the BLM's and Forest Service's principal regulatory mechanism.

This Proposed LUPA/FEIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and the National Forest Management Act of 1976, as amended. The Proposed LUPA is largely based on Alternatives D and E, the co-preferred alternatives in the Draft LUPA/DEIS, which was released on November 1, 2013. The Proposed LUPA/FEIS contains the Proposed Plan, a summary of changes made between the Draft LUPA/DEIS and Proposed LUPA/FEIS, impacts of the Proposed Plan, a summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public review period for the Draft LUPA/DEIS, and responses to the comments.

In accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 219.59, the Forest Service will waive their objection procedures of this subpart and instead adopt the BLM's protest procedures outlined in 43 C.F.R. § 1610.5-2.

Pursuant to the BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed LUPA and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decisions within 30 days from date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability of the FEIS in the Federal Register. For further information on filing a protest, please see the accompanying protest regulations in the pages that follow (labeled as Attachment #1). The regulations specify the required elements of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g. meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.).

Emailed protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular mail or overnight delivery postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, the BLM will consider the emailed protest as an advance copy and will afford it full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, please direct emailed protests to: protest@blm.gov.

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

<u>Regular Mail:</u>	<u>Overnight Delivery:</u>
Director (210)	Director (210)
Attn: Protest Coordinator	Attn: Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 71383	20 M Street SE, Room 2134LM
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383	Washington, D.C. 20003

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

The BLM Director, in agreement with the responsible official for the Forest Service, will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior on each protest.

Responses to protest issues will be compiled and formalized in a Director's Protest Resolution Report made available following issuance of the decisions.

Upon resolution of all land use plan amendment protests, the BLM and the Forest Service will issue an Approved LUPA and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved LUPA and ROD will be mailed or made available electronically to all who participated in the planning process and will be available on the BLM website at http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/nepa_register/sage-grouse_rmp_revision.html and the Forest Service website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r4/home/?cid=STELPRD3815825>

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions included in this Proposed LUPA are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process, through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) pursuant to 43 CFR, Part 4 Subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's and the Forest Service's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations once the BLM and the Forest Service resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and issues an Approved LUPA and ROD. The Approved LUPA and ROD will therefore identify the implementation decisions made in the plan that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals.

Sincerely,



Jeffery L. Foss
Acting Idaho State Director
Bureau of Land Management



Jamie E. Connell
Montana State Director
Bureau of Land Management



(for) Nora Rasure
Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service
Intermountain Region

Attachment 1

Protest Regulations

[CITE: 43CFR1610.5-2]

TITLE 43--PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR
CHAPTER II--BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PART 1600--PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING--Table of Contents
Subpart 1610--Resource Management Planning
Sec. 1610.5-2 Protest procedures.

- (a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.
- (1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.
- (2) The protest shall contain:
- (i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;
 - (ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
 - (iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;
 - (iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
 - (v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.
- (3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest.
- (b) The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review



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Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

1 **Changes to Chapter 1 between Draft LUPA/EIS and Proposed LUPA/Final EIS**

- 2 • General corrections (e.g., typographical errors), clarifications, and acreage recalculations were
3 included.
- 4 • Additions and clarifications to the planning criteria (Section 1.6.1) and Memoranda of
5 Understanding (Section 1.7.5).
- 6 • A discussion of USFWS was expanded to include the Priority Areas for Conservation and
7 how they relate to GRSG management areas in the LUPA as well as a discussion of
8 Sagebrush Focal Areas (Section 1.1.2).
- 9 • A discussion was added to describe a new USGS report published regarding lek buffers since
10 the DEIS (Section 1.1.3).
- 11 • Text was added to describe the Montana Executive Order related to GRSG (Section 1.1.4).
- 12

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

1 **Chapter 1. Introduction**

2 **1.1 Background**

3 Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG; *Centrocercus urophasianus*) are large, ground-dwelling birds that
4 reside primarily in sagebrush ecosystems. Sagebrush ecosystems were and, in some respects,
5 still are ubiquitous across the intermountain regions of western North America. While
6 historical Euro-American settlement of these lands has been slower and sparser than in other
7 regions of the country, habitat conversion to suit human purposes has contributed to
8 widespread loss and decline of sagebrush habitat availability or quality and associated wildlife
9 populations. These human purposes include agriculture and urban development, energy and
10 mineral resource development, and a long history of dispersed (but sometimes intensive)
11 uses such as domestic grazing.

12 More recently, large wildfires, often fueled or exacerbated by invasive plant species such as
13 cheatgrass, have led to large areas of sagebrush loss in the intermountain west and Great
14 Basin. The estimated distribution of contiguous sagebrush habitats, prior to Euro-American
15 contact (Schroeder et al. 2004), was nearly twice that which is available today. This influences
16 the availability of habitat for GRSG across the species' range (**Figure 1-1**, Greater Sage-
17 Grouse Distribution). Although early documentation is sparse and possibly unreliable, it is
18 suspected that GRSG were similarly more abundant historically at a continental scale
19 (Schroeder et al. 2004). GRSG population trends are variable across their distribution, and
20 while some populations appear stable, population numbers show long-term declines
21 collectively across several regions (Connelly et al. 2004). Proximate reasons for population
22 declines differ across the range-wide distribution of GRSG, but ultimately, the underlying
23 cause is loss of suitable sagebrush habitat (Connelly and Braun 1997; Leonard et al. 2000;
24 Aldridge et al. 2008).

25 The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directs the United States
26 (US) Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop and
27 periodically revise or amend its Land Use Plans (LUPs), which guide management of BLM-
28 administered lands. The National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) directs the US
29 Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service to develop and periodically revise or
30 amend its Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs), which guide management of
31 National Forest System lands. For the purpose of this document, the term LUP applies to all
32 BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and older Management Framework Plans
33 (MFPs) and Forest Service LRMPs.

34 This plan amendment effort is the result of the July 2011, BLM National Greater Sage-
35 Grouse Planning Strategy (Strategy) (BLM 2011). The Strategy responds to the March 2010,
36 US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) *12-Month Finding for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-
37 Grouse (Centrocercus urophasianus) as Threatened or Endangered* (75 Federal Register [FR] 13910,
38 March 23, 2010) (2010 Finding). In the 2010 Finding, the USFWS concluded that GRSG
39 was “warranted, but precluded” for listing as a threatened or endangered species. The
40 USFWS reviewed the status and threats to GRSG in relation to the five Listing Factors

Figure 1-1 Greater Sage-Grouse Distribution



1 provided in Section 4(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Of the five Listing Factors
2 reviewed, the USFWS determined that Factor A, “*the present or threatened destruction, modification,*
3 *or curtailment of the habitat or range of the Greater Sage-Grouse,*” and Factor D, “*the inadequacy of*
4 *existing regulatory mechanisms*” posed “*a significant threat to the Greater Sage-Grouse now and in the*
5 *foreseeable future*” (USFWS 2010) (emphasis added). The USFWS identified the conservation
6 measures in LUPs as the principal regulatory mechanisms for the BLM and Forest Service.

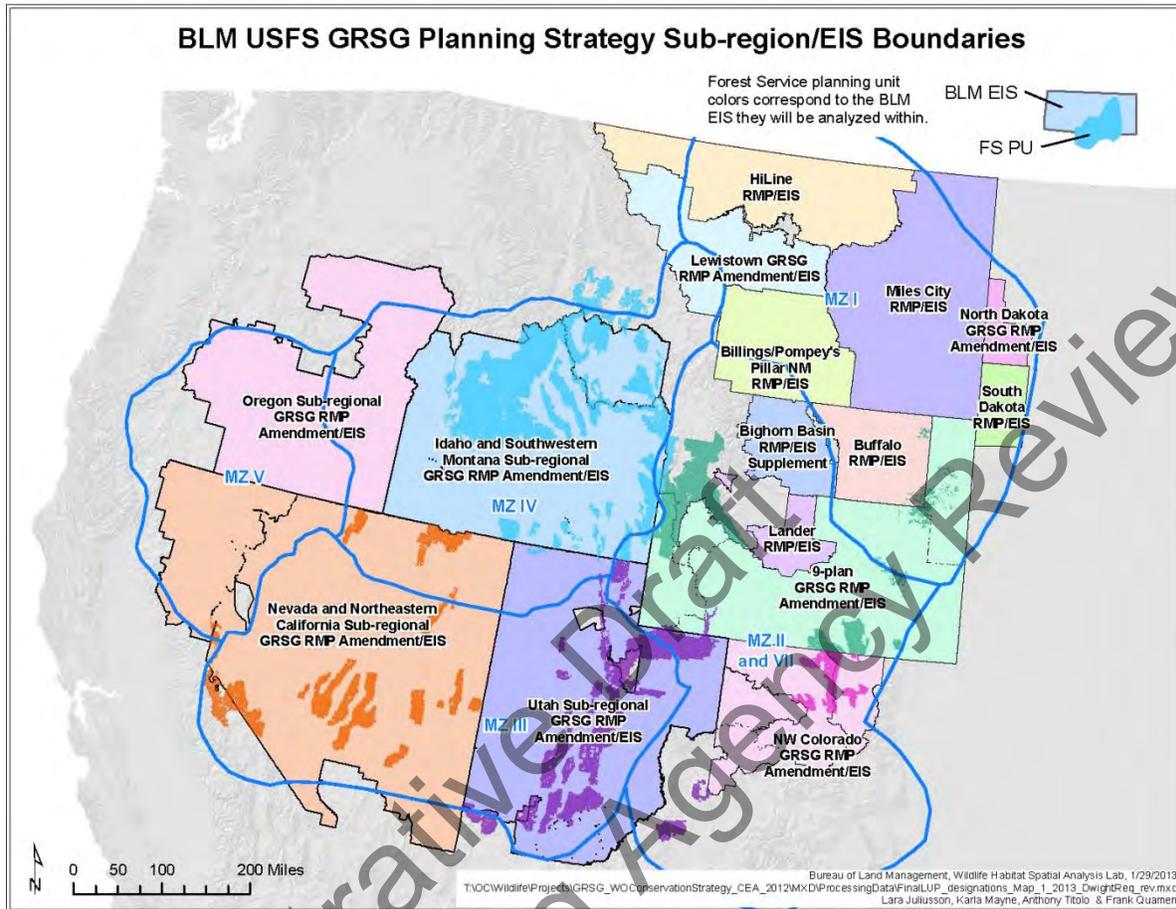
7 In response to the USFWS findings, the BLM and Forest Service intend to prepare plan
8 amendments with associated Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) to incorporate
9 specific conservation measures across the range of the GRSG, consistent with national BLM
10 and Forest Service policy. The planning strategy will evaluate the adequacy of BLM and
11 Forest Service LUPs and address, as necessary, amendments throughout the range of the
12 GRSG (with the exception of the bi-state population in California and Nevada and the
13 Washington State distinct population segment, which will be addressed through other
14 planning efforts). The BLM is the lead agency and the FS is a cooperating agency in
15 developing these EISs. These EISs have been coordinated under two administrative
16 planning regions: the Rocky Mountain Region and the Great Basin Region. These regions
17 are drawn roughly to correspond with the threats identified by the FWS in the 2010 listing
18 decision, along with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)
19 Management Zones framework (National Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Framework
20 Team, December 2006). Stiver et al. (2006) delineated seven GRSG Management Zones,
21 based on the distribution of 41 GRSG populations and 7 floristic provinces to guide general
22 conservation goals and rangewide management within the range of the species. More
23 detailed site-specific data, such as for seasonal habitats, vegetation characteristics, and related
24 factors are more appropriately addressed in finer scale planning efforts or activities.

25 The Rocky Mountain Region comprises LUPs in the states of Montana, North Dakota,
26 South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and portions of Utah. This region comprises the
27 WAFWA Management Zones I (Great Plains), II (Wyoming Basin), and a portion of VII
28 (Colorado Plateau). The USFWS has identified a number of threats in this region, the major
29 ones being habitat loss and fragmentation caused by development (e.g., oil and gas
30 development, energy transmission, and wind energy development).

31 The Great Basin Region comprises LUPs in California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, and
32 portions of Utah and Montana. This region comprises the WAFWA Management Zones III
33 (Southern Great Basin), IV (Snake River Plain), and V (Northern Great Basin). The USFWS
34 has identified a number of threats in this region, the major ones being wildfire, loss of native
35 habitat to invasive species, and habitat fragmentation.

36 Both the Rocky Mountain and Great Basin regions are further divided into sub-regions,
37 which is the level of this National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA)
38 analysis. These sub-regions are generally based on the identified threats to the GRSG and
39 the WAFWA Management Zones (see **Figure 1-2**, BLM USFS GRSG Planning Strategy
40 Sub-region/EIS Boundaries, showing the sub-regional boundaries and WAFWA
41 Management Zones).

Figure 1-2
BLM USFS GRSG Planning Strategy Sub-region/EIS Boundaries



1 On December 9, 2011, a Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register to initiate
2 the amendment of LUPs across nine western states, including California, Oregon, Nevada,
3 Idaho, Utah, and Southwest Montana in the Great Basin Region and Northwest Colorado,
4 Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, and North Dakota in the Rocky Mountain Region. This
5 Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Regional Plan Amendment and EIS is one of fifteen
6 separate EISs that are currently being conducted to analyze and incorporate specific
7 conservation measures across the range of the GRSG, consistent with National BLM and
8 Forest Service policy. A goal of all such LUPAs is to ensure consistency of goals objectives
9 and management actions, to the extent practicable, across the region, as well as across the
10 range of the GRSG.

11 On December 27, 2011, the BLM Washington Office released Instructional Memorandum
12 (IM) No. 2012-044, *BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Planning Strategy*. This IM
13 provides direction to all of the planning efforts across the GRSG range to consider all
14 applicable conservation measures when revising or amending its LUPs in GRSG habitat,
15 including the measures developed by the NTT that were presented in the December 2011

document – *A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures* (NTT Report), included as Attachment 1 of the IM. The IM also directs the inclusion and refinement of preliminary priority habitat (PPH) and preliminary general habitat (PGH) to be used in applying the conservation measures included in the NTT Report. The conservation measures developed by the NTT, should be considered in the land use planning process. The NTT report provides the latest science and best biological judgment, as of December 2011, to assist in making management decisions relating to the GRSG. The IM requires that the BLM consider all applicable conservation measures developed by the NTT when revising or amending its RMPs in GRSG habitat.

To augment this planning document at a biologically meaningful scale for GRSG, a Baseline Environmental Report (BER) for GRSG was produced by the US Geological Survey (USGS) for the BLM and Forest Service (Manier et al. 2013). The BER is a science support document that provides information to provide context for the individual planning units and issues within the larger WAFWA GRSG MZs. The BER examines each threat identified in the USFWS listing decision and summarizes the current scientific understanding of various impacts on GRSG populations and habitats. When available, the BER also identifies patterns, thresholds, indicators, metrics, and measured responses that quantify the impacts of each specific threat.

The Draft EIS included six alternatives that mapped GRSG habitat using different habitat classification schemes (**Table 1-1**).

Table 1-1
Crosswalk between Habitat Classifications in the Draft and Final EIS

Alternative	DEIS Habitat Classification	FEIS Habitat Classification
Alternative A	Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH)	Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)
	Preliminary General Habitat (PGH)	General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)
Alternative B	Preliminary Priority Management Area (PPMA)	Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)
	Preliminary General Management Area (PGMA)	General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)
Alternative C	Preliminary Priority Management Area (PPMA)	Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)
Alternative D	Preliminary Priority Management	Priority Habitat Management Area

Table 1-1		
Crosswalk between Habitat Classifications in the Draft and Final EIS		
Alternative	DEIS Habitat Classification	FEIS Habitat Classification
	Area (PPMA)	(PHMA)
	Preliminary Medial Management Area (PMMA)	Important Habitat Management Area (IHMA)
	Preliminary General Management Area (PGMA)	Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)
Alternative E	Idaho Core Habitat Zone (CHZ)	Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)
	Montana Preliminary Priority Management Area (PPMA)	
	Utah Sage-grouse Management Area (SGMA)	
	Idaho Important Habitat Zone (IHZ)	Important Habitat Management Area (IHMA) – Idaho only
Alternative F	Idaho General Habitat Zone (GHZ)	General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)
	Montana Preliminary General Management Area (PGMA)	
	Preliminary Priority Management Area (PPMA)	
Alternative F	Preliminary General Management Area (PGMA)	General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)
	Preliminary Restoration Management Area (PRMA)	Occur within General or Important Habitat Management Area (GHMA; IHMA)

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The Proposed Plan uses a three-tiered habitat classification system: Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA) Important Habitat Management Areas (IHMA) and General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA).

1 **Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMAs)** focus on conserving the two key meta-
2 populations in the sub-region. These meta-populations consist of a large aggregation of
3 interconnected breeding subpopulations of GRSG that have the highest likelihood of long-
4 term persistence. PHMAs include adequate area to accommodate continuation of existing
5 land uses and landowner activities.

6 **Important Habitat Management Areas (IHMAs)** contain additional habitat and
7 populations that provide a management buffer for the PHMA and to connect patches of
8 PHMA. IHMAs are typically adjacent to PHMAs but generally reflect somewhat lower
9 GRSG population status and/or reduced habitat value due to disturbance, habitat
10 fragmentation or other factors. There are no IHMAs designated within the Southwestern
11 Montana Conservation Area.

12 **General Habitat Management Areas (GHMAs)** encompass habitat that is outside of
13 PHMAs or IHMAs. GHMAs contain approximately 10 percent of the occupied leks that are
14 also of relatively low male attendance compared to leks in PHMA or IHMA. GHMAs are
15 generally characterized by lower quality disturbed or patchy habitat of low lek connectivity.

16 **1.1.1 Forest Service Involvement**

17 The Forest Service is a cooperating agency with the BLM as part of the BLM GRSG
18 Planning Strategy. Across the range of the GRSG the Forest Service manages approximately
19 8 percent of the total GRSG habitat. Combined with the approximately 52 percent managed
20 by the BLM, both agencies manage approximately 60 percent of GRSG habitat across its
21 range (Knick 2011).

22 The Forest Service has partnered with the BLM to help complete the LUPAs and EISs to
23 implement the Strategy. As part of the initial Notice of Intent published in the Federal
24 Register on December 9, 2011, numerous Forest Service LUPs were identified to be
25 amended through this combined effort. After further evaluation a Notice of Correction was
26 published in the Federal Register on February, 10, 2012, which added several additional
27 Forest Service LUPs to the list of plans to be amended through this process.

28 The Forest Service “Interim Conservation Recommendations for Greater Sage-Grouse and
29 Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat” (Forest Service Washington Office [WO] 2600 Memo,
30 October 2, 2012) provides interim recommendations for GRSG and habitat management in
31 Forest Service Regions 1, 2, and 4, on the 20 Forest Service units involved in the GRSG land
32 use planning process. These recommendations are applicable until interim directives are
33 adopted or until the amendment for the LUP unit is completed (77 *Federal Register* 12792;
34 March 2, 2012). The recommendations identify considerations for project decision-making
35 as well as existing direction and legal requirements that may be relevant to Forest Service
36 management of GRSG habitat. The recommendations do not supersede more protective
37 conservation measures in existing LUPs. The goal is to promote consistency in management
38 of activities on National Forest System lands with guidance in the BLM IM No. 2012-043,
39 Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures (December 22, 2011).

1 The Forest Service has structured its planning effort in a manner similar to the BLM
2 Strategy, with involvement at the national, regional and sub-regional levels, as described in
3 detail in **Section 1.1.1**. Since December 2011, the BLM and Forest Service have been
4 working jointly through scoping, issue and alternative development, effects analysis and
5 document completion. At the culmination of this process, the Forest Service intends to issue
6 a separate Record of Decision (ROD) to amend or revise (if needed) Forest Service LUPs.

7 **1.1.2 USFWS Involvement**

8 The USFWS is a cooperating agency with the BLM as part of this Strategy. The USFWS is
9 ultimately responsible for the evaluation and findings regarding potential ESA listing of the
10 GRSG. The 2010 Finding indicated that GRSG is warranted for listing but precluded by
11 higher priority listing actions (“warranted but precluded”), this designation places the GRSG
12 on the federal list of candidate species.

13 ***GRSG Conservation Objectives: Priority Areas for Conservation and How They*** 14 ***Correlate with Priority and General Habitat Management Areas***

15 In 2012, the Director of the USFWS asked the Conservation Objectives Team (COT),
16 consisting of state and USFWS representatives, to produce recommendations regarding the
17 degree to which the threats need to be reduced or ameliorated to conserve GRSG so that it
18 would no longer be in danger of extinction or likely to become in danger of extinction in the
19 foreseeable future. The COT Report (USFWS 2013a) provides objectives based upon the
20 best scientific and commercial data available at the time of its release. The BLM and Forest
21 Service planning decisions analyzed in the LUP/EISS are intended to ameliorate threats
22 identified in the COT report and to reverse the trends in habitat condition. The COT Report
23 can be viewed online at the following address:

24 [http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/sagegrouse/COT/COT-Report-with-
Dear-Interested-Reader-Letter.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/sagegrouse/COT/COT-Report-with-
25 Dear-Interested-Reader-Letter.pdf)

26 The highest level objective in the COT Report is identified as meeting the objectives of
27 WAFWA’s 2006 GRSG Comprehensive Strategy of “reversing negative population trends
28 and achieving a neutral or positive population trend.”

29 The COT Report provides a WAFWA Management Zone and Population Risk Assessment.
30 The report identifies localized threats from sagebrush elimination, fire, conifer
31 encroachment, weed and annual grass invasion, mining, free-roaming wild horses and
32 burros, urbanization, and widespread threats from energy development, infrastructure,
33 grazing, and recreation (USFWS 2013a, p. 18).

34 Key areas across the landscape that are considered “necessary to maintain redundant,
35 representative, and resilient populations” are identified within the COT Report. The USFWS
36 in concert with the respective state wildlife management agencies identified these key areas
37 as Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs).

38 Within the Idaho and southwestern Montana sub-region, the PACs consist of a total
39 11,232,800 acres. Under the Proposed Plan, the PACs are comprised of 7,111,200 acres of

1 PHMA managed by the BLM and Forest Service, 3,489,400 acres of IHMA managed by the
2 BLM and Forest Service, 272,400 acres of GHMA managed by the BLM and Forest Service,
3 and 359,900 acres of non-habitat managed by the BLM and Forest Service.

4 On October 27, 2014, the USFWS provided the BLM and Forest Service a memorandum
5 titled "[Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendations to Refine Land Use Allocations
6 in Highly Important Landscapes](#)". The memorandum and associated maps provided by the
7 USFWS identify areas that represent recognized "strongholds" for GRSG that have been
8 noted and referenced as having the highest densities of GRSG and other criteria important
9 for the persistence of the species. The USFWS did recognize areas within the Idaho and
10 Southwestern Montana planning area as "strongholds" for GRSG.

11 **1.1.3 Other Federal Agency Involvement**

12 On November 21, 2014 the USGS published "Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for
13 Greater Sage-Grouse—A Review" (USGS 2014). The USGS review provided a compilation
14 and summary of published scientific studies that evaluate the influence of anthropogenic
15 activities and infrastructure on GRSG populations. The BLM has reviewed this information
16 and examined how lek buffer-distances were addressed through land use allocations and
17 other management actions in the Draft Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region
18 GRSG LUPA/EIS. Based on this review, in undertaking BLM management actions, and
19 consistent with valid and existing rights and applicable law in authorizing third party actions,
20 the BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances in the USGS Report "Conservation Buffer
21 Distance Estimates for Greater Sage Grouse-A Review (Open File Report 2014-1239)" in
22 GHMA, IHMA, and PHMA as detailed in **Appendix DD**.

23 **1.1.4 State Government and Wildlife Agencies Involvement**

24 The various state wildlife agencies are involved in the BLM GRSG planning strategy as
25 cooperating agencies and are involved with the RMTs and the Sub-Regional interdisciplinary
26 teams. While working to help develop the EIS, the states of Idaho and Utah have also
27 worked through their own authorities and processes to develop state plans to be included as
28 alternatives in the BLM GRSG Planning Strategy as a potential approach to management for
29 consideration by the BLM and Forest Service.



Figure 1-3 USFWS Priority Areas for Conservation with Preliminary Priority and General Habitat

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

1 The Governor of the State of Montana issued Executive Order 10-2014 which created the
2 Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team and the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation
3 Program. The executive order outlines a number of conservation strategies for state agencies
4 to follow for land uses and activities in GRSG habitat in addition to establishing the
5 Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team and habitat conservation program. The State
6 conservation efforts are complimentary to the conservation measures proposed in the BLM
7 land use plans and when combined would provide conservation efforts across land
8 ownership boundaries.

9 **1.1.5 Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region**

10 The BLM Idaho and Montana state offices and Forest Service Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Boise,
11 Caribou, Challis, Salmon, Sawtooth, and Targhee national forests and Curlew National
12 Grassland are preparing the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Regional EIS. This is to
13 consider amending up to 29 LUPs to incorporate conservation measures into the
14 management of GRSG habitat for all included BLM-administered and National Forest
15 System lands (**Figure 1-4**). This planning area is the geographic area within which the BLM
16 and Forest Service will provide direction during this planning effort, and the planning area
17 boundary includes all lands regardless of jurisdiction. For this EIS, the planning area is the
18 entire sub-region (**Figure 1-4**). Lands addressed in the LUPA will be BLM-administered and
19 National Forest System lands (including surface-estate and split-estate lands) in GRSG
20 habitats. Any direction provided in the LUPA will apply only to federal lands or mineral
21 estate administered by either the BLM or the Forest Service. The LUPA will be limited to
22 providing land use direction specific to the conservation of GRSG and their habitat. The
23 proposed LUPA is intended to identify and incorporate appropriate regulatory mechanisms
24 to maintain, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat. It also is intended to eliminate, reduce, or
25 minimize threats to GRSG priority and general habitats on BLM-administered and National
26 Forest System lands in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region. The proposed
27 LUPA addresses both ESA Listing Factors A and D (see Section 1.1 above) and is intended
28 to provide consistency in the management of GRSG habitats across Idaho and Southwestern
29 Montana Sub-region BLM and Forest Service offices. The LUPs identified in **Table 1-2**,
30 BLM and Forest Service Land Use Plans Proposed for Amendment, are proposed to be
31 amended during this effort to incorporate appropriate conservation measures. The Butte
32 RMP is not identified in **Table 1-2** and is not going to be amended due to the limited extent
33 and quality of GRSG habitat present within the Butte Field Office; however, the area
34 covered by the Butte RMP will be considered as part of the effects analysis described in
35 **Chapter 4**.

Table 1-2
BLM and Forest Service Land Use Plans Proposed for Amendment

Managing Office	Year Effective	Land Use Plan
Bureau of Land Management		
Bruneau Field Office, ID	1983	Bruneau MFP
Bruneau Field Office, ID	Revision to start in 2015	Bruneau RMP Revision
Burley Field Office, ID	1985	Cassia RMP
Burley Field Office, ID	1982	Twin Falls MFP



Table 1-2
BLM and Forest Service Land Use Plans Proposed for Amendment

Managing Office	Year Effective	Land Use Plan
Challis Field Office, ID	1999	Challis RMP
Dillon Field Office, MT	2006	Dillon RMP
Four Rivers Field Office, ID	1988	Cascade RMP
Four Rivers Field Office, ID	1983	Kuna RMP
Four Rivers Field Office, ID	In Development	Four Rivers RMP Revision
Four Rivers Field Office, ID	2008	Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) RMP
Jarbidge Field Office, ID	1987	Jarbidge RMP
Jarbidge Field Office, ID	In Development	Jarbidge RMP Revision
Owyhee Field Office, ID	1999	Owyhee RMP
Pocatello Field Office, ID	2012	Pocatello RMP
Salmon Field Office, ID	1987	Lemhi RMP
Shoshone Field Office, ID	2006	Craters of the Moon National Monument RMP
Shoshone Field Office, ID	1975	Magic MFP
Shoshone Field Office, ID	1981	Sun Valley MFP
Shoshone Field Office, ID	1980	Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP
Shoshone and Burley Field Offices, ID	1985	Monument RMP
Shoshone and Burley Field Offices, ID	Revision to start in 2015	Shoshone-Burley RMP Revision
Upper Snake Field Office, ID	1981	Little Lost-Birch Creek MFP
Upper Snake Field Office, ID	1985	Medicine Lodge RMP
Upper Snake Field Office, ID	1981	Big Desert MFP
Upper Snake Field Office, ID	1983	Big Lost MFP
Upper Snake Field Office, ID	In Development	Upper Snake RMP
Forest Service		
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, MT	2009	Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Plan
Boise National Forest, ID	2010	Boise National Forest, Forest Plan Amendments Proposed to Facilitate Implementation of the Plan-Scale Wildlife Conservation Strategy
Caribou-Targhee National Forest, ID	2002	Curlew National Grassland Management Plan
Caribou-Targhee National Forest, ID	2003	Revised Forest Plan for the Caribou National Forest
Caribou-Targhee National Forest, ID	1997	1997 Revised Forest Plan, Targhee National Forest
Salmon-Challis National Forest, ID	1987	Challis National Forest Plan
Salmon-Challis National Forest, ID	1988	Salmon National Forest Plan
Sawtooth National Forest, ID, UT	2012	Sawtooth National Forest Revised Forest Plan

Figure 1-4 Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Regional Planning Area



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1.2 Purpose and Need

The BLM and the Forest Service are preparing a LUPA with associated EIS for LUPs containing GRSG habitat. This effort responds to the USFWS’s 2010 Finding which identified inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms as a significant threat. The USFWS identified the principal regulatory mechanisms for the BLM and Forest Service as conservation measures embedded in LUPs. Changes in management of GRSG habitats are necessary to avoid the continued decline of populations that are anticipated across the species’ range. These plan amendments will focus on areas affected by threats to the GRSG habitat identified by the USFWS in the 2010 Finding. Within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region the primary threats to GRSG include habitat loss and fragmentation due to increased occurrence of wildfire, expansion of invasive species, human development and infrastructure. **Table 1-3**, Identified Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse , lists the threats, in order of priority, that have been identified across the GRSG range and specifically within Idaho and Montana. At the local scale, the relative risk of these threats may differ. For example, even though the USFWS at the national level, the State of Idaho at the state level, and the Challis Local Working Group (LWG) at the local level have identified predation as a lower threat, the Custer County Board of Commissioners has identified excessive predation as the greatest threat to GRSG within Custer County (see **Appendix R**).

**Table 1-3
Identified Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse**

USFWS 2010 Finding	2006 Idaho GRSG Conservation Plan	2005 Montana GRSG Management Plan
Invasive Species	Wildfire	Fire
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Harvest management
Fire	Annual Grassland	Livestock grazing management
Agriculture	Livestock Impacts	Noxious weed management
Grazing	Human Disturbance	Mining and energy development
Oil and Gas	West Nile Virus	Outreach, education, and implementation;
Urbanization	Prescribed Fire	Power lines and generation facilities
Mining	Seeded Perennial Grassland	Predation
Conifer Invasion	Climate Change	Recreational disturbance of GRSG
Predation	Conifer Encroachment	Roads and motorized vehicles
Disease	Isolated Populations	Vegetation
Water Development	Predation	Other wildlife
Hunting	Urban/Exurban Development	
Climate Change	Sagebrush Control	
	Insecticides	
	Agricultural Expansion	
	Sport Hunting	
	Mines/Landfills/Gravel Pits	
	Falconry	

20 Source: USFWS 2010a; Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee 2006; Montana Sage-Grouse Work Group 2005

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2 The purpose of the LUPA is to identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures
3 into LUPs to conserve, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat by reducing, eliminating, or
4 minimizing threats to that habitat. The BLM will consider such measures in the context of its
5 multiple-use mandate under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).
6 Because the BLM and Forest Service administer a large portion of the GRSG habitat within
7 the affected states, changes in BLM and Forest Service management of GRSG habitats are
8 anticipated to have a considerable beneficial impact on present and future GRSG
9 populations.

10 **1.3 Description of the Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Area**

11 **1.3.1 Overview**

12 The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region includes BLM-administered and National
13 Forest System lands in Idaho and southwestern Montana, excluding the Idaho panhandle
14 (**Figure 1-3** and **Table 1-4**, Acres of GRSG Habitat by Surface Management). The specific
15 field offices and national forests included in the planning area are: Bruneau Field Office,
16 Burley Field Office, Challis Field Office, Four Rivers Field Office, Jarbidge Field Office,
17 Owyhee Field Office, Pocatello Field Office, Salmon Field Office, Shoshone Field Office,
18 Upper Snake Field Office, Boise National Forest, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Curlew
19 National Grassland, Salmon-Challis National Forest, and Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho;
20 and Butte Field Office, Dillon Field Office, and Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest in
21 southwest Montana. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region also includes the
22 portion of the Sawtooth National Forest located within Box Elder County in Utah, and the
23 maps of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse LUPA will display these
24 lands as part of the planning area. The acres of GRSG habitat by county is displayed in
25 **Table 1-5**, Acres of GRSG Habitat by County .

26 There are approximately 77,800 acres of BLM-administered lands in Elko County, Nevada,
27 located north of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and south of the Idaho-Nevada
28 state line adjacent to the Bruneau and Jarbidge Field Offices in Idaho. For purposes of the
29 GRSG LUPAs in Idaho and in Nevada, planning for these lands will occur through the
30 Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse LUPA, and the regulatory
31 measures and direction that are put in place for the GRSG through the ROD will be
32 implemented and administered by the Jarbidge and Bruneau Field Offices in Idaho.
33 Therefore, the decision and planning areas for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater
34 Sage-Grouse LUPA end at the Idaho/Nevada state line and will not include lands in
35 Nevada; however, maps will continue to include these Nevada lands as part of the Idaho and
36 Southwestern Montana Sub-region based on the recognized administrative boundary.

37 PPH and PGH have been delineated as defined by BLM IM No. 2012-043 for both Idaho
38 and Montana. Although slightly different processes were used to delineate these areas the
39 habitat described is analogous and will be discussed in conjunction for the purposes analysis.
40 In Idaho, PPH and PGH were identified based on a model incorporating sage-grouse
41 breeding bird density and lek connectivity models, informed with additional ancillary broad
42



Table 1-4
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Surface Management

Surface Land Management	Acres PPH	Acres PGH	Acres Outside Habitat	Total Acres
BLM Total	7,272,100	1,971,800	3,205,100	12,449,000
BLM – Idaho	6,811,400	1,749,900	2,982,900	11,544,200
Bruneau Field Office	1,001,000	184,700	262,900	1,448,600
Burley Field Office	422,000	206,200	206,700	834,900
Challis Field Office	635,600	84,400	72,900	792,900
Four Rivers Field Office	162,200	190,800	901,400	1,254,400
Jarbridge Field Office	765,100	251,900	305,100	1,322,200
Owyhee Field Office	794,600	242,700	222,500	1,259,900
Pocatello Field Office	233,700	87,500	278,800	599,900
Salmon Field Office	311,100	51,600	131,200	493,900
Shoshone Field Office	1,092,500	262,000	368,700	1,723,200
Upper Snake Field Office	1,393,800	187,900	232,600	1,814,300
BLM – Montana	460,600	222,000	222,200	904,800
Dillon Field Office	460,600	222,000	222,200	904,800
Forest Service Total	962,400	898,100	11,391,900	13,252,400
Forest Service - Idaho	728,200	664,100	9,718,800	11,111,100
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	110	30	980	1,120
Sawtooth National Forest	210,100	212,400	1,612,300	2,034,800
Boise National Forest	21,200	56,900	2,182,800	2,260,900
Caribou-Targhee National Forest	148,300	186,400	2,251,300	2,586,000
Salmon-Challis National Forest	348,700	208,300	3,672,400	4,229,400
Forest Service - Montana	162,300	234,000	1,673,100	2,069,400
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	162,300	234,000	1,673,100	2,069,400
Forest Service - Utah	71,900	0	0	71,900
Sawtooth National Forest	71,900	0	0	71,900
US Fish and Wildlife Service	39,700	11,700	30,000	81,400
National Park Service	27,200	222,700	261,800	511,700
Department of Energy	378,000	182,500	1,670	562,200
Department of Defense	11,100	37,700	78,500	127,400
Bureau of Reclamation	3,250	3,260	109,800	116,300
Indian Tribe	143,900	10,700	189,000	343,600
Idaho State	642,400	377,500	804,500	1,824,400
Montana State	221,700	167,500	432,000	821,100
Utah State	630	0	0	630
Private	2,127,600	1,857,200	9,652,900	13,637,700
Other	87,800	32,200	294,400	414,400
Total Acres:	11,921,200	5,756,600	26,164,500	43,842,300

Source: BLM 2013

Table 1-5
Acres of GRSG Habitat by County^{1, 2}

County	Acres PPH			Acres PGH			GRSG Habitat (PPH & PGH)			County Acres	Percent Federal PPH in County	Percent Federal Habitat in County
	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service			
Idaho												
Ada	0	0	0	500	0	500	500	0	500	678,800	0	0
Adams	7,800	0	7,800	14,400	0	14,400	22,200	0	22,200	604,200	1	4
Bear Lake	43,500	1,600	45,200	4,700	600	5,300	48,200	2,200	50,500	672,700	7	8
Bingham	87,800	0	87,800	96,500	0	96,500	184,300	0	184,300	1,356,800	6	14
Blaine	454,000	2,200	456,200	65,300	17,600	82,900	519,300	19,800	539,100	1,699,100	27	32
Bonneville	6,200	0	6,200	19,400	42,000	61,400	25,600	42,000	67,600	1,220,500	1	6
Butte	489,400	65,400	554,700	20,200	73,800	94,000	509,600	139,200	648,700	1,432,800	39	45
Camas	97,200	400	97,600	15,300	19,000	34,300	112,500	19,400	131,900	689,100	14	19
Caribou	7,400	0	7,400	9,100	2,000	11,100	16,500	2,000	18,500	1,150,900	1	2
Cassia	251,500	130,900	382,400	133,400	121,900	255,300	384,900	252,800	637,700	1,651,000	23	39
Clark	310,700	80,500	391,100	25,800	89,700	115,600	336,500	170,200	506,700	1,128,500	35	45
Custer	652,500	234,700	887,200	78,100	102,200	180,300	730,600	336,900	1,067,500	3,160,400	28	34
Elmore	108,400	26,000	134,400	57,700	57,000	114,700	166,100	83,000	249,100	1,986,100	7	13
Fremont	97,800	8,900	106,600	6,900	14,100	21,000	104,700	23,000	127,600	1,212,300	9	11
Gem	0	0	0	19,500	0	19,500	19,500	0	19,500	361,400	0	5
Gooding	195,000	0	195,000	18,100	0	18,100	213,100	0	213,100	469,900	41	45
Jefferson	169,100	0	169,100	12,200	0	12,200	181,300	0	181,300	707,700	24	26
Jerome	0	0	0	54,900	0	54,900	54,900	0	54,900	385,600	0	14
Lemhi	377,800	66,800	444,600	63,200	76,800	139,900	441,000	143,600	584,500	2,923,100	15	20
Lincoln	306,100	0	306,100	129,700	0	129,700	435,800	0	435,800	771,800	40	56
Madison	11,400	0	11,400	800	0	800	12,200	0	12,200	303,000	4	4
Minidoka	124,500	0	124,500	10,800	0	10,800	135,300	0	135,300	488,000	26	28

¹Acres included are within the planning area. Acres for counties that extend beyond the planning area only reflect those acres within the county and within the planning area. Counties which do not contain any federal PPH or PGH are not included in the table.

²Acreage totals may not match other tables exactly, as a result of rounding errors and GIS overlay offsets.

Table 1-5
Acres of GRSG Habitat by County^{1, 2}

County	Acres PPH			Acres PGH			GRSG Habitat (PPH & PGH)			County Acres	Percent Federal PPH in County	Percent Federal Habitat in County
	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service	BLM	Forest Service	BLM & Forest Service			
Oneida	172,300	43,600	215,900	65,700	17,900	83,600	238,000	61,500	299,500	769,000	28	39
Owyhee	2,344,500	0	2,344,500	651,000	0	651,000	2,995,500	0	2,995,500	4,925,800	48	61
Payette	3,400	0	3,400	9,100	0	9,100	12,500	0	12,500	262,400	1	5
Power	82,100	4,100	86,200	35,800	2,400	38,300	117,900	6,500	124,500	923,000	9	13
Twin Falls	345,000	63,900	408,900	39,700	27,500	67,200	384,700	91,400	476,100	1,234,300	33	39
Washington	66,100	0	66,100	92,000	0	92,000	158,100	0	158,100	942,400	7	17
Montana												
Beaverhead	436,900	122,900	559,800	123,400	138,800	262,200	560,300	261,700	822,000	3,564,900	15	23
Deer Lodge	0	0	0	700	0	700	700	0	700	474,400	0	0
Fremont	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	23,700	39,900	63,500	101,200	95,604	196,900	124,900	135,504	260,400	2,306,000	3	11
Silver Bow	0	0	0	17,600	0	17,600	17,600	0	17,600	459,900	0	4
Utah												
Box Elder ³	0	71,900	71,900	0	0	0	0	71,900	71,900	92,100	78	78

1

³Only acres for the Sawtooth National Forest that are located in Box Elder County are included; therefore, the only county acres contained in the Idaho and southwestern Montana Sub-region are those administered by the Sawtooth National Forest.

1 scale habitat data, seasonal habitat maps, connectivity information, expert opinion,
2 population persistence model, local priority areas and agriculture and conifer filters (Makela
3 and Major 2012).

4 In Montana, PPH was delineated based on Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Park's (MFWP)
5 modeling of GRSG Core Areas using a model based on male lek attendance and refined with
6 seasonal habitat, telemetry, connectivity information and field review; occupied habitats not
7 identified as Core Areas were delineated as PGH (MFWP 2009).

8 Through this land use planning process, the BLM and Forest Service continue to refine PPH
9 and PGH data to: (1) identify priority habitat and analyze actions within priority habitat to
10 conserve GRSG habitat functionality, and/or where appropriate, improve habitat
11 functionality, and (2) identify general habitat and analyze actions within general habitat that
12 provide for major life history function (e.g., breeding, migration, or winter survival) in order
13 to maintain genetic diversity needed for sustainable GRSG populations.

14 While PPH and PGH delineations reflect a relatively broad characterization of habitat
15 priorities at the landscape scale, there may be variations or discrepancies locally due to the
16 nature of the modeling involved. For purposes of this planning effort, the April 2012 map
17 (Makela and Major 2012) provides a common basis for comparing baseline conditions and
18 impacts analysis for each alternative on GRSG habitat in the sub-region. For the remainder
19 of this document, PPH and PGH refer to the areas identified in the April 2012 map of
20 GRSG habitat (**Figure 1-4**).

21 The vast majority of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region lies within WAFWA
22 Management Zone (MZ) IV (Stiver et al. 2006). A small portion of southeastern Idaho is
23 within MZ II and is associated with the Wyoming Basin population. Within the sub-region,
24 GRSG occupy all or portions of ten population areas described in Connelly et al (2004;
25 **Figure 1-5**, Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Population Areas). Two
26 populations (Great Basin Core, Wyoming Basin) occupy habitat in adjacent states. Habitat
27 mapping has been coordinated across state boundaries.

28 The distribution of GRSG is closely aligned with the distribution of sagebrush-dominated
29 landscapes (Schroeder et al. 2004). In the sub-region, large expanses of sagebrush still occur
30 in portions of southwestern and south-central Idaho, in association with the Great Basin
31 Core population shared with Nevada, Oregon, and Utah, as well as in portions of the Snake-
32 Salmon-Beaverhead population north of the Snake River.

33 At broad scales, PPH and PGH encompass areas of intact sagebrush, suitable for GRSG
34 habitat needs. PPH and PGH may also contain inclusions of conifer encroachment and
35 perennial grass dominated areas, generally occupied by GRSG or potentially suitable for
36 future restoration. At finer scales, PPH and PGH encompass areas of intact suitable
37 sagebrush habitat that is generally occupied by GRSG, as well as areas of conifer expansion
38 and perennial grassland potentially suitable for future restoration.



Figure 1-5 Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Population Areas



1 If current trends in wildfire, populations and habitat activities continue, then populations of
2 sage-grouse in MZ IV are estimated to decline by 55 percent between 2007 and 2037, and by
3 66 percent in MZ II (USFWS 2010, citing unpublished version of Garton et al. 2011).
4 Modeling suggests that if current conditions and trends continue, at least 13 percent of the
5 GRSG populations may decline below effective population sizes of 50 within the next 30
6 years and at least 75 percent of the populations may decline below effective population sizes
7 of 500 within the next 100 years (Garton et al. 2011).

8 **1.3.2 Land Uses**

9 Land uses occurring within GRSG habitat on BLM-administered and National Forest
10 System lands in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region are livestock grazing and
11 associated infrastructure; rights-of-way (ROWs) for a variety of linear and site-type facilities;
12 travel and recreation; off-highway vehicle (OHV) use; energy (nonrenewable, renewable, and
13 geothermal), mineral development (including hardrock and phosphate mining); and
14 geothermal leasing, exploration, and development.

15 These uses generally occur throughout the planning area to varying degrees. For example
16 phosphate leasing is typically confined to southeast Idaho and oil and gas leasing typically
17 occurs in the eastern portion of the sub-region. Livestock grazing occurs throughout the
18 sub-region as do recreation, OHV use and various ROW authorizations for linear and site-
19 type facilities.

20 **1.4 Planning Process**

21 **1.4.1 BLM Planning Process**

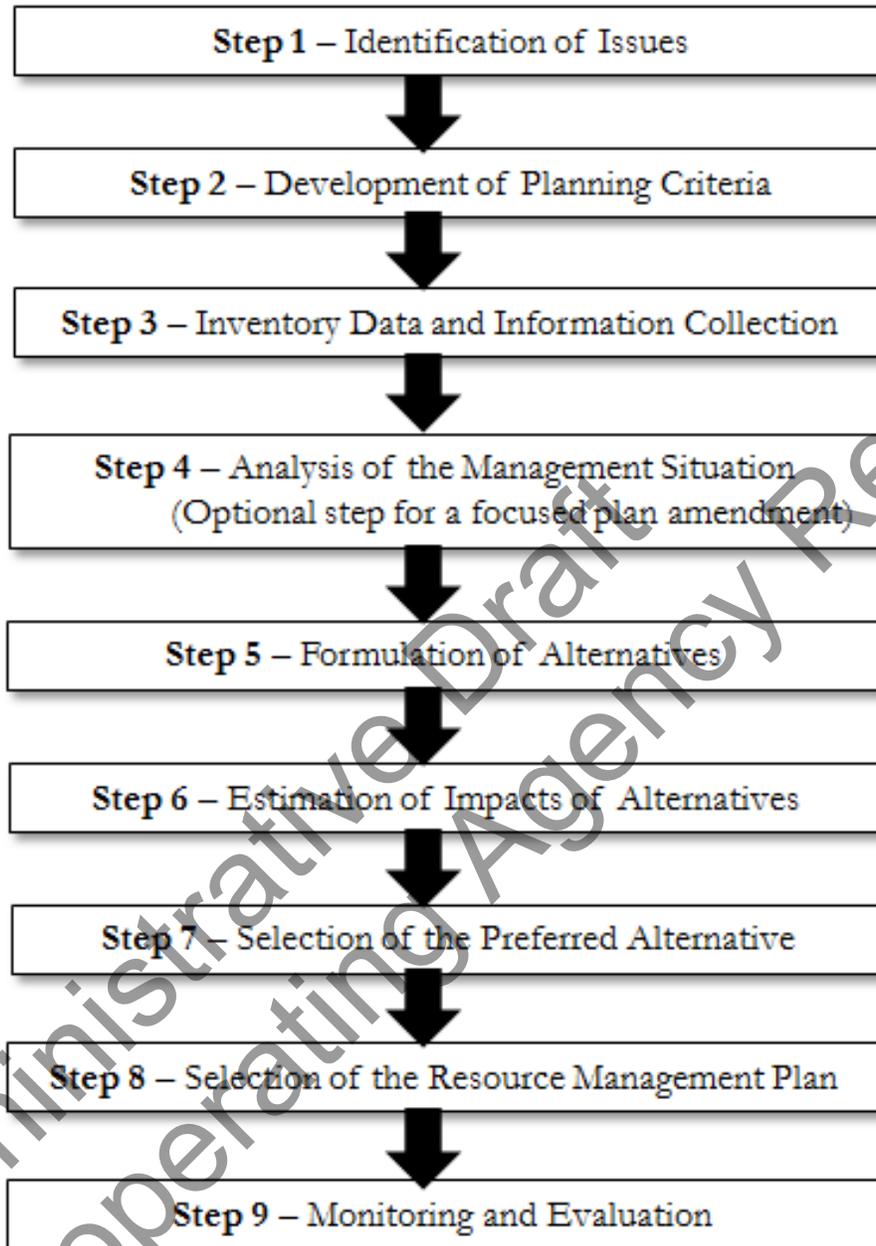
22 FLPMA requires the BLM to use RMPs as tools by which "present and future use is
23 projected" (43 United States Code [USC] 1701(a)(2)). FLPMA's implementing regulations for
24 planning (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 1600), state that LUPs are a
25 preliminary step in the overall process of managing public lands "designed to guide and
26 control future management actions and the development of subsequent, more detailed and
27 limited scope plans for resources and uses" (43 CFR 1601.0-2). Public participation and
28 input are important components of land use planning.

29 Under BLM regulations, an RMP revision or amendment of an existing plan is a major
30 federal action requiring disclosure and documentation of environmental effects as described
31 in the NEPA. Thus, this EIS accompanies the amendment of the existing RMPs (**Table 1-**
32 **2**). This EIS analyzes the impacts of six alternatives for the Idaho and Southwestern
33 Montana Sub-region LUPA, including the No Action Alternative. The science used to
34 analyze these impacts is current through August 2013.

35 The BLM uses a nine-step planning process (**Figure 1-6**, BLM Nine Step Planning Process)
36 to develop or revise RMPs (43 CFR Part 1600 and planning program guidance in the BLM
37 Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning Handbook (BLM 2005a)). The planning process is
38 designed to help the BLM identify the uses of BLM-administered lands desired by the public
39



Figure 1-6
BLM Nine Step Planning Process



Source: 43 CFR 1610.4

1 and to consider these uses to the extent they are consistent with the laws established by
2 Congress and the policies of the executive branch of the federal government.

3 Once an RMP is approved, it may be changed through amendment. An amendment can be
4 initiated in response to monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy,
5 a change in circumstances or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of
6 resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions, and direction provided in the approved
7 plan. If the BLM decides to prepare an EIS, the amending process shall follow the same
8 procedure required for preparation and approval of the plan, but the focus shall be limited to
9 that portion of the plan being amended (43 CFR 1610.5-5).

10 As depicted in **Figure 1-6**, the planning process is issue-driven (Step 1). The planning
11 process is undertaken to resolve management issues and problems as well as to take
12 advantage of management opportunities. The BLM uses the public scoping process to
13 identify planning issues to direct (drive) the revision or amendment of an existing plan. The
14 scoping process is also used to introduce the public to preliminary planning criteria, which
15 set the parameters or "sideboards" for conducting the planning process (Step 2).

16 The BLM uses existing data from files and other sources and collects new data to address
17 planning issues and to fill data gaps identified during public scoping (Step 3). Using these
18 data, information concerning the resource management programs, and the planning criteria,
19 the BLM completes an Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) (Step 4) to describe
20 current management and develop or inform the affected environment portion of the LUP.
21 Typically, the AMS is conducted at the outset of planning for an entire LUP or LUP revision
22 and is incorporated by reference into development of a single focus plan amendment. AMSs
23 are required for plan revisions but not necessarily for plan amendments, and an AMS has not
24 been completed specific to this sub-regional planning effort. In this case, direction for the
25 plan amendment is provided through national policy (BLM IM 2012-044).

26 Results of the first four steps of the planning process clarify the purpose and need and
27 identify key planning issues that need to be addressed by the amendment. Key planning
28 issues reflect the focus of the LUP amendment and are described in more detail in **Section**
29 **1.5.2, Issues Identified for Consideration in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-**
30 **Region.**

31 Alternatives constitute a range of management actions that set forth different priorities and
32 measures to emphasize certain uses or resource values over other uses or resource values
33 (usually representing a continuum from extraction and development to
34 preservation/conservation) pursuant to the multiple-use and sustained yield mandate, so as
35 to achieve certain goals or objectives consistent with the purpose and need. During
36 alternative formulation (Step 5), the BLM collaborates with cooperating agencies to identify
37 goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resources and resource uses within the planning
38 area. The alternatives represent a reasonable range of planning strategies for managing
39 resources and resource uses. Chapter 2 of the DEIS, Alternatives, describes and summarizes
40 the Preferred Alternative and the other draft alternatives considered in detail.



1 The draft LUPA/EIS also includes an analysis of the impacts of the Preferred Alternative
2 and the other draft alternatives in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences (Step 6). With
3 input from cooperating agencies and BLM specialists, and consideration of planning issues,
4 planning criteria, and the impacts of alternatives, the BLM identifies and recommends a
5 preferred alternative from among the alternatives presented in the EIS (Step 7). This is
6 documented in the draft LUPA/EIS, which is then distributed for a 90-day public review
7 and comment period.

8 Following receipt and consideration of public comments on the draft LUPA/EIS and in
9 preparation of the Proposed LUPA/Final EIS, the BLM considers all comments it receives
10 during the public comment period (Step 8). This Proposed LUPA has been crafted, in whole
11 or in part, from components of the draft alternatives. It amends plans on final approval of
12 the Record of Decision.

13 Monitoring, the repeated measurement of activities and conditions over time, and evaluation,
14 in which the plan and monitoring data are reviewed to see if management goals and
15 objectives are being met and if management direction is sound, are components of plan
16 implementation (Step 9). Monitoring data gathered over time are examined and used to draw
17 conclusions on whether management actions are meeting stated objectives, and if not, why.
18 Conclusions are then used to make recommendations on whether to continue current
19 management or what changes need to be made in management practices to meet objectives.

20 The two types of monitoring of the planning process include implementation and
21 effectiveness monitoring. Land use plan monitoring is the process of (1) tracking the
22 implementation of land use planning direction and (2) collecting and assessing
23 data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of land use planning direction. The
24 two types of monitoring are described below.

25 **Implementation Monitoring:** Implementation monitoring is the most basic type of
26 monitoring and simply determines whether planned activities have been implemented in the
27 manner prescribed by the plan. Some agencies call this compliance monitoring. This
28 monitoring documents the BLM's progress toward full implementation of the direction
29 provided in the LUP. There are no specific thresholds or indicators required for this type of
30 monitoring.

31 **Effectiveness Monitoring:** Effectiveness monitoring is aimed at determining if the
32 implementation of activities has achieved the desired goals and objectives. Effectiveness
33 monitoring asks the question: Was the specified activity successful in achieving the
34 objective? This requires knowledge of the objectives established in the LUP as well as
35 indicators that can be measured. Indicators are established by technical specialists in order to
36 address specific questions, and thus to focus on collection of only necessary data. Success is
37 measured against the benchmark of achieving desired future conditions established by the
38 plan.

39 Regulations at 43 CFR 1610.4-9 require that the proposed LUPA establish intervals and
40 standards, as appropriate, for monitoring and evaluation of the plan, based on the sensitivity

1 of the resource decisions involved. Progress in meeting the plan objectives and adherence to
2 the management framework established by the plan is reviewed periodically. The Council on
3 Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that agencies may
4 provide for monitoring to assure that their decisions are carried out and should do so in
5 important cases (40 CFR 1505.2(c)). To meet these requirements, the BLM will review the
6 plan on a regular schedule in order to provide consistent tracking of accomplishments and
7 provide information that can be used to develop annual budget requests to continue
8 implementation.

9 LUP evaluations will be used by BLM to determine if the direction provided in the LUP,
10 supported by the accompanying NEPA analysis, is still valid. Evaluation of the LUP will
11 generally be conducted every five years per BLM policy, unless unexpected actions, new
12 information, or significant changes in other plans, legislation, or litigation triggers an
13 evaluation. LUP evaluations determine if direction provided is being implemented, whether
14 mitigation measures are satisfactory, whether there are significant changes in the related
15 plans of other entities, whether there are new data of significance to the plan, and if direction
16 should be changed through amendment or revision. Evaluations will follow the protocols
17 established by the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 in effect at the time the
18 evaluation is initiated. Specific monitoring and evaluation needs are identified by
19 resource/uses throughout Chapter 2.

20 **1.4.2 Forest Service Planning Process**

21 The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the
22 NFMA (16 USC 1600 et seq.), requires the Forest Service to develop, maintain, and, as
23 appropriate, revise LRMPs for units of the National Forest System using a systematic
24 interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological,
25 economic, and other sciences. Consistent with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960
26 (16 USC 528-531), the overall goal of managing the National Forest System is to sustain the
27 multiple uses of its renewable resources in perpetuity while maintaining the long-term
28 productivity of the land. LRMPs provide broad guidance and information for project and
29 activity decision-making. In particular, LRMPs coordinate outdoor recreation, range, timber,
30 watershed, wildlife and fish, and wilderness. Public participation and input are important
31 components of land use planning.

32 LRMPs developed under the 1982 planning rule procedures (36 CFR parts 200 to 299,
33 revised July 1, 2000) have resulted in:

- 34 i. Establishment of forest multiple-use goals and objectives
- 35 ii. Establishment of forest-wide management requirements (standards and
36 guidelines)
- 37 iii. Establishment of management areas and management area direction
38 (management area prescriptions) applying to future activities in that management
39 area



- 1 iv. Designation of suitable timber land and establishment of allowable timber sale
- 2 quantity
- 3 v. Nonwilderness allocations or wilderness recommendations
- 4 vi. Establishment of monitoring and evaluation requirements

5 NFMA requires LRMPs to be maintained, amended, and revised. Adaptive management
6 requires ongoing adjustment of goals, objectives, management area prescriptions, standards,
7 and guidelines constraining land uses. An amendment can be started in response to
8 monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in
9 circumstances or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses,
10 or a change in the standards and guidelines of the approved plan. Plan development is part
11 of the collaborative and adaptive cycle: (1) monitor, (2) evaluate monitoring results and any
12 new information, and (3) change activity and resource management, change the plan, change
13 the monitoring, or do an assessment.

14 The Forest Service responsible official may amend a plan in response to the need for change.
15 For this amendment, the process involves eight steps (36 CFR, Part 220):

- 16 i. Consideration of need for change
- 17 ii. Public notice for initiating plan amendment. Development of the proposed plan
- 18 amendment
- 19 iii. Documentation of affected environment and environmental consequences in an
- 20 EIS. Public notice for proposed plan amendment, draft EIS, and 90-day
- 21 comment period
- 22 iv. Response to comments
- 23 v. Issuance of final EIS and draft decision document, beginning of the 60-day
- 24 public objection period before approval of the decision document
- 25 vi. Upon resolution of any objection⁴ (36 CFR, Part 219 subpart B), approval of the
- 26 plan by the responsible official

27 Under Forest Service regulations, an LRMP revision or amendment of an existing plan is a
28 federal action requiring appropriate NEPA documentation. This EIS analyzes the possible
29 amendment of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest LRMP and the amendment of the
30 individual LRMPs for the Boise, Caribou, Challis, Salmon, Sawtooth, and Targhee national
31 forests and Curlew National Grassland. This EIS analyzes the impacts of various alternatives
32 for the plan amendment, including the no action alternative.

⁴Because the Forest Service is a cooperating agency and thus a participant in the multifederal agency effort, the responsible officials for the Forest Service have waived the objection procedures of 35 CFR, Part 219, Subpart B, and adopted the administrative review procedure of the BLM, as provided for by 36 CFR, Part 219.59(a). This is in agreement with the responsible officials of the BLM. A joint agency response will be provided to those who file for administrative review of this effort.

1 In addition, both agencies have certain existing program-specific plans or amendments that
2 implement their respective LUPs (for example oil and gas and geothermal leasing analyses).
3 Similar to the broad scale LUPs, these program-specific plans may also be amended to
4 reflect new information or changed circumstances that result from this analysis.⁵

5 **1.5 Public Input and Identification of Issues**

6 **1.5.1 The Scoping Process**

7 Scoping is an early and open process for determining the scope, or range, of issues to be
8 addressed and for identifying the significant issues to consider in the planning process.
9 Scoping identifies the public and agency concerns, defines the relevant issues and
10 alternatives that will be examined in detail in the EIS, and eliminates those that are not
11 within the scope or have been covered by prior environmental review. A planning issue is
12 defined as a major controversy or dispute regarding existing and potential land and resource
13 allocations, levels of resource use, production and related management practices on BLM-
14 administered and National Forest System lands that can be addressed through a range of
15 alternatives. The environmental impacts of these alternative management scenarios are
16 analyzed and addressed in this final EIS.

17 A public scoping period was initiated on December 9, 2011, with the publication of a Notice
18 of Intent to begin a planning effort in the Federal Register. Scoping is designed to be
19 consistent with the public involvement requirements of FLPMA, NFMA, and NEPA. The
20 cooperative process included soliciting input from interested state and local governments,
21 tribal governments, other federal agencies and organizations, and individuals to identify the
22 scope of issues to be addressed in the plan amendment, and to assist in the formulation of
23 reasonable alternatives. The scoping process is an excellent method for opening dialogue
24 between the BLM, Forest Service, and the general public about management of GRSG and
25 their habitats on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands and for identifying
26 the concerns of those who have an interest in this subject and in GRSG habitats. As part of
27 the scoping process, the BLM also requested that the public submit nominations for
28 potential Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) for GRSG and their habitats.

29 Public outreach during the public scoping period included: press releases announcing the
30 original and extended scoping period for the EIS process; a newsletter mailed in December
31 2011 to over 14,000 agency officials, organizations, and members of the public in the Great
32 Basin Region; 26 open houses throughout the Great Basin Region; and a National GRSG
33 conservation Web site (<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse.html>) and a
34 regional Web site for the Great Basin Region (<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse/western.html>), which provides access to materials distributed at scoping
35

⁵Regulations at 36 CFR, Part 228.102, require the Forest Service to decide which NFS lands are administratively available for oil and gas leasing. The Forest Service decision also includes necessary lease stipulations to protect surface resources. The Forest Service does not have regulations that address geothermal leasing, but the agency follows a process similar to oil and gas in that it conducts an analysis of leasing National Forest System lands and makes a decision that is consistent with but independent of the LRMP.



1 meetings, as well as information on the public involvement process. The formal public
2 comment period as required by NEPA began on December 9, 2011, with the publication of
3 a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register. It was extended through a Notice of Correction
4 published February 10, 2012, and ended on March 23, 2012.

5 Scoping included scheduled open-house meetings in the following 26 locations (see Chapter
6 5 for details):

- 7 • Tonopah, Ely, Elko, Winnemucca, and Reno, Nevada
- 8 • Boise, Idaho Falls, Salmon, Twin Falls, and Pocatello, Idaho
- 9 • Lakeview, Ontario, Baker City, Burns, and Prineville, Oregon
- 10 • Price, Vernal, Salt Lake City, Randolph, Snowville, Richfield, Kanab, and Cedar
11 City, Utah
- 12 • Alturas and Susanville, California
- 13 • Dillon, Montana

14 In addition, news releases were used to notify the public regarding the scoping period and
15 the planning process and to invite the public to provide written comments from many
16 sources including via email, fax, and regular mail (see Chapter 5 for details). Comments
17 obtained from the public during the scoping period were used to define the relevant issues
18 that would be addressed by a range of reasonable alternatives.

19 A total of 585 unique written submissions for the Great Basin Region were received during
20 the public scoping period. Submissions resulted in a total of 7,472 unique comments. In
21 addition, a total of 30,397 form letters were received.

22 For the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region planning process, scoping comments
23 received from the public were placed in one of three categories:

- 24 i. Issues identified for consideration in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-
25 Region LUPA
- 26 ii. Issues to be addressed through policy or administrative action (and therefore not
27 addressed in the LUPA)
- 28 iii. Issues eliminated from detailed analysis because they are beyond the scope of the
29 LUPA (and therefore not addressed in the LUPA)

30 Some important issues to be addressed in the LUPA were identified by the public and the
31 agencies during the scoping process for the statewide planning effort. The Final Scoping
32 Summary can be located at:

33 http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse/documents_and_resources.html

1 The Scoping Summary was prepared in support of the planning effort and summarizes the
2 scoping process. The Scoping Report identified issues in 13 broad categories. Section 1.5.3
3 describes the refined issues for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region. Other
4 resource and use issues are identified in the BLM Planning Handbook and Manual (H1610-
5 1). All of these issues were considered in developing the alternatives brought forward for
6 analysis.

7 **1.5.2 Issues Identified for Consideration in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana** 8 **Sub-Region**

9 During the scoping process, the BLM and Forest Service received feedback from members
10 of the public, including various public, governmental and nongovernmental groups. This
11 feedback, along with internal assessment and concerns described in the 2010 Finding, has
12 been compiled to describe issues and analysis concerns that are discussed in this document.
13 During comment analysis, individual comments were evaluated to determine whether they
14 constituted issues relevant to this planning process. These issues were then evaluated to
15 determine where in the planning process they most appropriately applied – project design;
16 alternative development, or environmental effects.

17 Issues that applied to all parts of the planning process were further evaluated to determine
18 planning issues. A planning issue is defined as a major controversy or dispute regarding
19 existing and potential land and resource allocations, levels of resource use, production and
20 related management practices on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands that
21 can be addressed through a range of alternatives. Planning issues can drive the development
22 of an alternative, may involve resources that are adversely affected by the proposed action,
23 or involve unresolved conflicts regarding alternative uses of available resources. Planning
24 issues provide focus for the analysis and are used to compare and contrast the environmental
25 effects of the alternatives.

26 In addition to planning issues, analysis issues are identified and utilized in the effects analysis
27 to compare alternatives. These issues are further described below.

28 **1.5.3 Planning Issues**

29 Issues identified as planning issues for this Draft LUPA/EIS are described below. These
30 issues have been grouped according to their related threat to GRSG, as described in the 2010
31 Finding, and a brief description of the threat is provided. These issues were used to drive
32 differences between the alternatives analyzed in detail and will be discussed in the analysis
33 and throughout the remaining chapters of this document.

34 ***Wildfire***

35 Wildfire (primarily lightning- and human-caused) in sagebrush ecosystems is one of the
36 primary factors linked to the loss of sagebrush-steppe habitat and corresponding population
37 declines of GRSG. Loss of sagebrush habitat to wildfire has been increasing in the western
38 portion of the GRSG range due to an increase in fire frequency, which has been facilitated in
39 drier, lower elevations by the replacement of native perennial bunchgrass communities by
40 invasive annuals such as cheatgrass. The USFWS conservation objective for wildfire – retain



1 and restore healthy native sagebrush plant communities within the range of GRSG (USFWS
2 2013) – is applicable to this planning issue.

3 **Issues:**

- 4 • **What measures should be undertaken to manage fuels and wildland fires,**
5 **while protecting GRSG habitat?**
- 6 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and**
7 **implement program activities to reduce the threat (habitat loss and**
8 **fragmentation) to GRSG habitat from wildland and prescribed fire?**

9 ***Vegetation – Invasive Species, Conifer Encroachment***

10 The increase in mean fire frequency has been facilitated by the incursion of nonnative annual
11 grasses into sagebrush ecosystems (Billings 1994; Miller and Eddleman 2001). Exotic annual
12 grasses and other invasive plants also alter habitat suitability for GRSG by reducing or
13 eliminating native forbs and grasses essential for food and cover (75 *Federal Register* 13910,
14 and references therein). Annual grasses and noxious perennials continue to expand their
15 range, facilitated by ground disturbances, including wildfire (Miller and Eddleman 2001),
16 improper grazing (Young et al. 1972, 1976), agriculture (Benvenuti 2007), motorized
17 recreation, and infrastructure associated with energy development (Bergquist et al. 2007).
18 The USFWS conservation objective for nonnative, invasive plant species – maintain and
19 restore healthy, native sagebrush plant communities (USFWS 2013) – is tied to this threat.

20 The intentional removal or treatment of sagebrush (i.e., using prescribed fire, or any
21 mechanical and chemical tools to remove or alter the successional status of the sagebrush
22 ecosystem) can contribute to habitat loss and fragmentation. Removal and manipulation of
23 sagebrush may also increase the opportunities for the incursion of invasive annual grasses,
24 particularly if the soil crust is disturbed (Beck et al. 2012). The USFWS conservation
25 objective for sagebrush removal – avoid sagebrush removal or manipulation in GRSG
26 breeding or wintering habitats (USFWS 2013) – is tied to this threat.

27 GRSG are negatively impacted by the expansion of pinyon and/or juniper in their habitats,
28 even if the under-story sagebrush habitats remain (Freese et al. 2009). GRSG avoid these
29 areas of expansion (Casazza et al. 2010), and as the pinyon and/or juniper increases in
30 abundance and size, the underlying habitat quality for GRSG diminishes. The USFWS
31 conservation objective for pinyon-juniper expansion – remove pinyon-juniper from areas of
32 sagebrush that are most likely to support GRSG (post-removal) at a rate that is at least equal
33 to the rate of pinyon-juniper incursion (USFWS 2013) – is applicable to this planning issue.

34 **Issues:**

- 35 • **How will the BLM and Forest Service address the potential expansion of**
36 **nonnative annual grasses (i.e., cheatgrass) and associated loss of**
37 **sagebrush habitats as a result of climate change?**

- How would the BLM and Forest Service conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat such as sagebrush communities and minimize or prevent the introduction or spread of noxious weeds and invasive species?
- How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and implement program activities to reduce the threat (habitat loss and fragmentation) to GRSG habitat from conifer encroachment and spread of noxious and invasive species?

Infrastructure

The increasing demands on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands for the location of wind towers, cellular towers, utility lines, roads, and other infrastructure cause continued development within the GRSG range, resulting in habitat loss and fragmentation, which in turn result in GRSG population declines. Infrastructure development can cause fragmentation that leaves the remaining habitat in noncontiguous patches, alteration that renders patches unusable to a species, or other changes (such as installation of power lines or cellular towers) that cause habitat avoidance (USFWS 2010). The cumulative impacts of infrastructure is a concern because sage-grouse population persistence may not be influenced by a single anthropogenic (human-built or human-caused) line or point feature (such as a power line or tower), but by multiple anthropogenic features acting in synergy (Leu and Hanser 2011). Development of infrastructure for any purpose (e.g. roads, pipelines, power lines, and cellular towers) results in habitat loss and fragmentation, and may cause GRSG habitat avoidance. Infrastructure can also provide sources for the introduction of invasive plant species and may also facilitate predation by providing perching or nesting opportunities for ravens and raptors. Surface mining and associated facilities within GRSG habitats result in the direct loss of habitat and habitat fragmentation. The USFWS conservation objectives listed below for the following threats are applicable to this planning issue:

- Energy development – design energy development to ensure it will not impinge upon stable or increasing GRSG population trends
- Infrastructure – avoid development of infrastructure within PACs
- Mining – maintain stable to increasing GRSG populations and no net loss of GRSG habitats in areas affected by mining (USFWS 2013)

Issues:

- How would the BLM and Forest Service manage program activities (land use authorizations, mining, mineral leasing, energy development – including renewable energy) to reduce the threat (habitat loss, fragmentation and reduced productivity) to GRSG habitat from additional infrastructure development and management of ongoing infrastructure development (ROWs, oil and gas development, Coal/Strip Mining, Hard Rock Mining, Wind Energy Development, Solar Energy Development) while recognizing valid existing authorizations?



- 1 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service manage existing and proposed**
2 **infrastructure development to reduce resulting mortality (direct and via**
3 **predation) of GRSG?**

4 ***Human Disturbance***

5 Various activities occurring within GRSG habitat can disturb GRSG, altering their behavior
6 and potentially disrupting aspects of their life history requirements, leading to lowered
7 productivity and reduced populations. These activities can include ROW, energy
8 (nonrenewable and renewable) and mineral development, as well as commercial operation
9 activities and recreational activities. Aspects of these activities can cause direct and indirect
10 disturbance to GRSG (construction activities, operational activities, maintenance activities,
11 noise, vehicles, etc.). The USFWS conservation objectives listed below for the following
12 threats are applicable to this planning issue:

- 13 • Energy development – design energy development to ensure it will not impinge
14 upon stable or increasing GRSG population trends
- 15 • Infrastructure – avoid development of infrastructure within PACs
- 16 • Mining – maintain stable to increasing GRSG populations and no net loss of
17 GRSG habitats in areas affected by mining
- 18 • Recreation – manage direct and indirect human disturbance (including noise) to
19 avoid interruption of normal GRSG behavior (USFWS 2013)

20 **Issues:**

- 21 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and**
22 **implement program activities to reduce the threat (loss of productivity) to**
23 **GRSG habitat from human presence?**
- 24 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and**
25 **implement program activities to reduce the threat (habitat loss and**
26 **fragmentation) to GRSG habitat from recreation and travel management**
27 **activities?**
- 28 • **How would motorized, nonmotorized, and mechanized travel be managed**
29 **to provide access to federal lands and a variety of recreation opportunities**
30 **while protecting GRSG and their habitat?**

31 ***Livestock Grazing***

32 Livestock grazing is the most widespread land use across the sagebrush biome (Connelly et
33 al. 2004) and almost all sagebrush areas are managed for livestock grazing (Knick et al. 2003).
34 Improper livestock management, in relation to local ecological conditions, may have negative
35 impacts on GRSG seasonal habitats (USFWS 2010a, and references therein). Structures
36 which support range management activities can have negative impacts on GRSG by
37 increasing fragmentation (e.g., fences and roads) or diminishing habitat quality (e.g.,
38 concentrating ungulates in winter habitats). Fences can be deleterious to GRSG populations

1 and habitats, with threats including habitat fragmentation and direct mortality through
2 strikes (Stevens et al. 2012). Fences can also improve habitat conditions for GRSG (e.g., by
3 protecting brood-rearing habitats in riparian areas from overgrazing). The USFWS
4 conservation objectives listed below for the following threats are applicable to this planning
5 issue:

- 6 • Grazing – conduct grazing management for all ungulates in a manner consistent
7 with local ecological conditions that maintains or restores healthy sagebrush
8 shrub and native perennial grass and forb communities and conserves the
9 essential habitat components for GRSG (e.g., shrub cover, nesting cover)
- 10 • Range management structures – avoid or reduce the impact of range
11 management structures on GRSG habitat
- 12 • Fences – minimize the impact of fences on GRSG populations (USFWS 2013)

13 **Issues:**

- 14 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and**
15 **implement grazing management activities (grazing, water developments,**
16 **fences, and structures) to reduce the threat (habitat loss, fragmentation,**
17 **productivity, disease vector production) to GRSG and their habitat?**
- 18 • **What measures would the BLM and Forest Service put in place to protect**
19 **and improve GRSG habitat while maintaining grazing privileges?**
- 20 • **What measures would be put in place to manage habitat for other wildlife**
21 **species and reduce conflicts with GRSG?**
- 22 • **What measures would the BLM and Forest Service put in place to reduce**
23 **the impacts of wild horses and burros on GRSG habitat?**

24 ***Management and Monitoring***

25 Effective conservation strategies are predicated on identifying key areas across the landscape
26 that are necessary to maintain redundant, representative, and resilient populations.
27 Delineation of key GRSG habitats recognizes the extensive reach of habitat threats and the
28 existing loss and degradation of habitats, and acknowledges that preservation of every
29 remaining area of GRSG habitat is improbable (Kiesecker et al. 2011; USFWS 2013). With
30 input from the state wildlife agencies, the BLM and Forest Service have identified PPH and
31 PGH. These areas, along with the PACs identified by USFWS, form a foundation to assess
32 application of habitat designations and related management actions as part of this effort.



1 **Issues:**

- 2 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service use the best available science to**
3 **designate priority and general habitat categories for GRSG habitat within**
4 **the planning area?**
- 5 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service accurately monitor the impact of**
6 **land uses on GRSG and its habitat?**

7 ***Urbanization and Agricultural Conversion***

8 Ex-urban development (dispersed homes on small acreages) results in direct habitat loss,
9 habitat fragmentation, and the introduction of invasive plants species. Urban and ex-urban
10 activities also increase the presence of predator subsidies (e.g., trash, landfills and bird
11 feeders) allowing for increased predators associated with humans that may have
12 disproportionate impacts on GRSG (e.g., red fox, skunks, and raccoons). Agricultural
13 conversion is typically defined as the conversion of sagebrush habitats to tilled agricultural
14 crops or re-seeded exotic grass pastures, resulting in habitat loss and fragmentation. The
15 USFWS conservation objectives listed below for the following threats are applicable to this
16 planning issue:

- 17 • Ex-urban development – limit urban and ex-urban development in GRSG
18 habitats and maintain intact native sagebrush plant communities
- 19 • Agricultural conversion – avoid further loss of sagebrush habitat for agricultural
20 activities (both plant and animal production) and prioritize restoration (USFWS
21 2013)

22 **Issues:**

- 23 • **What opportunities exist to adjust public land ownership that would**
24 **increase management efficiency for GRSG and their habitat?**
- 25 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service manage lands and realty**
26 **decisions to reduce habitat fragmentation and conversion of GRSG**
27 **habitat?**
- 28 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service evaluate, authorize, and**
29 **implement land tenure adjustments to reduce the conversion of (habitat**
30 **loss and fragmentation) GRSG habitat to agricultural or urbanization**
31 **uses?**

32 ***Social and Economic Concerns***

33 Management of the BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the sub-
34 region affect the economies of the associated counties and states. Conversely, the local
35 demographics, social structure, and values within the counties and states influence the
36 demand for uses and opportunities provided by the BLM-administered and National Forest
37 System lands. In many counties, management uses (mining, grazing, energy development) of
38 the BLM-administered and National Forest System lands are a vital component of the

1 economic and social stability in these counties. Noncommodity values around aesthetics and
2 recreation opportunities can also play an important role in local economics and sense of
3 place.

4 **Issue:**

- 5 • **How could the BLM and Forest Service promote or maintain activities**
6 **that provide social and economic benefit to local communities while**
7 **providing protection for GRSG habitat?**

8 ***Special Management Designations***

9 The BLM and Forest Service have the ability to designate and manage unique and important
10 areas for their associated values. The BLM calls these ACECs and the Forest Service calls
11 these Zoological Areas. Several ACECs already exist within the sub-region. These areas
12 prescribe management to protect the unique values identified during their designation.
13 Existing special management areas such as Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), and
14 Wild and Scenic Rivers, may in some areas protect GRSG by restricting resource uses in
15 these areas.

16 **Issue:**

- 17 • **What areas would be designated by the BLM or Forest Service to benefit**
18 **the maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of GRSG and GRSG**
19 **habitat?**

20 ***Analysis Issues***

21 The following issues were identified through the internal and external scoping process;
22 however, they were not used to drive the development of the alternatives. They will be
23 displayed as components of the analysis in **Chapter 4** and may show differences between the
24 effects of the alternatives.

25 **Issues:**

- 26 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service protect water and soil**
27 **resources in order to benefit GRSG habitat?**
28 • **How would the BLM and Forest Service incorporate the analysis of the**
29 **impacts of a changing climate on GRSG habitat?**

30 ***Issues not Addressed***

31 The following discussion describes various comments or issues raised during the scoping
32 period which are outside the scope of this LUPA process. This discussion is taken from the
33 May 2012 National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy Scoping Summary Report (BLM
34 2012).



1 Comments related to national policy decisions and issues outside the scope of the LUPA will
2 not be addressed as part of this planning effort, including decisions on BLM-administered
3 and National Forest System lands within the purview of other planning efforts or decisions
4 made by other federal, state, or local agencies.

5 *National Policy Decisions*

6 Commenters expressed concern with decisions at the national level, including, but not
7 limited to, the LUP revision process and implementation of NEPA, decisions on wilderness
8 and WSAs, and hunting regulations on federal lands.

9 *Outside the Scope of the Planning Effort*

10 Commenters expressed concern with development and management of GRSG on decisions
11 outside of the BLM and Forest Service jurisdiction. Specific themes included the following:

- 12 • How will the BLM and Forest Service work with wildlife management agencies
13 to ensure appropriate management of hunting for GRSG on both public and
14 private lands?

15 Many commenters questioned why hunting of GRSG is allowed if the bird is in
16 need of protection. Others stated that hunting should be used as a method to
17 control GRSG predators.

18 Hunting is regulated by state wildlife agencies; these comments therefore relate
19 to state-regulated actions and are outside the scope of the current planning
20 effort. Additionally, hunting opportunities for GRSG have been reduced in
21 response to general population declines of known origin (e.g., disease and habitat
22 loss) and unknown origin. While hunting has not been demonstrated as the
23 primary cause of decline in GRSG populations, the cautionary recommendations
24 outlined in the Sage-Grouse management guidelines (Idaho Sage-Grouse
25 Advisory Committee 2006) and Connelly et al. (2000) remain appropriate.

- 26 • How did the USFWS determine the warranted but precluded decision?

27 Commenters questioned population levels and the need to incorporate range-
28 wide conservation measures. Others questioned the effectiveness of ESA listing
29 as a method of species conservation.

30 These comments relate to decisions under the purview of the USFWS and will
31 not be addressed in the current planning effort.

- 32 • How can the BLM and Forest Service manage livestock grazing?

33 Commenters asked that grazing be limited or completely stopped due to
34 detrimental ecosystem effects. Other stated that grazing programs should be
35 reformed as the requirements are too limiting and impact ranchers' livelihoods.
36 In addition, some commenters state that grazing provides habitat enhancements
37 for sensitive species.

1 Decisions about national livestock grazing policies would not be made in this
2 planning effort.

- 3 • How should renewable energy be managed and developed in relation to
4 economic instability and wildlife mortality?

5 Commenters stated concerns about renewable energy development, including
6 economic instability due to government subsidies and risk of wildlife mortality,
7 specifically for bats and birds.

8 General decisions about renewable energy management on BLM-administered
9 and National Forest System lands are outside the scope of this planning effort.

10 In addition, comments were received related to issues that are outside the scope of this
11 effort, including the following:

- 12 • Compensation of private land owners for conservation efforts and off-site
13 mitigation
- 14 • BLM and Forest Service funding
- 15 • Designation of Special Management Areas
- 16 • NEPA procedures and costs

17 In addition to these issues described in the Scoping Summary Report, feedback specific to
18 the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region and predator control was provided to
19 BLM through public meeting comments and cooperating agency feedback. While predation
20 is included in several of the planning issues as a concern related to development, actual
21 predator control activities are outside the authority of the BLM and Forest Service and,
22 therefore, will not be considered further in the planning process.

23 **1.5.4 Public Comment on the Draft LUPA/EIS**

24 The BLM and Forest Service released the Draft LUPA/EIS to the public on November 1,
25 2013. Following the release of the Draft LUPA/EIS, there was a 90-day public comment
26 period, which began on November 1, 2013, and ended on January 29, 2014. During this
27 time, the BLM and Forest Service hosted seven open houses where the public had the
28 opportunity to learn about the Draft LUPA/EIS, to ask questions of the BLM, the Forest
29 Service, and the USFWS staff, and to fill out comment cards. Open houses were held in the
30 following locations:

- 31 • Murphy, ID- January 6, 2014
- 32 • Idaho Falls, ID, January 7, 2014
- 33 • Salmon, ID, January 8, 2014



- 1 • Dillon, MT, January 9, 2014
- 2 • Pocatello, ID, January 13, 2014
- 3 • Twin Falls, ID, January 14, 2014
- 4 • Boise, ID, January 15, 2014

5 The BLM and Forest Service received written comments by mail, e-mail, and submitted at
6 the public meetings. Using a systematic approach of labeling, reviewing, and categorizing
7 each comment, the BLM and Forest Service identified and formally responded to all
8 substantive public comments. Substantive comments were categorized based on the content
9 of the comment. Each retained the link to the commenter.

10 Subsequently, the BLM and Forest Service drafted statements summarizing the issues
11 contained in each comment category. They then developed responses to each issue
12 statement. As part of the response statement, the BLM and Forest Service indicated whether
13 the comments resulted in a change to the LUPA/EIS. The Comment Analysis Report in
14 **Appendix T** contains the issue statements and summary response for each comment
15 category.

16 **1.6 Development of Planning Criteria**

17 Planning criteria are based on appropriate laws, regulations, BLM and Forest Service Manual
18 and Handbook sections, and policy directives, as well as on public participation and
19 coordination with cooperating agencies, other federal agencies, state and local governments,
20 and Native American tribes. Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and factors used as a
21 framework to resolve issues and develop alternatives. Planning criteria are prepared to
22 ensure decision-making is tailored to the issues and to ensure that the BLM and Forest
23 Service avoid unnecessary data collection and analysis.

24 **1.6.1 Preliminary Planning Criteria**

- 25 • The BLM and Forest Service will use the WAFWA *Conservation Assessment of*
26 *Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Habitats* (Connelly et al. 2004) and any other
27 appropriate resources (e.g., Knick et al. 2011) to identify GRSG habitat
28 requirements and best management practices.
- 29 • The approved LUPA will be consistent with the BLM's National Greater Sage-
30 Grouse Conservation Strategy.
- 31 • The approved LUPA will comply with FLPMA, NEPA, and CEQ regulations at
32 40 CFR, Parts 1500-1508; Department of the Interior regulations at 43 CFR and
33 46 and 43 CFR, Part 1600; the BLM H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook,
34 Appendix C: Program-Specific and Resource-Specific Decision Guidance
35 Requirements, as amended, for affected resource programs; the 2008 BLM
36 NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1); and all other applicable BLM policies and
37 guidance.

- 1 • The approved LUPA will comply with NFMA, NEPA, CEQ regulations at 40
2 CFR, Parts 1500-1508l; Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture at 36 CFR,
3 Part 219; Forest Service Manual 1920; and Forest Service Handbooks 1909.12
4 and 1909.15.
- 5 • The approved LUPA will comply with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro
6 Act of 1971 (as amended) which directs that "*All management activities shall be at the*
7 *minimal feasible level and shall be carried out in consultation with the wildlife agency of the*
8 *State wherein such lands are located in order to protect the natural ecological balance of all*
9 *wildlife species which inhabit such lands, particularly endangered wildlife species.*"
- 10 • The LUPA will be limited to providing land use direction or to amending certain
11 program-specific decisions, for the conservation of GRSG habitats on BLM-
12 administered and National Forest System lands in the planning area.
- 13 • The BLM and Forest Service will consider allocations and prescriptive standards
14 to conserve GRSG habitat, as well as objectives and management actions to
15 restore, enhance, and improve GRSG habitat.
- 16 • The LUPA will recognize valid existing rights and authorizations, such as mining
17 claims, mineral leases, and approved mineral operating plans.
- 18 • Lands addressed in the LUPA will be BLM-administered and National Forest
19 System lands (including split-estate lands) in GRSG habitats. Any direction
20 provided in the LUPAs will apply only to BLM-administered and National
21 Forest System lands.
- 22 • Where more restrictive land use allocations or decisions are made in existing
23 RMPs, those more restrictive land use allocations or decisions will remain in
24 effect and will not be amended by this LUPA.
- 25 • The BLM and Forest Service will use a collaborative and multi-jurisdictional
26 approach with the public and adjacent jurisdiction, where appropriate, to
27 determine the desired future condition of BLM-administered and National
28 Forest System lands for the conservation of GRSG and their habitats and to
29 consider the impacts of proposed actions on all the resources in the region.
- 30 • As described by law and policy, the BLM and Forest Service will strive to ensure
31 that conservation measures are as consistent as possible with other planning
32 jurisdictions within the planning area boundaries.
- 33 • The BLM and Forest Service will consider a range of reasonable alternatives,
34 including appropriate management prescriptions that focus on the relative values
35 of resources while contributing to the conservation of the GRSG and its habitat.
- 36 • The BLM and Forest Service will address socioeconomic impacts, including
37 environmental justice, of the alternatives. Socio-economic analysis will use an
38 accepted input-output quantitative model such as IMPLAN, RIMSII, or JEDI
39 for renewable energy analysis.



- 1 • The BLM and Forest Service will use best available scientific information,
2 research, technologies, and results of inventory, monitoring, and coordination
3 consistent with the Information Quality Act, to determine appropriate local and
4 regional management strategies that will enhance or restore GRSG habitats.
- 5 • Management of GRSG habitat that intersects with WSAs on BLM-administered
6 lands will be guided by BLM Manual 6330 Management of Wilderness Study
7 Areas. Land use allocations made for WSAs must be consistent with Manual
8 6330 and with other laws, regulations, and policies related to WSA management.
- 9 • Management of other special designation areas (e.g., Wild and Scenic Rivers,
10 National Historic Trails, Wilderness Areas, National Monuments, National
11 Conservation Areas) will be guided by the appropriate BLM and Forest Service
12 manual or handbook.
- 13 • Management of GRSG habitat that intersects with National Forest System
14 wilderness areas will be guided by Forest Service Manual 2300 – Recreation,
15 Wilderness, and Related Resource Management.
- 16 • For BLM-administered lands, all activities and uses within GRSG habitats will
17 follow existing land health standards. Standards and guidelines (S&G) for
18 livestock grazing and other programs that have developed S&Gs will be
19 applicable to all alternatives for BLM-administered lands.
- 20 • Management of National Forest System lands for livestock grazing will follow
21 guidance in Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2200, Range Management, and Forest
22 Service Handbook (FSH) 2209.13, Grazing Permit Administration.
- 23 • For National Forest System lands, all activities and uses within GRSG habitats
24 will follow guidelines in Forest Manual 2500 – Watershed and Air Management.
- 25 • The BLM and Forest Service will consult with Native American tribes to identify
26 sites, areas, and objects important to their cultural and religious heritage within
27 GRSG habitats.
- 28 • The BLM and Forest Service will coordinate and communicate with state, local,
29 and tribal governments to ensure that the BLM and Forest Service consider
30 provisions of pertinent plans, seek to resolve inconsistencies between state, local,
31 and tribal plans, and provide ample opportunities for state, local, and tribal
32 governments to comment on the development of amendments.
- 33 • The BLM and Forest Service will develop vegetation management objectives,
34 including objectives for managing noxious weeds and invasive species (including
35 identification of desired future condition for specific areas), within GRSG
36 habitat.
- 37 • The LUPA will be based on the principles of adaptive management.
- 38 • Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenarios (**Appendix B**) and planning for
39 Fluid Minerals will follow the BLM Handbook H-1624-1 and current fluid

1 minerals manual guidance for fluid mineral (e.g., oil and gas, coal-bed methane,
2 and oil shale) and geothermal resources. For mineral resources on National
3 Forest System lands, the Forest Service will apply guidance provided in Forest
4 Manual 2800 – Minerals and Geology, as applicable.

- 5 • The LUPA will be developed using an interdisciplinary approach to prepare
6 reasonable foreseeable development scenarios, identify alternatives, and analyze
7 resource impacts, including cumulative impacts on natural and cultural resources
8 and the social and economic environment.
- 9 • The most current approved BLM and Forest Service corporate spatial data will
10 be supported by current metadata and will be used to ascertain GRSG habitat
11 extent and quality. Data will be consistent with the principles of the Information
12 Quality Act of 2000.
- 13 • State wildlife agencies' GRSG data and expertise will be used to the fullest extent
14 practicable in making management determinations on federal lands.

15 **1.7 Relationship to Other Policies, Plans and Programs**

16 This planning process will recognize the many ongoing programs, plans, and policies that are
17 being implemented in the planning area by other land managers and government agencies.
18 The BLM and Forest Service will seek to be consistent with or complementary to other
19 management actions whenever possible.

20 **1.7.1 Federal Plans**

21 Federal plans that will be considered during the GRSG planning effort include, but are not
22 limited to, the following:

- 23 • Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (BLM 1991a)
- 24 • Final Vegetation Treatments on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17
25 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Associated
26 Record of Decision. USDI, Bureau of Land Management, 2007 (FES 07-21)
- 27 • Final Vegetation Treatments on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17
28 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report. USDI, Bureau of Land
29 Management, 2007 (FES 07-21)
- 30 • Approved Resource Management Plan Amendments/Record of Decision for
31 Designation of Energy Corridors on Bureau of Land Management-Administered
32 Lands in the 11 Western States, January 2009, and the ROD on Forest Service
33 Designation of Section 368 Energy Corridors on National Forest System Lands
34 in 10 Western States (Forest Service 2009)
- 35 • BLM and Forest Service Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
36 for Geothermal Leasing In the Western United States (2008) and associated
37 Records of Decision and Management Plan Amendments



- 1 • Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy
2 Development on BLM-administered Lands in the Western United States. FES
3 05-11. June 2005
- 4 • Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Solar Energy
5 Development in Six Southwestern States. October 2012
- 6 • Supplement to the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for
7 Solar Energy Development in Six Southwestern States. October 2011
- 8 • Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) Conservation Objectives: Final
9 Report. USFWS, February 2013
- 10 • Forest Service oil and gas leasing availability analyses prepared to comply with 36
11 CFR, Part 228.102

12 1.7.2 State Plans

13 State plans that will be considered during the GRSG planning effort include the following:

- 14 • Greater Sage-Grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy. National Sage-
15 Grouse Conservation Planning Framework Team, Western Association of Fish
16 and Wildlife Agencies, 2006
- 17 • Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy, 2009
- 18 • Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage-Grouse in Montana –
19 Final, Montana Sage Grouse Work Group, 2005
- 20 • Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-Grouse in Idaho, as amended, Idaho
21 Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee, 2009
- 22 • Idaho Energy Plan, Idaho Governor’s Office of Energy Resources, 2012
- 23 • Idaho Invasive Species Strategic Plan 2012-2016
- 24 • Idaho Greater Sage-Grouse Local Working Group (LWG) Plans
 - 25 - Big Desert
 - 26 - Challis
 - 27 - Curlew Valley
 - 28 - Dillon
 - 29 - East Idaho Uplands
 - 30 - Jarbidge
 - 31 - North Magic Valley
 - 32 - Owyhee County
 - 33 - Shoshone Basin

- 1 - Upper Snake
- 2 - West Central

1.7.3 County Plans

County plans that will be considered during the GRSG planning effort are listed in **Table 1-6**, County Land Use and Sage-Grouse Management Plans. Blank rows indicate that the given county does not have a Land Use or Sage-Grouse Management Plan.

Table 1-6
County Land Use and Sage-Grouse Management Plans

County	Type	Adoption Date
Idaho		
Ada	Comprehensive	November 26, 2007
Adams	Comprehensive	May 2006
Bear Lake		
Bingham	Comprehensive	March 2005
Blaine	Comprehensive	November 7, 1994
Bonneville	Comprehensive	January 5, 1995
Butte		
Camas		
Caribou	Comprehensive	May 22, 2006
Cassia	Comprehensive	September 1, 2006
Clark	Comprehensive	November 11, 2010
Custer	Comprehensive Sage-Grouse	December 11, 2006 March 29, 2013
Elmore	Comprehensive	August 9, 2004
Fremont	Comprehensive	December 17, 2008
Gem	Comprehensive	January 19, 2010
Gooding	Comprehensive	May 3, 2010
Jefferson	Comprehensive	January 15, 2005
Jerome	Comprehensive	April 27, 2006
Lemhi	Comprehensive	October 9, 2012
Lincoln	Comprehensive	May 7, 2008
Madison	Comprehensive	March 25, 2008 in Draft
Minidoka	Comprehensive	Pending Approval
Oneida	Comprehensive	2011
Owyhee	Comprehensive Sage-Grouse Energy	August 9, 2010 April 8, 2013 December 4, 2007
Payette	Comprehensive	May 8, 2006
Power	Comprehensive	June 8, 2009
Twin Falls	Comprehensive	July 5, 1995
Washington	Comprehensive	October 19, 2010



**Table 1-6
County Land Use and Sage-Grouse Management Plans**

County	Type	Adoption Date
Montana		
Beaverhead	Resource Use Plan	July 6, 2010
Deer Lodge	Growth Policy	December 12, 2005
Gallatin	Growth Policy	April 15, 2003
Madison?	Growth Policy	September 2006
Silver Bow	Growth Policy	2008
Utah		
Box Elder		

1.7.4 Endangered Species Recovery Plans

Endangered species recovery plans are prepared by the USFWS to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species. The following geographically relevant endangered species recovery plans have been identified:

- Draft Recovery Plan for Three of the Five Distinct Population Segments of Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*)
- Draft Recovery Plan for the Jarbidge River Distinct Population Segment of Bull Trout
- Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Plan
- Recovery Plan for the Bruneau Hot Springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis bruneauensis*)
- Recovery Plan for the Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel
- Revised Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan
- Snake River Aquatic Species Recovery Plan

1.7.5 Memoranda of Understanding

There are several memoranda of understanding (MOU) in effect that pertain to management of resources on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands. These include:

- Between the BLM, Forest Service, USFWS, National Marine Fisheries Service and the Environmental Protection Agency regarding implementation of the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy. The purpose of this MOU is to cooperatively implement the “The Interior Columbia Basin Strategy” to guide the amendment and revision of forest (Forest Service) and resource management (BLM) plans and project implementation on public lands administered by the Forest Service and BLM throughout the Interior Columbia Basin.
- Between the BLM and the Forest Service Concerning Oil and Gas Leasing Operations (2006). The purpose of this MOU is to establish joint BLM and

1 Forest Service policies and procedures for managing oil and gas leasing and
2 operational activities pursuant to oil and gas leases on National Forest System
3 lands, consistent with applicable law and policy. The MOU was signed in 2006
4 for the purpose of efficient, effective compliance with statutory and regulatory
5 requirements. The MOU establishes the roles of the Forest Service and the BLM
6 in processing Applications for Permits to Drill and review of subsequent
7 operations.

- 8 • Between the BLM and the Forest Service concerning Implementation of Section
9 225 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 Regarding Geothermal Leasing and
10 Permitting (2006).
- 11 • Interagency Agreements between the BLM and Forest Service concerning
12 Mineral Leasing (1984) and Leasable Mineral Operations (1987). These
13 agreements currently pertain to management of leasable minerals other than oil
14 and gas and geothermal.
- 15 • Between the Department of the Interior, the USDA and the US Environmental
16 Protection Agency Regarding Air Quality Analyses and Mitigation for Federal Oil
17 and Gas Decisions Through the NEPA Process (2011). Through the MOU, the
18 signatories commit to a clearly defined, efficient approach to compliance with
19 the NEPA regarding air quality and air quality related values (AQRVs), such as
20 visibility, in connection with oil and gas development on Federal lands.
- 21 • Between the WAFWA, the Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation
22 Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency, the BLM, USFWS, and USGS (2008).
23 The purpose of the MOU is to provide for cooperation among the participating
24 State and federal land, wildlife management and science agencies in the
25 conservation and management of GRSG sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.) habitats and
26 other sagebrush-dependent wildlife throughout the Western United States and
27 Canada.
- 28 • Between the Idaho BLM and Nevada BLM regarding management responsibility
29 and authority regarding lands in Nevada but accessed through Idaho.
- 30 • Between Twin Falls District BLM and Elko District BLM (2013) clearly
31 identifying the administrative boundaries between the districts as the
32 Nevada/Idaho state line within the China Butte, Player Butte, Player Canyon,
33 and Horse Creek allotments, and defines the Twin Falls District and Elko
34 District management responsibilities in the Nevada portions of the identified
35 allotments.
- 36 • Between the State of Idaho (Governor's Office, Idaho Department of Fish and
37 Game [IDFG], Office of Species Conservation [OSC], Idaho Department of
38 Agriculture [IDA]) and the BLM and USDA (Forest Service, Animal and Plant
39 Health Inspection Service [APHIS], NRCS) for the purpose of supporting and
40 implementing the intent and actions contained in the 2006 Conservation Plan for
41 the Greater Sage-Grouse in Idaho.



- 1 • Montana Idaho Airshed Group MOU, which includes federal, state, and private
2 partners and encompasses prescribed burning activities on federal lands (e.g., pile
3 burns and seedbed preparation).
- 4 • Between the Forest Service Sawtooth National Forest Minidoka Ranger District
5 and the BLM Twin Falls District Burley Field Office concerning consolidated
6 management of the Forest Service Goose Creek Allotment and the BLM West
7 Goose Creek Allotment.
- 8 • Between the BLM and APHIS (2012) for the purpose of establishing guidelines
9 to assist field personnel in carrying out their wildlife damage management
10 responsibilities.
- 11 • Between the BLM and the Department of Energy (2011) regarding grazing,
12 ROWs, fire suppression and other aspects of shared management of lands within
13 the Idaho National Laboratory.
- 14 • While it is not an MOU, the BLM Dillon Field Office is a signatory on the
15 Montana Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement;
16 a multiparty agreement involving various federal and county agencies regarding
17 fire suppression efforts.

18 In addition, the BLM has entered into numerous MOUs with various federal, state, and
19 county agencies for the purpose of establishing cooperating agencies for the BLM and
20 Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy. The following agencies and
21 entities have established cooperating agency status for the purpose of working on the Idaho
22 and Southwestern Montana Sub-regional GRSG planning effort:

- 23 • **Federal**

- 24 - USFWS
- 25 - Forest Service
 - 26 ○ Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
 - 27 ○ Boise National Forest
 - 28 ○ Caribou-Targhee National Forest
 - 29 ○ Salmon-Challis National Forest
 - 30 ○ Sawtooth National Forest
- 31 - NRCS
- 32 - National Park Service – Craters of the Moon National Monument and
33 Preserve
- 34 - Department of Energy – Idaho National Laboratory

- 35 • **State**

- 36 - Idaho Department of Fish and Game

- 1 - Idaho Office of Species Conservation
- 2 - Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
- 3 • **County**
- 4 - Idaho Association of Counties
- 5 - Bingham County, Idaho
- 6 - Blaine County, Idaho
- 7 - Box Elder County, Utah (through the Utah BLM State Office)
- 8 - Cassia County, Idaho
- 9 - Clark County, Idaho
- 10 - Custer County, Idaho
- 11 - Fremont County, Idaho
- 12 - Jefferson County, Idaho
- 13 - Lemhi County, Idaho
- 14 - Owyhee County, Idaho
- 15 - Power County, Idaho
- 16 - Twin Falls County, Idaho
- 17 - Beaverhead County, Montana
- 18 - Madison County, Montana

19 **1.7.6 Activity Plans and Amendments**

20 Each BLM field office and Forest Service district has many specific planning documents
21 including: allotment management plans, livestock management plans, activity plans,
22 coordinated resource management plans, cooperative resource management plans, habitat
23 management plans, fire management plans, and normal fire rehabilitation plans.

24 **1.7.7 Habitat Management Plans**

25 A Habitat Management Plan (HMP) provides guidance for the management of a defined
26 habitat for a target wildlife species, protecting and improving habitat for that species and for
27 other species utilizing the habitat. These plans are usually written in coordination with State
28 Wildlife Agencies. Idaho Department of Fish and Game has a variety of fish and wildlife
29 management plans which are either species specific (e.g., mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and
30 Yellowstone cutthroat trout) or statewide in scope (e.g., Comprehensive Wildlife
31 Conservation Strategy and Fisheries Management Plan). The plans most relevant to the
32 GRSG in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana sub-region are the Idaho 2006 Conservation
33 Plan for GRSG and the Montana 2005 Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for
34 GRSG.



1 **1.7.8 Secretarial Order 3336**

2 Wildfire has been identified as one of the primary factors linked to loss of sagebrush-steppe
3 habitat and corresponding population declines of greater sage-grouse (Connelly and Braun,
4 1997; Miller and Eddleman, 2001). While fire is a naturally occurring disturbance in the
5 sagebrush steppe, the incursion of non-native annual grasses has facilitated an increase in
6 mean fire frequency which can preclude the opportunity for sagebrush to become re-
7 established. As such, the RMP includes requirements (referred to as Greater Sage-grouse
8 Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessment in appendices in Draft documents) - that
9 landscape scale Fire and Invasives Assessments be completed and updated regularly to more
10 accurately define specific areas to be treated to address threats to sagebrush steppe habitat
11 from wildfire. Within the Great Basin, the first five priority areas of conservation (PACs)
12 were singled out for the initial round of assessments because fire was identified as a primary
13 threat to greater sage-grouse habitat and the first phase of these assessments were completed
14 in March of 2015. Additionally, the Secretary of Interior issued Secretarial Order 3336 on
15 January 5, 2015 which establishes the protection, conservation and restoration of “the health
16 of the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem and, in particular, greater sage-grouse habitat, while
17 maintaining safe and efficient operations as a critical fire management priority for the
18 Department”. The Secretarial Order will result in a final report of activities to be
19 implemented prior to the 2016 Western fire season. This will include prioritization and
20 allocation of fire resources and the integration of emerging science, enhancing existing tools
21 to implement the Resource Management Plan and improve our ability to protect sagebrush-
22 steppe from damaging wildfires.

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Administrative Draft Review
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Cooperating Agency Review



Chapter 2

Proposed Action and Alternatives



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1 **Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives**

2 **2.1 Changes between the Draft LUPA/EIS and Proposed LUPA/Final EIS**

3 As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal
4 review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM and Forest Service have developed the Proposed
5 LUPA/FEIS for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands in the
6 Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG sub-region. The Proposed LUPA/FEIS focuses
7 on addressing public comments, while continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's
8 legal and regulatory mandates. The Proposed LUPA/FEIS is a variation of the co-preferred
9 alternative (Alternatives D and E), and is within the range of alternatives analyzed in the
10 DEIS.

11 Changes made to the Proposed LUPA/FEIS from the co-preferred alternative (Alternatives
12 D and E) in Draft LUPA/EIS are the following:

- 13 • During review of the DEIS, mapping adjustments were made in
14 response to public comments and were based on agency field
15 and personnel input and discussions with State of Idaho and
16 USFWS. Specifically, adjustments were intended to address the
17 broad scale nature of the initial map and to address disparities.
18 Specifically, certain portions of the Alternative D and
19 Alternative E maps still encompassed some areas of non-habitat,
20 such as timber or farm lands; or they were missing some areas of
21 potential restoration or other locally definable areas or habitat;
22 or were designated inappropriately as Core and/or Important.
23 As a result, in preparing the Proposed Plan/FEIS, BLM, Forest
24 Service, USFWS and the State of Idaho worked together to
25 refine the GRSG Habitat Management Area map. To resolve
26 map disparities between Alternatives D and E, and to provide
27 more recognizable boundaries of Habitat Management Areas on
28 the ground, BLM and Forest Service worked closely with field
29 personnel in December 2013. During the winter and spring of
30 2014, BLM and Forest Service also worked closely with the State
31 of Idaho and USFWS (Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office, Boise) in
32 re-evaluating the Core, Important or General Management Zone
33 designations of Alternative E, in order to move forward with a
34 map for the Proposed Plan that met BLM and Forest Service
35 objectives for habitat and State of Idaho and USFWS objectives
36 for populations.
- 37 • Allocations for PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA — allocations in
38 the proposed plan/FEIS provide more opportunities for uses in
39 GHMA, while still maintaining conservation management by
40 establishing screening criteria for project/activity review in
41 GRSG habitat. Allocations that were changed between the
42 preferred Alternative and the Proposed Plan are as follows:

- 1 • Major ROWs in PHMA, analyzed as exclusion in Alternative
2 D, were changed to Avoidance and analyzed in the Proposed
3 Plan.
- 4 • Major ROWs in GHMA, analyzed as avoidance in
5 Alternative D, were changed to open and analyzed in the
6 Proposed Plan (Idaho).
- 7 • Minor ROWs in GHMA, analyzed as avoidance in
8 Alternative D, were changed to open and analyzed in the
9 Proposed Plan.
- 10 • Solar development in PHMA, analyzed as avoidance in
11 Alternative E, was changed to exclusion and analyzed in the
12 Proposed Plan.
- 13 • Wind development in PHMA, was not analyzed in
14 Alternative E, but analyzed as Exclusion in the Proposed
15 Plan.
- 16 • Wind development in IHMA, was not analyzed in
17 Alternative E, but was analyzed as Avoidance in the
18 Proposed Plan.
- 19 • Salable minerals in PHMA, analyzed as open in Alternative
20 E, was changed to closed to new development and analyzed
21 in the Proposed Plan.
- 22 • Non energy leasables in PHMA, analyzed as open in
23 Alternative E, was changed to closed and analyzed in the
24 Proposed Plan.
- 25 • Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) — these areas have been
26 identified in the Proposed Plan based on recommendations
27 in a USFWS memorandum, and are proposed to be managed
28 as PHMA with the following additional management:
29 recommended for withdrawal; NSO without waiver,
30 exception, or modification for fluid mineral leasing; and
31 prioritized for management and conservation actions
32 including, but not limited to review of livestock grazing
33 permits/leases. Alternatives B and C proposed withdrawal
34 from locatable minerals development; alternatives B and D
35 proposed closure of PPMA to fluid mineral development
36 whereas Alternative E proposed the Idaho Core Habitat
37 Zone as open to fluid minerals with NSO. Alternatives C
38 and F proposed no grazing in occupied GRSG habitat
39 whereas other alternatives were open with varying
40 management actions. See DEIS at Chapter 4. As such, the

1 management of these areas as SFAs and the impacts of the
2 associated management decisions was addressed in the DEIS
3 and is qualitatively within the spectrum of alternatives
4 analyzed.

5 BLM and the Forest Service will manage these areas, totaling
6 approximately 3,842,900 acres (3,606,100 acres of BLM;
7 236,800 acres of Forest Service) within the Idaho and
8 Southwestern Montana sub-region, as SFAs because of the
9 importance of these necessary pockets of habitat to the
10 conservation of the species range-wide. Specifically, SFAs
11 include characteristics such as existing high-quality sagebrush
12 habitat; highest breeding densities; have been identified as
13 essential to conservation and persistence of the species;
14 represent a preponderance of current federal ownership and
15 in some cases are adjacent to protected areas that serve to
16 anchor the conservation importance of the landscape. While
17 SFAs provide essential habitat for the conservation of
18 GRSG, a broad, landscape approach that integrates
19 appropriate conservation efforts across habitats occurring
20 outside the SFAs, in accordance with the Proposed Plan, is
21 also integral since effective conservation strategies are
22 predicated on identifying key areas across the landscape that
23 are necessary to maintain redundant, representative and
24 resilient GRSG populations (see LUPA/DEIS Issues
25 **Section 1.5.2**, Management and Monitoring). In light of the
26 landscape level approach to GRSG conservation provided
27 through this planning effort and as defined by the
28 characteristics set forth above, as well as additional
29 considerations, including potential for impacts from climate
30 change, fire and invasives, these areas have been identified as
31 SFAs.

32 As noted in the DEIS, the goals of this planning effort are to
33 protect both the habitat and the species. While action
34 Alternatives B through F, and portions of Alternative A
35 emphasize a slightly different mix of resources and resource
36 uses, all have goals to 1) conserve, enhance, and restore the
37 sagebrush ecosystem that GRSG populations depend on in
38 order to maintain or increase their abundance and
39 distribution, in cooperation with other conservation
40 partners; and 2) to protect GRSG habitats from disturbances
41 that will reduce distribution or abundance of GRSG (see
42 LUPA/DEIS **Section 2.2.1** Management Common To All
43 Alternatives and **Table 2-17**). The BLM and Forest Service
44 committed to using the best available scientific information
45 to determine appropriate local and regional management

1 strategies to enhance and restore GRSG habitats (see
2 LUP/DEIS **Section 1.6.1** Preliminary Planning Criteria and
3 **Section 4.1.2** Incomplete or Unavailable Information).

- 4 • USGS Buffer Study—Included a management action to
5 incorporate the lek buffer-distances identified in the USGS
6 report titled Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater
7 Sage Grouse—A Review: USGS Open File Report 2014-1239
8 (Mainer et al. 2014) during NEPA analysis at the implementation
9 stage. Although the buffer report was not available at the time
10 of the DEIS release, applying these buffers was addressed in the
11 DEIS and is qualitatively within the spectrum of alternatives
12 analyzed. Specifically, (Alternatives B, C, D, E, and F) identified
13 and analyzed allocation restrictions such as closure to fluid
14 minerals, recommendation for locatable mineral withdrawal,
15 elimination of grazing, saleable mineral restrictions, and ROW
16 avoidance and exclusion. Alternatives B and C were the most
17 restrictive. The following were analyzed in the DEIS: 1) closing
18 PHMA to fluid minerals development (Alternatives B and C); 2)
19 recommending withdrawal of PHMA to locatable minerals
20 (Alternatives B and C); 3) closing occupied GRSG habitat to
21 livestock grazing (Alternatives C and F); and 4) closing PHMA
22 to saleable minerals (Alternatives B, C, and F) and applying a 3
23 km buffer restriction for saleable minerals around leks
24 (Alternative B). In additions to specific management actions
25 designed to protect GRSG habitat, the DEIS included a
26 Required Design Features and Best Management Practices
27 Appendix D that applies protective measures during project
28 implementation. Of all the action alternatives identified,
29 Alternative E analyzed fewer restrictions on development in
30 GRSG habitat than any of the other action alternatives.
31 However, the No Action was still the least restrictive of all
32 alternatives analyzed. Accordingly, the management decision to
33 require lek buffers for development within certain habitat types
34 is within the range of alternatives analyzed.
- 35 • Adaptive management—Identification of hard and soft adaptive
36 management triggers for population and habitat and identified
37 appropriate management responses. Chapter 2 of the DEIS
38 identified that the BLM/Forest Service would further develop
39 the adaptive management approach by identifying hard and soft
40 triggers and responses. All of the adaptive management hard
41 trigger responses were analyzed within the range of alternatives.
42 For example, in a Conservtion Area, if a hard trigger is reached
43 in IHMA, all IHMA in the Conservation Area would be managed

1 as PHMA for all resources. Adaptive triggers were analysed in
2 Alternatives D and E of the Draft EIS

- 3 • Monitoring and Disturbance – The monitoring framework was
4 further refined in the FEIS, and further clarification as to how
5 disturbance cap calculations would be measured were developed
6 for the FEIS. During the public comment period, BLM received
7 comments on how monitoring and disturbance cap calculations
8 would occur at implementation. The DEIS outlined the major
9 components of the monitoring strategy, as well as provided a
10 table portraying a list of anthropogenic disturbances that would
11 count against the disturbance cap. A BLM Disturbance and
12 Monitoring Sub-team further enhanced the two Appendices
13 (**Appendix G**, Disturbance and Adaptive Management,
14 **Appendix H**, Anthropogenic Disturbance Calculation, and
15 **Appendix E**, GRSG Final Monitoring Framework) in the FEIS.
- 16 • Mitigation Strategy; Net Conservation Gain –The net
17 conservation gain strategy is in response to the overall
18 landscape-scale goal which is to enhance, conserve, and restore
19 GRSG and its habitat. All of the action alternatives provided
20 management actions to meet the landscape-scale goal (GRSG
21 Goals: Goal 1, 2, 3 and 5; Special Status Species Objectives: MA-
22 OBJ-1,2, and 3; HM-OBJ-1 and 2; Vegetation Management
23 Objectives VEG-OBJ-1, 2, and 3, Wildland Fire Management
24 Objective Fuel-OBJ – 1). WAFWA Management Zone
25 Cumulative Effects Analysis on GRSG – a quantitative
26 cumulative effects analysis for GRSG was included in the FEIS.
27 This analysis was completed to analyze the effects of
28 management actions on GRSG at a biologically significant scale
29 which as determined to be at the WAFWA Management Zone.
30 The DEIS, in Chapter 4, included a qualitative analysis and
31 identified that a quantitative analysis would be completed for the
32 FEIS at the WAFWA Management Zone.
- 33 • Forest Service Plan Amendment—Chapter 2 separates the
34 Forest Service Proposed Plan and the BLM Proposed Plan.
35 This is because the Forest Service has different guidance for
36 writing planning language; however, the actions are basically the
37 same for both the BLM and FS under the Proposed Plan.
- 38 • Public Comment on DEIS—Updated the FEIS based on public
39 comment received on the DEIS (see **Appendix T**, Public
40 Comment Report)

41 NEPA requires agencies to prepare a supplement to the draft EIS: 1) the agency makes
42 substantial changes in the proposed action that are relevant to environmental concerns; or 2)
43 if there are significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns

1 and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts. A supplement is not necessary if a newly
2 formulated alternative is a minor variation of one of the alternatives is qualitatively within
3 the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS.

4 The Proposed LUPA includes components of the alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS.
5 Taken together, these components present a suite of management decisions that present a
6 minor variation of alternatives identified in the Draft LUPA/Draft EIS and are qualitatively
7 within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed.

8 As such, the BLM has determined that the Proposed LUPA is a minor variation and that the
9 impacts of the Proposed LUPA would not affect the human environment in a substantial
10 manner or to a significant extent not already considered in the EIS. The impacts disclosed in
11 the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are similar or identical to those described Draft LUPA/Draft
12 EIS.

13 **2.2 Introduction**

14 The LUPA/EIS complies with NEPA, which directs the BLM and Forest Service to “study,
15 develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any
16 proposal that involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available
17 resources...” (NEPA Section 102[2][e]). At the heart of the alternative development process
18 is the required development of a reasonable range of alternatives. Public and internal (within
19 BLM and Forest Service) scoping (see **Section 1.5**, Scoping and Identification of Issues)
20 identified issues that present opportunities for alternative courses of action, while the
21 purpose and need for action described in **Section 1.2**, Purpose and Need, provides
22 sideboards for determining “reasonableness.”

23 This chapter introduces and details the Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan is a mix of
24 management actions selected from the range of alternatives in the Draft LUPA/EIS and is
25 based on best science, public scoping comments, public comments on the Draft LUPA/EIS
26 and internal agency discussion. The alternatives that were in the Draft LUPA/EIS are also
27 included in this chapter. These include the No Action Alternative, which would continue
28 the existing policies of the BLM and Forest Service; five action alternatives; and the
29 alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.

30 The identification of the co-Preferred Alternatives in the Draft LUPA/EIS did not
31 constitute a commitment or decision in principle, and there is no requirement to select either
32 of the co-Preferred Alternatives or any of the separate alternatives presented in the Draft
33 LUPA/EIS in the Final LUPA/EIS as the Proposed Plan. The BLM and Forest Service
34 have the discretion to select any of the alternatives as their Preferred Alternative(s) in the
35 Draft LUPA/EIS. The agencies also have the discretion to modify the Preferred
36 Alternative(s) between the Draft EIS and the Final EIS into the Proposed Plan. The
37 modifications are allowable as long as the actions presented in the Proposed Plan within the
38 Proposed LUPA/Final EIS were within the range of alternatives in the Draft EIS. The
39 various parts of the separate alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft EIS can be “mixed

1 and matched” to develop an alternative – known as the Proposed Plan - in the Final EIS, as
2 long as the reasons for doing so are explained (40 CFR 1506.2(b)).

3 **2.3 Introduction to Draft Alternatives**

4 LUP decisions consist of identifying and clearly defining goals and objectives (desired
5 outcomes) for resources and resource uses, followed by developing allowable uses and
6 management actions necessary for achieving the goals and objectives. These critical
7 determinations guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific
8 implementation actions to meet multiple use and sustained yield mandates while sustaining
9 land health.

10 **2.3.1 Components of Alternatives**

11 Goals are broad statements of desired (LUP-wide and resource- or resource-use-specific)
12 outcomes and are not quantifiable or measurable. Objectives are specific measurable desired
13 conditions or outcomes intended to meet goals. Goals and objectives can vary across
14 alternatives, resulting in different allowable uses and management actions for some resources
15 and resource uses. Forest Service objectives are also time specific.

16 Management actions and allowable uses are designed to achieve objectives. Management
17 actions are measures that guide day-to-day and future activities. Allowable uses delineate
18 which uses are permitted, restricted, or prohibited, and may include stipulations or
19 restrictions. Allowable uses also identify lands where specific uses are excluded to protect
20 resource values, or where certain lands are open or closed in response to legislative,
21 regulatory, or policy requirements. Implementation decisions are site-specific on-the-ground
22 actions and are typically not addressed in LUPs.

23 On National Forest System lands, forest plans guide management activities and contain
24 desired conditions and objectives as well as standards and guidelines that provide direction
25 for project planning and design. Desired conditions are descriptions of specific social,
26 economic, and/or ecological characteristics of the plan area, or a portion of the plan area,
27 toward which management of the land and resources should be directed. Standards are
28 mandatory constraints on project and activity decision making. Not meeting a standard
29 would require a site-specific forest plan amendment. A guideline is a constraint on project
30 and activity decision making that allows for departure from its terms, so long as the purpose
31 of the guideline is met.

32 **2.3.2 Purpose of Alternatives Development**

33 Land use planning and NEPA regulations require the BLM and Forest Service to formulate
34 a reasonable range of alternatives. Alternative development is guided by established planning
35 criteria (as outlined for the BLM at 43 CFR 1610) (see **Chapter 1**).

36 The NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 1501.2(c) state that Federal agencies shall: “Study,
37 develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any
38 proposal which involves unresolved conflict concerning alternatives uses of available
39 resources....”

1 The basic goal of alternative development is to produce distinct potential management
2 scenarios that:

- 3 • Address the identified major planning issues;
- 4 • Explore opportunities to enhance management of resources and
5 resource uses;
- 6 • Resolve conflicts among resources and resource uses; and
- 7 • Meet the purpose of and need for the LUP or LUPA.

8 Pursuit of this goal provides the BLM, Forest Service, and the public with an appreciation
9 for the diverse ways in which conflicts regarding resources and resource uses might be
10 resolved, and offers the decision maker a reasonable range of alternatives from which to
11 make an informed decision. The components and broad aim of each alternative considered
12 for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG LUPA/EIS are discussed below.

13 **2.4 Alternative Development Process for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater** 14 **Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment**

15 The Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG LUPA/EIS planning team employed the
16 BLM planning process (outlined in **Section 1.4**, Planning Process) to develop a reasonable
17 range of alternatives for the LUPA/EIS. The BLM and Forest Service complied with NEPA
18 and the CEQ implementing regulations at 40 CFR Part 1500 in the development of
19 alternatives for this Proposed LUPA/EIS, including seeking public input and analyzing
20 reasonable alternatives. Where necessary to meet the planning criteria, to address issues and
21 comments from cooperating agencies and the public, or to provide a reasonable range of
22 alternatives, the alternatives include management options for the planning area that would
23 modify or amend decisions made in the applicable LUP. Since this LUPA/EIS will
24 specifically address GRSG conservation, many decisions within existing LUPs that do not
25 impact GRSG are acceptable and reasonable; in these instances, there is no need to develop
26 alternative management prescriptions.

27 Public input received during the scoping process was considered to identify significant issues
28 deserving of detailed study to help identify alternatives. The planning team developed
29 planning issues to be addressed in the LUPA/EIS, based on broad concerns or
30 controversies related to conditions, trends, needs, and existing and potential uses of planning
31 area lands and resources. All comments were reviewed to determine whether they identified
32 significant issues or unresolved conflicts.

33 **2.4.1 Develop a Reasonable Range of Alternatives**

34 Based on scoping and collaboration efforts, the BLM and Forest Service finalized their
35 planning criteria and identified 13 key planning issues to help frame the alternatives
36 development process. Following the close of the public scoping period in March 2012, the
37 BLM and the Forest Service began the alternatives development process. Between May and
38 September 2012, the planning team (BLM, Forest Service, and cooperating agencies) met to

1 develop management goals and to identify objectives and actions to address the goals. The
2 various groups met numerous times throughout this period to refine their work. As
3 outcomes of this process, the planning team:

- 4 • Developed one No Action Alternative (Alternative A) and three
5 preliminary action alternatives. The first action alternative
6 (Alternative B) is based on A Report on National Greater Sage-
7 Grouse Conservation Measures (NTT 2011), and the two
8 additional action alternatives (Alternative C and F) are based on
9 proposed alternatives submitted by various conservation groups.
- 10 • Customized the objectives and actions from the NTT-based
11 alternative (Alternative B) to develop a third action alternative
12 (Alternative D) that strives for balance among competing
13 interests.
- 14 • Incorporated proposed GRSG protection measures
15 recommended by state governments as a fifth alternative
16 (Alternative E).

17 Each of the preliminary action alternatives in the Draft LUPA/EIS was designed to:

- 18 • Address the 13 planning issues (identified in Section 1.5.3);
- 19 • Fulfill the purpose and need for the LUPA (outlined in Section
20 1.2, Purpose and Need); and
- 21 • Meet the multiple use mandates of the FLPMA (43 CFR 1716),
22 MUSYA and NFMA.

23 **2.4.2 Resulting Range of Alternatives in Draft LUPA/EIS**

24 The five resulting action alternatives (Alternatives B, C, D, E, and F) in the Draft
25 LUPA/EIS offer a range of management approaches to maintain or increase GRSG
26 abundance and distribution of GRSG by conserving, enhancing, or restoring the sagebrush
27 ecosystem upon which GRSG populations depend in collaboration with other conservation
28 partners. While the goal is the same across all the alternatives, each alternative contains a
29 discrete set of objectives and management actions constituting a separate LUPA. The goal is
30 met in varying degrees, with the potential for different long-range outcomes and conditions.

31 The relative emphasis given to particular resources and resource uses differs as well,
32 including allowable uses, restoration measures, and specific direction pertaining to individual
33 resource programs. When resources or resource uses are mandated by law or are not tied to
34 planning issues, there are typically few or no distinctions between alternatives.

35 The meaningful differences among the alternatives are described in **Section 2.9**, Summary
36 Comparison of Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives. **Section 2.10**, Detailed
37 Description of Draft Alternatives, also provides a complete description of the proposed

1 decisions for each alternative, including the project goal and objectives, management actions,
2 and allowable uses for individual resource programs. Maps and figures in **Appendix A**
3 provide a visual representation of differences between alternatives. In some instances,
4 varying levels of management overlap a single area, or polygon, due to management
5 prescriptions from different resource programs. In instances where varying levels of
6 management prescriptions overlap a single polygon, the stricter of the management
7 prescriptions would apply.

8 **2.4.3 Selection of and Rationale for identifying the co-Preferred** 9 **Alternatives**

10 The BLM and Forest Service selected Alternatives D and E as its co-preferred alternatives,
11 which were presented in the Draft RMP/EIS, released in October 2013. The BLM and
12 Forest Service selected the co-preferred alternatives based on interdisciplinary team
13 recommendations, environmental consequences analysis of the alternatives, cooperating
14 agency input, and public input during scoping.

15 Alternative D provides LUP guidance and conservation measures to address all GRSG
16 threats for BLM- and Forest Service-managed programs that affect GRSG or their habitat. It
17 provides a consistent approach to BLM and Forest Service management within the entire
18 sub-region. It is also consistent with existing regulations and policy.

19 Alternative E provides LUP guidance focusing on the primary threats to GRSG in Idaho
20 (e.g., wildfire, invasive species and infrastructure development). It also includes LUP
21 guidance for some other secondary GRSG threats (e.g., recreation, improper livestock
22 grazing and West Nile virus) on BLM and Forest Service programs which affect GRSG or
23 their habitat. This alternative also includes four foundational elements: habitat zones;
24 conservation areas; population objectives; and adaptive triggers.

25 Alternatives D and E both categorize GRSG habitat into three delineations which
26 differentiate them from the other alternatives analyzed in the Draft LUPA/EIS. Alternative
27 D names these Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA), Important Habitat
28 Management Areas (IHMA), and General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA). Alternative
29 E names these categories Core Habitat Zones (CHZ), Important Habitat Zones (IHZ), and
30 General Habitat Zones (GHZ).

31 The BLM used the impact analysis, along with knowledge of specific issues raised
32 throughout the planning process; recommendations from the tribes, cooperating agencies,
33 and BLM and Forest Service resource specialists; consideration of planning criteria; and
34 anticipated resolution of resource conflicts to identify Alternatives D and E as co-Preferred
35 Alternatives from the suite of alternatives analyzed. Specifically, the selection of the co-
36 Preferred Alternatives was based on the following:

- 37 • Achievement of BLM goals and policies; and
- 38 • Consideration of cooperating agencies and BLM specialists'
39 recommendations.



1 See **Section 2.6.1**, Development of the Proposed Plan Amendment for GRSG Management,
2 for a discussion of the how the Proposed Plan Amendments were developed.

3 **2.5 BLM/Forest Service Resource Programs for Addressing GRSG Threats**

4 The action alternatives are directed towards responding to USFWS-identified issues and
5 threats to GRSG and its habitat. The USFWS threats do not necessarily align with BLM and
6 Forest Service resource program areas, and are often integrated into several different agency
7 resource program areas. **Table 2-1**, USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable
8 BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats, provides a
9 cross-walk between each of the USFWS listing decision and COT identified threats and the
10 BLM and the Forest Service resource program areas and shows how those threats were
11 addressed in the BLM and the Forest Service land use plan.

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Table 2-1
USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2010 warranted but precluded finding)	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2013)	Applicable BLM/Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Addressing Threat
Wildland Fire	Fire	<u>BLM</u> : Wildland Fire Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Fire Management
Invasive Species	Nonnative, Invasive Plants Species	<u>BLM</u> : Vegetation Management, Range Management, Wildland Fire Management, and Recreation <u>Forest Service</u> : GRSG Habitat, Fire Management, and Roads and Transportation
Oil and Gas For wind energy development, see <i>Infrastructure – power lines/pipelines, roads (below)</i>	Energy Development	<u>BLM</u> : Lands and Realty and Fluid Minerals <u>Forest Service</u> : Lands and Realty and Fluid Minerals
Prescribed Fire	Sagebrush Removal	<u>BLM</u> : Vegetation Management and Wildland Fire Management <u>Forest Service</u> : GRSG Habitat and Fire Management
Grazing	Grazing	<u>BLM</u> : Range Management, Wild Horse and Burro Management, Special Status Species, and Vegetation Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Livestock Grazing and Wild Horse and Burro Management
See <i>Grazing Management (above)</i>	Range Management Structures	<u>BLM</u> : Range Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Livestock Grazing
<i>No similar threat identified</i>	Free-Roaming Equid Management	<u>BLM</u> : Wild Horse and Burro Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Wild Horse and Burro Management
Conifer Encroachment	Pinyon and/or Juniper Expansion	<u>BLM</u> : Wildland Fire Management and Vegetation Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Fire Management and GRSG Habitat
Agriculture & Urbanization	Agricultural Conversion and Ex-Urban Development	<u>BLM</u> : Lands and Realty <u>Forest Service</u> : Lands and Realty/Land Ownership Adjustments

Table 2-1
USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2010 warranted but precluded finding)	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2013)	Applicable BLM/Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Addressing Threat
Hard Rock Mining	Mining	<u>BLM</u> : Lands and Realty, Locatable Minerals, Salable Minerals, and Non-energy Leasable Minerals <u>Forest Service</u> : Locatable Minerals, Non-energy Leasable Minerals, and Mineral Materials
<i>See Infrastructure, Roads</i>	Recreation	<u>BLM</u> : Recreation and Trails and Travel Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Recreation and Roads/ Transportation
Infrastructure - Power lines/ pipelines - Roads - Communication sites - Railroads Range improvements (see below)	Infrastructure	<u>BLM</u> : Lands and Realty and Trails and Travel Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Lands and Realty and Roads/ Transportation
Infrastructure – Range Improvements	Range Management Structures	<u>BLM</u> : Range Management <u>Forest Service</u> : Livestock Grazing
Water Developments	No similar threat identified	All applicable programs
Climate Change	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.</i>
Weather	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.</i>
Predation	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : All applicable programs <u>Forest Service</u> : GRSG Habitat, Land and Realty, and Minerals
Disease	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : All applicable programs <u>Forest Service</u> : Minerals/Fluid Mineral Operations
Hunting	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing</i>

Table 2-1
USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2010 warranted but precluded finding)	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2013)	Applicable BLM/Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Addressing Threat ¹
		<i>this threat.</i>
Contaminants	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : Public Health and Safety <u>Forest Service</u> : Mineral

Source: USFWS 2010, 2013

¹ For management associated with each resource program, see **Section 2.6.2** for the BLM Proposed Plan and **Section 2.6.3** for the Forest Service Proposed Plan

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1 **2.6 Proposed Plan Amendment**

2 **2.6.1 Development of the Proposed Plan Amendment for GRSG**
3 **Management**

4 In developing the Proposed Plan Amendment, the BLM and Forest Service made
5 modifications to the co-Preferred Alternatives identified in the Draft LUPA/EIS. The
6 modifications are based on public comments received on the Draft LUPA/EIS, internal
7 BLM review, new information and best available science, the need for clarification in the
8 plans, and ongoing coordination with stakeholders across the range of the GRSG. As a
9 result, the Proposed Plan Amendment provides consistent GRSG habitat management
10 across the range, prioritizes development outside of GRSG habitat, and focuses on a
11 landscape-scale approach to conserving GRSG habitat.

12 As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal
13 review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM's and Forest Service's Preferred Alternative,
14 identified as Alternatives D and E as presented in the Draft LUPA/EIS, has been modified
15 and are now considered the Proposed Plans/LUPAs for managing BLM-administered and
16 National Forest System lands within the Idaho and southwestern Montana sub-region.
17 Differences between the Proposed Plan and the co-preferred alternatives are presented in
18 **Appendix EE**. The Proposed Plans/LUPAs focus on addressing public comments, while
19 continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's legal and regulatory mandates.

20 Since release of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM and Forest Service have continued to work
21 closely with a broad range of governmental partners, including Governors, State Fish and
22 Game agencies, the USFWS, Indian tribes, county commissioners and many others. Through
23 this cooperation, the BLM and Forest Service have developed a Proposed Plan Amendment
24 that takes into account state, Tribal, and local plans, policies, and strategies in accordance
25 with applicable law, and contributes to the long-term conservation of the GRSG. The BLM
26 and Forest Service also received many substantive public comments on the Draft LUPA
27 (**Appendix T**), which greatly informed the BLM's and Forest Service's development of the
28 Proposed Plan Amendment.

29 On October 27, 2014, the USFWS provided the BLM and Forest Service a memorandum
30 titled "[Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendations to Refine Land Use Allocations
31 in Highly Important Landscapes](#)". The memorandum and associated maps provided by the
32 USFWS identify areas that represent recognized "strongholds" for GRSG that have been
33 noted and referenced as having the highest densities of GRSG and other criteria important
34 for the persistence of the species. Within these areas, the BLM/FS identified Sagebrush
35 Focal Areas (SFAs), which are PHMAs with the following additional management (Figure 2-
36 3):

- 37 1) Recommended for withdrawal from the Mining Law of 1872, subject to valid existing
38 rights.
- 39 2) Managed as NSO, without waiver, exception, or modification, for fluid mineral leasing.

1 3) Prioritized for management and conservation actions in these areas, including, but not
2 limited to review of livestock grazing permits/leases (see livestock grazing section for
3 additional actions).

4 The BLM's and Forest Service's Proposed Plan Amendment considers documents related to
5 the conservation of GRSG that have been released since the publication of the draft
6 LUPA/EIS. For example, this Proposed Plan Amendment considers the USFWS' October
7 27th, 2014 memorandum "*Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendations to Refine Land Use*
8 *Allocations in Highly Important Landscapes*" and the USGS' November 21st, 2014 report
9 "*Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse—A Review*" (USGS 2014). Based
10 on these documents, the BLM is proposing to designate SFAs to further protect highly
11 valuable habitat and is proposing to include lek-buffer distances when authorizing activities
12 near leks. The BLM and Forest Service also updated the Proposed Plan Amendment to
13 reflect new GRSG state conservation strategies, including recent State Executive Orders.

14 The BLM and Forest Service have refined the Proposed Plan Amendment to provide a
15 layered management approach that offers the highest level of protection for GRSG in the
16 most valuable habitat. Land use allocations in the Proposed Plan would limit or eliminate
17 new surface disturbance in PHMA, while minimizing disturbance in GHMA. In addition to
18 establishing protective land use allocations, the Proposed Plan Amendment would
19 implement a suite of management tools such as disturbance limits (**Appendix G**), GRSG
20 habitat objectives and monitoring (**Appendix E**), mitigation approaches (**Appendix J**),
21 adaptive management triggers and responses (**Appendix G**), and lek buffer-distances
22 (**Appendix B**) throughout the range. These overlapping and reinforcing conservation
23 measures will work in concert to improve GRSG habitat condition and provide clarity and
24 consistency on how the BLM/FS will manage activities in GRSG habitat.

25 For the sake of clarity, BLM and Forest Service decisions have been separated into two
26 sections (described in **Sections 2.6.2** and **2.6.3**, respectively) in the Proposed Plan
27 Amendment.

28 **2.6.2 BLM Proposed Plan Amendment**

29 The Proposed Plan represents a management strategy to address GRSG, their habitat and
30 associated threats within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region. The Plan has
31 been developed through a coordinated partnership of BLM, Forest Service, the States of
32 Idaho and Montana and the USFWS.

33 The Plan incorporates appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore
34 GRSG habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. The Plan is
35 also consistent with the objectives described in the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team
36 Report (USFWS 2013) to: 'Conserve sage-grouse so that it is no longer in danger of
37 extinction or likely to become in danger of extinction in the foreseeable future...' through
38 'Maintaining viable, connected, and well-distributed populations and habitats across [the
39 range of GRSG], through threat amelioration, conservation of key habitats, and restoration
40 activities?.'

1 To achieve these objectives the Plan includes a combination of: goals and objectives
2 including vegetation/habitat management objectives to be applied during project
3 development and implementation (**Table 2-3**); land allocation decisions (**Table 2-2**);
4 delineation of five Conservation Areas (**Figure 2-1**) to support evaluation of the adaptive
5 management strategy and 3 percent anthropogenic disturbance cap; delineation of PHMA,
6 IHMA, GHMA, and SFAs (**Figures 2-2 and 2-3**) with associated program management
7 direction; a mitigation framework and strategy; development of Wildfire and Invasive
8 Species Assessments; and associated monitoring to support these decisions.

9 The decisions described in this Plan apply to BLM lands in both Montana and Idaho unless
10 identified differently. Several notable differences include the Adaptive Management Strategy
11 and the Disturbance Density evaluation. In both cases Idaho and Southwestern Montana
12 have separate approaches which are described in the applicable sections. Southwestern
13 Montana's approach in both cases is the same as the approaches being applied in the rest of
14 Montana; this supports a consistent approach within the entire state that can be
15 implemented in coordination with State and Federal partners.

16 The proposed plan incorporates the following GRSG goals:

17 GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase the abundance, distribution and connectivity of
18 GRSG by conserving, enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat to maintain
19 resilient populations by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to GRSG
20 habitats.

21 GOAL-2: Provide for the needs of GRSG and their habitat while also providing for
22 resource uses in accordance with the agencies' direction for multiple use and
23 sustained yield as described in FLPMA and the NFMA.

24 GOAL-3: Manage anthropogenic development and human disturbance to minimize the
25 likelihood of adverse population level effects on GRSG.

Table 2-2
Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRS G EIS – Land Allocation Decisions Summary¹

PHMA	IHMA	GHMA
Solar/Wind/Nuclear/Hydropower – Figure 2-4		
Exclusion (LR-2)	Avoidance (LR-2)	Idaho: Open (LR-2) Montana: Avoidance
Commercial Service Airports – Figure 2-6		
Exclusion (LR-3)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Landfills – Figure 2-6		
Exclusion (LR-4)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Utility Corridors – Figure 2-7		
Existing designated corridors which are land use plan designations (and include Section 368 Corridors), will remain “open” (subject to the ongoing settlement agreement) and can provide an opportunity to be modified with mitigation. Any new disturbance within these corridors would count towards the disturbance cap. All new, modified, or deleted corridors will require a land use plan amendment. (LR-7)	Same as PHMA (LR-7)	Same as PHMA (LR-7)
ROWs and Land Use Authorizations/Permits – High Voltage Transmission Lines and Large Pipelines – Figure 2-8		
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Idaho: Open (LR-1) Montana: Avoidance
ROWs and Land Use Authorizations/Permits – Minor ROWs – Figure 2-9		
Avoidance (LR-1)	Avoidance (LR-1)	Open (LR-1)
Land Tenure Adjustments – Figure 2-10		

Note:

¹ The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion includes portions of Idaho, Montana and Utah. Where differences exist between direction for Idaho and Montana or between BLM and Forest Service, those are noted in the table and within the management action section. The lands within Utah are part of the Sawtooth National Forest and are managed as such; therefore direction for these lands in Utah is the same as that described for the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho.

**Table 2-2
Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG EIS – Land Allocation Decisions Summary¹**

PHMA	IHMA	GHMA
Retention with exceptions for exchange; available for exchange with no net loss of GRSG Key habitat within PHMA and IHMA. Not available for disposal. (LR-14)	Same as PHMA (LR-14)	Available for exchange only
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation (Includes Geothermal) – Figures 2-11 and 2-12		
Idaho and Montana: Open subject to No Surface Occupancy (NSO) without waiver, or modification. (FLM-1)	Idaho: Open subject to NSO with a limited exception. Montana: Not Applicable (FLM-1)	Idaho and Montana: Open subject to Controlled Surface Use and Timing Limitations (FLM-1)
Locatable Minerals – Figure 2-13		
Areas not previously withdrawn are open.	Same as PHMA.	Same as PHMA.
Non-Energy Leasables – Figure 2-14		
Closed to leasing. (NEL-1) There are no Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) in PHMA.	KPLAs are Open subject to standard leasing stipulations. Areas outside KPLAs are Open subject to standard and GRSG stipulations (required design features, seasonal timing restrictions). (NEL-1)	Open to leasing with standard and GRSG stipulations (required design features and seasonal timing restrictions) (NEL-1)
Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals) – Figure 2-15		
Closed to new site authorizations. Existing sites Open to new free use subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to Anthropogenic Disturbance Criteria (AD-4). Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)	Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions. (SAL-1)
Travel Management – Figure 2-16		
BLM Idaho: Limited to Existing (TM-1) BLM Montana: Limited to Designated (Decisions described in Dillon RMP)	BLM: Limited to Existing (TM-1)	BLM: Limited to Existing (TM-1) BLM Montana: Limited to Designated (Decisions described in Dillon RMP)

1

Note:

¹ The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion includes portions of Idaho, Montana and Utah. Where differences exist between direction for Idaho and Montana or between BLM and Forest Service, those are noted in the table and within the management action section. The lands within Utah are part of the Sawtooth National Forest and are managed as such; therefore direction for these lands in Utah is the same as that described for the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho.

1 GOAL-4: Reduce the risk of West Nile Virus or other disease outbreaks from BLM
2 and Forest Service management actions.

3 GOAL-5: Conserve, enhance, and restore the sagebrush ecosystem upon which GRSG
4 populations depend in an effort to maintain and/or increase their abundance
5 and distribution, in cooperation with other conservation partners.

6 ***Special Status Species***

7
8 *Objectives*

9 MA-OBJ-1 (Management Area – Objective): Maintain a resilient population of GRSG in
10 Idaho and Southwestern Montana.

11 MA-OBJ-2: Designate GRSG management areas and associated management to maintain
12 a resilient population and to designate strategically located adjacent areas to
13 provide a buffer from unpredictable habitat loss such as wildfire to the
14 resilient population areas.

15 MA-OBJ-3: Identify and strategically protect larger intact sagebrush areas and areas of
16 lower fragmentation to maintain GRSG population persistence.

17 HM-OBJ-1 (Habitat Management): Maintain or make progress toward at least 70 percent
18 of lands within PHMAs and IHMAs capable of producing sagebrush at 10 to
19 30 percent canopy cover and conifers absent to uncommon within 1.86 miles
20 of occupied leks.

21 HM-OBJ-2: Incorporate GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives (Table 2-3) into the design
22 of projects or activities, as appropriate, based on site conditions and
23 ecological potential, unless achievement of fuels management objectives
24 require additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection
25 of GRSG habitat and conserve habitat quality for the species or at least one
26 of the following conditions can be demonstrated and documented in the
27 NEPA analysis associated with the specific project:

- 28 • A specific objective is not applicable to the site-specific conditions of
29 the project or activity;
- 30 • An alternative objective is determined to provide equal or better
31 protection for GRSG or its habitat (based on appropriate scientific
32 findings); or
- 33 • Analysis concludes that following a specific objective would provide
34 no more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for
35 the project being proposed.

36 These habitat objectives in **Table 2-3** summarize the characteristics that research has
37 found represent the seasonal habitat needs for GRSG. The specific seasonal components
38 identified in the table were adjusted based on local science and monitoring data to define

1 the range of characteristics used in this subregion. Thus, the habitat objectives provide
2 the broad vegetative conditions we strive to obtain across the landscape that indicate the
3 seasonal habitats used by GRSG. These habitat indicators are consistent with the
4 rangeland health indicators used by the BLM.

5 The habitat objectives will be part of the GRSG habitat assessment to be used during
6 land health evaluations (see Monitoring Framework, **Appendix E**). These habitat
7 objectives are not obtainable on every acre within the designated GRSG habitat
8 management areas. Therefore, the determination on whether the objectives have been
9 met will be based on the specific site's ecological ability to meet the desired condition
10 identified in the table.

11 All BLM use authorizations will contain terms and conditions regarding the actions
12 needed to meet or progress toward meeting the habitat objectives. If monitoring data
13 show the habitat objectives have not been met nor progress being made towards meeting
14 them, there will be an evaluation and a determination made as to the cause. If it is
15 determined that the authorized use is a cause, the use will be adjusted by the response
16 specified in the instrument that authorized the use.

17
Table 2-3
Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for GRSG on BLM-Administered Lands

Attribute	Indicator	Desired Condition	Reference
BREEDING HABITAT (LEK AND NESTING/EARLY BROOD REARING)			
Breeding and Nesting (Seasonal Use Period March 1 – June 15)			
Lek Security	Proximity of trees	Trees (i.e., in Idaho mainly juniper, conifers, and does not include old-growth juniper, pinyon pine and mountain mahogany; in Montana mainly Douglas-fir) absent or uncommon on shrub/grassland ecological sites within 1.86 miles (3 km) of occupied leks.	Baruch-Mordo et al. 2013 ⁷ Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 328 ft. (100 m) of an occupied lek	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
NESTING/EARLY BROOD REARING^{5,10,12,13,14}			
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent (Percent of Seasonal Habitat Meeting Desired Conditions)	>80% of the nesting habitat meets the recommended vegetation characteristics, where appropriate (relative to ecological site potential, etc.).	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Sagebrush cover ² (Canopy Cover)	15-25%	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸ Connelly et al. 2003 ⁹ Hagen et al. 2007 ¹¹
	Sagebrush height		Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸



Table 2-3
Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for GRSG on BLM-Administered Lands

Attribute	Indicator	Desired Condition	Reference
	Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	12-31 inches (30-80cm) 16-31 inches (40-80cm)	
	Predominant sagebrush shape	Predominantly spreading shape ⁵	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
	Perennial grass cover ² Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	≥10% ≥15%	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸ Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
	Perennial grass (and forb) height	≥ 7 inches	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸ Connelly et al. 2003 ⁹ Hagen et al. 2007 ¹¹ Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
	Perennial forb (canopy) cover ² Arid sites ³ Mesic sites ⁴	≥5% ≥10%	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Perennial forb availability	Preferred forbs are common with several species present ⁶	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
LATE BROOD-REARING/SUMMER^{1, 15} (July-October)¹ Late brood-rearing areas, such as riparian, meadows, springs, higher elevation mesic uplands, etc. may occur within other mapped seasonal habitat areas. Apply late brood rearing/summer habitat desired conditions locally as appropriate.			
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent (Percent of Seasonal Habitat Meeting Desired Condition)	>40% of the summer/brood habitat meets recommended brood habitat characteristics where appropriate (relative to ecological site potential, etc.)	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Sagebrush (canopy) cover ²	Uplands 10-25% Riparian/Meadow: Sagebrush cover within 100 m	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Sagebrush height	16 to 32 inches (40-80cm)	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Perennial grass and forb cover ²	>15%	
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ²	Preferred forbs are common with appropriate numbers of species present ⁶	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
	Riparian and/or meadow habitat condition	Proper Functioning Condition	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³
WINTER¹ November-March¹ (Apply to areas of known or likely winter-use)			
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent (Percent of Seasonal Habitat Meeting Desired Condition)	>80% of the wintering habitat meets winter habitat characteristics where appropriate (relative to ecological site, etc.).	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸
	Sagebrush cover and	Sagebrush is at least 10 inches	Connelly et al. 2000 ⁸

Table 2-3
Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for GRSG on BLM-Administered Lands

Attribute	Indicator	Desired Condition	Reference
	height above snow	(25 cm) above snow and $\geq 10\%$ cover ¹⁶	Stiver et al. <i>in press</i> ¹³

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- ¹ Seasonal dates can be adjusted by local unit according to geographic region.
- ² Since plant species and/or life forms may overlap, total vegetative cover, inclusive of shrubs, forbs and grasses may exceed 100%.
- ³ Arid corresponds to the 10 – 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al. *In Press*).
- ⁴ Mesic corresponds to the ≥ 12 inch precipitation zone; *Artemisia tridentata vaseyana* is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al. *In Press*).
- ⁵ Collectively the indicators for sagebrush (cover, height, and shape), perennial grass and perennial forb (cover, height and/or availability) represent the desired condition range for nesting/early brood rearing habitat characteristics, consistent with the breeding habitat suitability matrix identified in Stiver et al. *In Press*. Sagebrush plants that are more tree or columnar-shaped provide less protective cover near the ground than sagebrush plants with a spreading shape (Stiver et al. *In Press*). Some sagebrush plants are naturally columnar (e.g., Great Basin big sagebrush), and a natural part of the plant community. However, a predominance of columnar shape arising from animal impacts may warrant management investigation or adjustments at site specific scales.
- ⁶ Preferred forbs are listed in Stiver et al. *In press*. Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred.
- ⁷ Baruch-Mordo, S., J. S. Evans, J. P. Severson, D. E. Naugle, J. D. Maestas, J. M. Kiesecker, M. J. Falkowski, C. A. Hagen, and K. P. Reese. 2013. Saving sage-grouse from trees. *Biological Conservation* 167:233-241.
- ⁸ Connelly, J. W., M. A. Schroeder, A. R. Sands, and C. E. Braun. 2000. Guidelines to manage sage-grouse populations and their habitats. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 28:967-985.
- ⁹ Connelly, J. W., K. P. Reese, and M. A. Schroeder. 2003. Monitoring of Greater sage-grouse habitats and populations. University of Idaho College of Natural Resources Experiment Station Bulletin 80. University of Idaho, Moscow, ID.
- ¹⁰ Doherty, K. 2008. Sage-grouse and Energy Development: Integrating Science with Conservation Planning to Reduce Impacts. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Montana, Missoula, MT.
- ¹¹ Hagen, C. A., J. W. Connelly, and M. A. Schroeder. 2007. A meta-analysis of greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* nesting and brood-rearing habitats. *Wildlife Biology* 13 (Supplement 1):42-50.
- ¹² Holloran, M. J., and S. H. Anderson. 2005. Spatial Distribution of Greater Sage-grouse nests in relatively contiguous sagebrush habitats. *Condor* 107:742-752.
- ¹³ Stiver, S. J., E. T. Rinkes, D. E. Naugle, P. D. Makela, D. A. Nance, and J. W. Karl. *In Press*. Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: A Multi-scale Habitat Assessment Tool. Bureau of Land Management and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Technical Reference 6710-1. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Denver, Colorado.
- ¹⁴ Connelly, J.W., A. Moser, and D. Kemner. 2013. Greater Sage-Grouse breeding habitats: Landscape-based comparisons. *Grouse News* 45. Research Reports.
- ¹⁵ Some late brood habitat occurs at higher elevations outside of mapped nesting habitat and some is embedded within nesting landscapes especially areas such as wet meadows, riparian areas, springs and seeps.
- ¹⁶ Winter habitat metrics are a guideline but snow depths and habitat availability may vary widely depending on winter severity, topography and elevation.

- 1
2 *Coordination*
3 CC-1: Collaborate, coordinate and utilize cooperative planning efforts to implement
4 and monitor activities to achieve desired conditions and to maximize the
5 utilization of available funding opportunities. Coordination efforts could
6 include: adjacent landowners, federal and state agencies, local governments,

- 1 tribes, communities, other agencies, resource advisory groups, public lands
2 permit holders and non-governmental organizations.
- 3 CC-2: Develop a cooperative MOU between the BLM, Forest Service and State of
4 Idaho to establish the State of Idaho as a cooperating agency during
5 implementation of the final decision. The MOU would identify
6 responsibilities, role and interaction of the BLM, Forest Service and State of
7 Idaho. Montana BLM will participate as appropriate on Montana's Sage-
8 grouse Oversight Team to facilitate coordination and implementation of
9 BLM's final decision and Montana's Executive Order No. 10-2014.
- 10 CC-3: The BLM and Forest Service would consider any recommendations from the
11 Governor of Idaho as a result of evaluation completed by the Sage-Grouse
12 Implementation Task Force.
- 13 CC-4: Idaho: The BLM would coordinate with the State of Idaho and the Idaho
14 Sage-Grouse Implementation Task Force regarding proposed management
15 changes, the implementation of conservation measures, mitigation, and site-
16 specific monitoring, related to adaptive management, anthropogenic
17 disturbance and livestock grazing (**Appendix M**).
- 18 CC-5: Montana: The BLM would coordinate with the State of Montana and the
19 Montana Sage-grouse Oversight Team regarding proposed management
20 changes, the implementation of conservation measures, mitigation, and site-
21 specific monitoring, related to adaptive management and anthropogenic
22 disturbance (**Appendix M**).
- 23 CC-5: Upon completion of the Record of Decision the BLM will develop an initial
24 Implementation Guide for BLM District and Field Offices within a year of
25 issuance of the Record of Decision. This Guide would define and describe
26 consistent application of the allocations, management actions, required
27 design features, and etc. that are contained within the final plan and would be
28 updated and expanded as needed to respond to issues and concerns.
- 29 CC-6: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with IDFG,
30 MFWP, USFWS, and other conservation partners in collaborative efforts
31 with adjacent states (Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Wyoming) in GRSG
32 MZs IV and II to evaluate GRSG habitat and population status and trends
33 and make appropriate regional recommendations for GRSG conservation at
34 broader scales.
- 35 CC-7: At the state level, BLM and Forest Service would coordinate with the
36 appropriate WAFWA Sage-grouse Technical Committee to develop
37 consistent population and habitat monitoring approaches that facilitate
38 GRSG conservation at the MZ scale.

1 CC-8: All prescribed burning would be coordinated with state and local air quality
2 agencies to ensure that local air quality is not significantly impacted by BLM
3 and Forest Service activities.

4 *Greater Sage-Grouse Management Areas*

5 MA-1 (Management Area): Designate five GRSG Conservation Areas within the
6 sub-region to form the geographic basis for achieving population objectives;
7 evaluating the disturbance density and adaptive regulatory triggers; and tailor
8 adaptive management responses. These conservation areas are depicted in
9 **Figure 2-1**. These areas are referred to as Mountain Valleys, Desert, West
10 Owyhee, Southern and Southwestern Montana Conservation Areas.

11 Conservation Area Description:

12 Mountain Valleys Conservation Area – generally located north of the Snake
13 River Plain, including GRSG habitat in the Salmon and Challis areas, and
14 habitat in west-central population area. It extends west from Rexburg, north
15 and west of Highway 33 to Howe, north and west of Highway 33/22 to
16 Arco, north and west of Highway 26/20/93 to Carey, north and west of
17 Highway 20 west to Hill City, north and west of Highway 20 to the Dylan
18 Karas Road, west to Canyon Creek. Canyon Creek to the confluence with
19 the Snake River form the western boundary.

20 Desert Conservation Area – located north of the Snake River and south of
21 the Mountain Valleys Conservation Area. It extends from the confluence of
22 Canyon Creek and the Snake River, eastward to Idaho Falls. The Snake River
23 and Henry’s Fork form the eastern boundary.

24 West Owyhee Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and
25 west of the Bruneau River.

26 Southern Conservation Area – located south of the Snake River and east of
27 the Bruneau River, including East Idaho uplands and Bear Lake Plateau, and
28 the Utah portion of the Sawtooth National Forest in Box Elder County.

29 Southwestern Montana – located in southwestern Montana - encompassing
30 the Dillon Butte BLM Field Office and Beaverhead-Deerlodge National
31 Forest boundaries (the Butte RMP is not being amended and since there are
32 limited GRSG federal GHMAs, management actions do not apply in the
33 Butte Field Office).

34 In general, GRSG habitats in the Desert and West Owyhee CAs are relatively
35 contiguous, while those in the Mountain Valleys and Southern CAs tend to
36 be more fragmented due to more complex topography, and elevational
37 differences and/or effects from wildfires, agriculture, urbanization or other
38 factors.

39 MA-2: Within each Conservation Area designate GRSG Habitat Management Areas:
40 Priority, Important and General Habitat Management Areas (**Figure 2-2**).



1 **Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMAs)** focus on conserving the
2 two key meta-populations in the sub-region. These meta-populations consist
3 of a large aggregation of interconnected breeding subpopulations of GRSG
4 that have the highest likelihood of long-term persistence. Specifically, these
5 include a meta-population north of the Snake River, inclusive of the North
6 Magic Valley, Big Desert and Basin and Range areas and another south of the
7 Snake River comprised of south central Idaho, the upper Bruneau-Jarbridge
8 Plateau, and the Owyhee Uplands. PHMA encompasses areas with the
9 highest conservation value to GRSG, based on the presence of larger leks,
10 habitat extent, important movement and connectivity corridors and winter
11 habitat. PHMAs include adequate area to accommodate continuation of
12 existing land uses and landowner activities. **Important Habitat**
13 **Management Areas (IHMAs)** contain additional habitat and populations
14 that provide a management buffer for the PHMA and to connect patches of
15 PHMA. IHMA encompasses areas of generally moderate to high
16 conservation value habitat and/or populations and in some Conservation
17 Areas includes areas beyond those identified by USFWS as necessary to
18 maintain redundant, representative and resilient populations (Priority Areas
19 for Conservation (PACs)). IHMAs are typically adjacent to PHMAs but
20 generally reflect somewhat lower GRSG population status and/or reduced
21 habitat value due to disturbance, habitat fragmentation or other factors.
22 There are no IHMAs designated within the Southwestern Montana
23 Conservation Area. **General Habitat Management Areas (GHMAs)**
24 encompass habitat that is outside of PHMAs or IHMAs. GHMAs contain
25 approximately 10 percent of the occupied leks that are also of relatively low
26 male attendance compared to leks in PHMA or IHMA. GHMAs are
27 generally characterized by lower quality disturbed or patchy habitat of low lek
28 connectivity.

29 MA-3: In Idaho, Designate PHMA and IHMA to encompass 90 percent of the
30 breeding males in Idaho. In Montana, designate PHMA to encompass
31 Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks 2009 Greater Sage Grouse Core Area
32 designations.

33 MA-4: Annually prioritize Conservation Areas at the state scale considering results
34 of the annual adaptive regulatory trigger evaluations relative to
35 implementation of restoration and mitigation activities.

36 MA-5: Prioritize activities and mitigation to protect, enhance and restore GRSG
37 habitats (i.e., fire suppression activities, fuels management activities,
38 vegetation treatments, invasive species treatments etc.) first by Conservation
39 Area, if appropriate (Conservation Area under adaptive management or at
40 risk of engaging adaptive management), followed by PHMAs, then IHMAs
41 then GHMAs within the Conservation Areas. Local priority areas within
42 these areas will be further refined as a result of completing the GRSG
43 Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments as described in **Appendix**

1 **D.** This could include projects outside GRSG habitat when those projects
2 would provide a benefit to GRSG habitat.

3 MA-6: The management area map and Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) baseline
4 map would be re-evaluated in conjunction with plan evaluation processes (i.e.
5 approximately every 5 years). This re-evaluation could indicate the need to
6 adjust PHMA, IHMA or GHMA or the habitat baseline. These adjustments
7 could occur upon completion of the appropriate analysis (plan amendment)
8 to review the allocation decisions based on the map. Results from the
9 Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments, such as identified focal or
10 emphasis areas would also be used to help inform mapping adjustments
11 during this evaluation.

12 MA-7: GRSG habitat within the project area would be assessed during project-level
13 NEPA analysis within the management area designations (PHMA, IHMA,
14 GHMA). Project proposals and their effects would be evaluated based on the
15 habitat and values affected.

16 MA-8: Idaho BLM will annually update the Key Habitat map as described in
17 **Appendix F**, in order to reflect habitat changes resulting from wildfire,
18 succession, and vegetation treatments that occurred or were observed since
19 the last update. Updates to the map will also occur if it is determined that
20 mapping errors or omissions have occurred, or that radio-telemetry studies
21 indicate that GRSG are consistently utilizing an area. Updates are also
22 intended to capture recommendations by the field offices, GRSG Local
23 Working Groups, or agency partners in GRSG conservation. Project-level
24 evaluations of GRSG habitat during the NEPA process may also be used to
25 inform the annual update.

26 MA-9: Areas of habitat outside of delineated management areas identified during the
27 Key habitat update process would be evaluated during site specific NEPA for
28 project level activities and GRSG required design features (**Appendix B**),
29 seasonal timing restrictions (**Appendix C**) and buffers (**Appendix B**) would
30 be included as part of project design. These areas would be further evaluated
31 during plan evaluation and the 5-year update to the management areas, to
32 determine whether they should be included as PHMAs, IHMAs, or GHMAs.

33 MA-10: Designate Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA) as shown on **Figure 2-3**. SFAs will
34 be managed as PHMA, with the following additional management:

- 35 • Recommended for withdrawal from the General Mining Act of 1872,
36 as amended, subject to valid existing rights.
- 37 • Managed as NSO, without waiver, exception, or modification, for
38 fluid mineral leasing.



- Prioritized for management and conservation actions in these areas, including, but not limited to review of livestock grazing permits/leases (see livestock grazing section for additional actions).

Areas of non-PHMA mapped within the SFA boundary will not be managed as SFA, except for the Donkey Hills ACEC and three Forest Service parcels in the Lost River Range, Idaho (Borah Peak, Big Flat Top Mountain, and Copper Basin Knob).

Adaptive Management

AM-1 (Adaptive Management): Idaho: Use hard and soft population and habitat triggers to determine an appropriate management response as described in AM-6 to AM-16. Hard and soft triggers are evaluated using Conservation Areas (MA-1) and BSUs (Appendix G).

AM-2: Utilize monitoring information collected through the Monitoring Framework (**Appendix E**) to determine when adaptive regulatory triggers have been met.

AM-3: Idaho: BLM and Forest Service would maintain GRSG habitat information, through use of the Key Habitat map or latest sagebrush/vegetation map, which would be used to track and identify habitat changes to assess the habitat trigger in the adaptive management approach. Key habitat map updates are made each winter by BLM in coordination with the Forest Service and IDFG, using the process described in **Appendix F**.

AM-4: Idaho: BLM would coordinate with the IDFG regarding population information collected and maintained by the IDFG to track and identify population changes to assess the population trigger in the adaptive management approach.

AM-5: Idaho: Twice each year the applicable monitoring information would be reviewed to determine if any adaptive management triggers have been met.

AM-6: Idaho: Adaptive habitat regulatory triggers would be individually calculated across all ownerships within the BSUs (**Appendix G**). The BSU is defined as the IDFG modeled nesting and wintering habitat (IDFG 2013, unpublished data) within PHMAs and IHMAs within a Conservation Area. The sagebrush component of the BSU is represented by the Key habitat within the BSU present during the 2011 baseline and as mapped during subsequent annual Key habitat map updates. Key habitat is defined as areas of generally intact sagebrush that provide GRSG habitat during some portion of the year (ISAC 2006).

AM-7: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Habitat Hard Triggers are defined as:

- 1 • A 20 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the PHMA of a
2 Conservation Area when compared to the 2011 baseline, inclusive of
3 all land ownerships or
- 4 • A 20 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the IHMA of a
5 Conservation Area when compared to the 2011 baseline.

6 AM-8: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Habitat Soft Triggers are defined as:

- 7 • A 10 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the PHMA of a
8 Conservation Area when compared to the 2011 baseline; or
- 9 • A 10 percent loss of Key Habitat within the BSU of the IHMA of a
10 Conservation Area when compared to the 2011 baseline.

11 AM-9: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Population Hard Triggers are defined as:

- 12 • A 20 percent decline in the current 3-year average of total maximum
13 number of males counted compared to the 2011 maximum male
14 baseline and a finite rate of change (λ) significantly below 1.0 within
15 PHMA within a Conservation Area over the same 3-year period; or
- 16 • A 20 percent decline in the current 3-year average of total maximum
17 number of males counted compared to the 2011 maximum male
18 baseline and a finite rate of change (λ) significantly below 1.0 within
19 IHMA within a Conservation Area over the same 3-year period.
- 20 • Significance is defined by the 90 percent confidence interval around
21 the current 3-year finite rate of change. If the 90 percent confidence
22 interval is less than, and does not include 1.0, then the finite rate of
23 change is considered significant. The finite rate of change and
24 variance will be calculated following Garton et al. (2011).

25 AM-10: Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Population Soft Triggers are defined as:

- 26 • A 10 percent decline in the current 3-year average of total maximum
27 number of males counted compared to the 2011 maximum male
28 baseline and a finite rate of change (λ) below 1.0 within PHMA
29 within a Conservation Area over the same 3-year period; or
- 30 • A 10 percent decline in the current 3-year average of total maximum
31 number of males counted compared to the 2011 maximum male
32 baseline and a finite rate of change (λ) below 1.0 within IHMA within
33 a Conservation Area over the same 3-year period.

34 AM-11: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Soft Triggers have been
35 met the Implementation Team would evaluate causal factors and recommend
36 additional potential implementation level activities (**Appendix G**).



- 1 AM-12: When any of the Adaptive Regulatory Criteria for Hard Triggers have been
2 met then all PHMA management actions would be applied to the IHMA
3 within that Conservation Area and the Implementation Team would evaluate
4 causal factors and recommend additional potential implementation level
5 activities.
- 6 AM-13: If an adaptive regulatory trigger is tripped and livestock grazing is identified
7 as a probable limiting factor then adjustments would follow the Adaptive
8 Grazing Management Response described in **Appendix G**.
- 9 AM-14: Remove any adaptive management response when the habitat or population
10 information shows a return to or an exceedance of the 2011 baseline values
11 within the associated Conservation Area in accordance with the Adaptive
12 Management Strategy. In such a case, upon removal of the adaptive
13 management response, the original habitat and population triggers would
14 apply.
- 15 AM-15: Montana: Follow the NPT Adaptive Management Guidance and Sideboards.
16 When a hard trigger is hit in a BSU, the designated response will be put in
17 place in that BSU. Triggers and responses have been developed with local
18 state and USFWS experts (**Appendix I**).
- 19 AM-16: Idaho and Montana: When a hard trigger is hit in a BSU within a PAC that
20 has multiple BSUs, including those that cross state lines, the WAFWA
21 Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team will convene to
22 determine the causal factor, put project-level responses in place, as
23 appropriate and discuss further appropriate actions to be applied. The team
24 will also investigate the status of the hard triggers in other BSUs within the
25 PAC and will invoke the appropriate plan response.

26 *Anthropogenic Disturbance*

27 AD-1 (Anthropogenic Disturbance): For Idaho and Montana, if the 3 percent
28 anthropogenic disturbance cap is exceeded on lands (regardless of land
29 ownership) within GRSG PHMA (or IHMA in Idaho) Habitat Management
30 Areas in any given BSU, then no further discrete anthropogenic disturbances
31 (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the General Mining Law
32 of 1872, as amended, valid existing rights, etc.) will be permitted by BLM
33 within GRSG PHMAs and IHMAs in any given BSU until the disturbance
34 has been reduced to less than the cap. As measured according to the
35 Monitoring Framework (**Appendix G**) for the intermediate scale.

36 For Idaho, if the 3 percent disturbance cap is exceeded on all lands
37 (regardless of land ownership) within a proposed project analysis area
38 (**Appendix G**) in a PHMA (or IHMA in Idaho), then no further
39 anthropogenic disturbance will be permitted by BLM until disturbance in the
40 proposed project analysis area has been reduced to maintain the area under

1 the cap (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the General
2 Mining Law of 1872, as amended, valid existing rights, etc.).

3 For Montana, if the 3 percent disturbance cap is exceeded on lands
4 (regardless of land ownership) or if anthropogenic disturbance and habitat
5 loss associated with conversion to agricultural tillage or fire exceed 5% within
6 a project analysis area in PHMAs, then no further discrete anthropogenic
7 disturbances (subject to applicable laws and regulations, such as the 1872
8 Mining Law, valid existing rights, etc.) will be permitted by BLM within
9 PHMA in a project analysis area until the disturbance has been reduced to
10 less than the cap. If the BLM determines that the State of Montana has
11 adopted a GRSG Habitat Conservation Program that contains comparable
12 components to those found in the State of Wyoming's Core Area Strategy
13 including an all lands approach for calculating anthropogenic disturbances, a
14 clear methodology for measuring the density of operations, and a fully
15 operational Density Disturbance Calculation Tool, the 3% disturbance cap
16 will be converted to a 5% cap for all sources of habitat alteration within a
17 project analysis area.

18 For Idaho the BSU (**Figure 2-3**) is defined as the currently mapped nesting
19 and wintering habitat within PHMA and IHMA within a Conservation Area,
20 inclusive of all ownerships for evaluation. For Montana the BSU is defined as
21 the PHMA in Montana. Anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat
22 disturbance from wildfire and fuels management activities and includes
23 activities described in **Table 2-4**. For Idaho this disturbance is measured by
24 direct footprint or by ROW width for linear features (powerlines, pipelines
25 and roads). For Montana disturbance is measured similar to the Wyoming
26 Disturbance Density Calculation Tool process described in **Appendix G**.

27 Subject to applicable laws and regulations and valid existing rights, if the
28 average density of one energy and mining facility per 640 acres (the density
29 cap) is exceeded on all lands (regardless of land ownership) in the Priority
30 Habitat Management Area within a proposed project analysis area, then no
31 further disturbance from energy or mining facilities will be permitted by
32 BLM: (1) until disturbance in the proposed project analysis area has been
33 reduced to maintain the limit under the cap; or (2) unless the energy or
34 mining facility is co-located into an existing disturbed area.

35 AD-2: New anthropogenic disturbances within PHMA or IHMA within a
36 Conservation Area where the disturbance cap is already exceeded from any
37 source or where the proposed development would result in the cap being
38 exceeded would not be allowed in within that Conservation Area until
39 enough habitat has been restored within that Conservation Area to maintain
40 the area under this cap (subject to valid existing rights).

41 AD-3: PHMA (Idaho only): Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria. In
42 order to avoid surface-disturbing activities in PHMA, priority will be given to



1 development (including ROWs, fluid minerals and other mineral resources
2 subject to applicable stipulations) outside of PHMA. When authorizing
3 development in PHMA, priority will be given to development in non-habitat
4 areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for GRSG. In addition to the
5 PHMA and IHMA Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-
6 4), the following criteria must all be met in the project screening and
7 assessment process:

- 8 a. The population trend for the GRSG within the associated
9 Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a three-year period and
10 the population levels are not currently engaging the adaptive
11 management triggers (this applies strictly to new authorizations;
12 renewals and amendments of existing authorizations would not be
13 subject to this criteria when it can be shown that long-term impacts
14 from those renewals or amendments would be substantially the same
15 as the existing development);
- 16 b. The development with associated mitigation would not result in a net
17 loss of GRSG Key habitat and mitigation would provide a net
18 conservation benefit to the respective PHMA;
- 19 c. The project and associated impacts would not result in a net loss of
20 GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing
21 a decline in the population of the species within the relevant
22 Conservation Area (the project would be outside Key habitat in areas
23 not meeting desired habitat conditions or the project would provide a
24 benefit to habitat areas that are functioning in a limited way as
25 habitat);
- 26 d. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the PHMA; or can be
27 either: 1) developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; or 2) is
28 co-located within the footprint of existing infrastructure (proposed
29 actions would not increase the 2011 authorized footprint and
30 associated impacts more than 50 percent, depending on industry
31 practice.
- 32 e. Development could be implemented adhering to the required design
33 features (RDF) described in **Appendix B**;
- 34 f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).
- 35 g. The project has been reviewed by the State Implementation Team
36 and recommended for consideration by the Idaho Governor.

37 AD-4: The following Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria must be
38 met in the screening and assessment process for proposals in PHMA and
39 IHMA to discourage additional disturbance in PHMAs and IHMAs (as
40 described in LR-1 and LR-2; applies to Idaho only):

- a. Through coordination with the USFWS and State of Idaho (as described in CC-1), it is determined that the project cannot be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management area; and
- b. The project siting and/or design should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on GRSG and other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; this may include co-location within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable; and
- c. The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG Key habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant Conservation Area; and
- d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and
- e. Development could be implemented adhering to the RDFs described in **Appendix B**.
- f. The project would not exceed the disturbance cap (AD-1).

In Montana, the BLM would apply the project/action screen and mitigation process (**Appendix I**).

AD-5: Co-locating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs or the construction of new facilities in all management area. Colocation for various activities is defined as:

- Communication Sites – The installation of new equipment/facilities on or within or adjacent to existing authorized equipment/facilities or within a communication site boundary as designated in the Communication Site Plan.
- Electrical Lines – Installation of new ROWs adjacent to current ROWs boundaries, not necessarily placed on the same power poles.
- Other Rights-of-Way – The installation of new ROWs within the existing footprint of an approved ROW boundary or adjacent to an approved ROW boundary.
- Designated Corridors – The installation of new rights-of-way within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor.

AD-6: Incorporate RDFs as described in **Appendix B** in the development of project or proposal implementation, reauthorizations or new authorizations and suppression activities, as conditions of approval (COAs) into any post-lease activities and as best management practices for locatable minerals activities, to the extent allowable by law, unless at least one of the following

- 1 conditions can be demonstrated and documented in the NEPA analysis
2 associated with the specific project:
- 3 a. A specific RDF is not applicable to the site-specific conditions of the
4 project or activity;
 - 5 b. A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or
6 better protection for GRSG or its habitat; or
 - 7 c. Analysis concludes that following a specific RDF would provide no
8 more protection to GRSG or its habitat than not following it, for the
9 project being proposed.
- 10 AD-7: Conduct implementation and project activities, including construction and
11 short-term anthropogenic disturbances consistent with seasonal habitat
12 restrictions described in **Appendix C**.
- 13 AD-8: RDFs and seasonal habitat restrictions would not be required for emergency
14 or short-term activities necessary to protect and preserve human life or
15 property.
- 16 AD-9: In undertaking BLM management actions, and consistent with valid and
17 existing rights and applicable law in authorizing third-party actions, the BLM
18 will apply the lek buffer-distances identified in the USGS Report
19 Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse – A
20 Review (Open File Report 2014-1239) in accordance with **Appendix B**.
- 21 AD-10: Incorporate appropriate conservation measures for slickspot peppergrass
22 (*Lepidium papilliferum*) as described in the 2014 Conservation Agreement (as
23 updated, amended or reauthorized) into implementation and project design
24 within slickspot peppergrass habitat in the Jarbidge and Four Rivers Field
25 Offices to avoid and minimize impacts to slickspot peppergrass. The 2014
26 Conservation Agreement is included as **Appendix P**.

Table 2-4
Anthropogenic Disturbances and Areas of Impact

Datasets as Described in the Monitoring Framework¹
Oil and Gas Wells and Development Facilities
Coal Mines
Wind Towers
Solar Fields
Geothermal Development Facilities
Mining (Active Locatable, Leasable and Saleable Developments)
Roads
Railroads
Powerlines
Communication Towers
Other Vertical Structures

**Table 2-4
Anthropogenic Disturbances and Areas of Impact**

Datasets as Described in the Monitoring Framework¹
Additional Local Datasets
Coalbed Methane Ponds
Meteorological Towers (e.g., wind energy testing)
Nuclear Energy Facilities
Airport Facilities and Infrastructure
Military Range Facilities and Infrastructure
Hydroelectric Plants
Recreation Areas Facilities and infrastructure

Note:

¹ Taken from Table 6 – GRSG Monitoring Framework.

See **Appendix G** for further details

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Mitigation

- MIT-1 (Mitigation): BLM would establish an inter-agency State GRSG Conservation Team at the state level (both Idaho and Montana) to help guide conservation of GRSG through compensatory mitigation, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision.
- MIT-2: The BLM and Forest Service, in coordination with the GRSG Conservation Team would develop a Mitigation Strategy within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. In Idaho this strategy would be consistent with the Idaho Mitigation Framework (**Appendix J**).
- MIT-3: In all GRSG habitat, in undertaking BLM management actions, and consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third-party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation (**Appendix G, Table G-1**), the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions.
- MIT-5: Mitigate anthropogenic development (**Appendix G, Table G-1**) impacts to GRSG habitat through application of appropriate mitigation in accordance with the Mitigation Framework (**Appendix J**).
- MIT-6: Consistent with regulations for minerals activities, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site when surface disturbing activities are proposed. Ensure reclamation bonds are sufficient to cover costs to fully rehabilitate lost GRSG habitat. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work. Areas are considered fully rehabilitated when they meet the conditions described in **Table 2-3**.

1 *Monitoring*

2 MON-1 (Monitoring): Once FIAT Assessments are complete annually complete a
3 review of FIAT Assessment implementation efforts within GRSG habitat
4 with appropriate USFWS and state agency personnel.

5 MON-2: Monitor the effectiveness of projects (e.g., fuel breaks, fuels treatments) until
6 objectives have been met or until it is determined that objectives cannot be
7 met, according to the monitoring schedule identified for project
8 implementation.

9 MON-3: Monitor invasive vegetation post vegetation management treatment

10 MON-4: Monitor project construction areas for noxious weed and invasive species for
11 at least 3 years, unless control is achieved earlier.

12 MON-5: Use lek, nesting and winter habitat maps and key habitat map (updates) to
13 annually assess GRSG population and habitat status in the context of the
14 adaptive management triggers.

15 MON-6: Continue to support updates to the Key Habitat map to track vegetation
16 changes in relation to GRSG habitat on a yearly basis, until such a time this
17 process is replaced. The process used to update the Key Habitat Map is
18 described in **Appendix F**.

19 MON-7: Monitor GRSG habitat as described in the monitoring framework plan
20 (**Appendix E**) in coordination with IDFG and MT FWP.

21 ***Vegetation***

22 *Objectives*

23 VEG-OBJ-1 (Vegetation): Reconnect and expand areas of higher native plant community
24 integrity/rangeland health to increase the extent of high quality habitat and,
25 where possible, to accommodate the future effects of climate change.
26

27 VEG-OBJ-2: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats by:

- 28 a. Increasing or enhancing canopy cover and average patch size of
29 sagebrush.
- 30 b. Increasing the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal
31 habitats.
- 32 c. Protecting or improving GRSG migration/movement corridors.
- 33 d. Reducing conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats.
- 34 e. Improving understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within
35 breeding and late brood-rearing habitats.

f. Reducing the extent of annual grasslands within and adjacent to PHMA and IHMA.

Decadal treatment objectives by population area are identified in **Table 2-5**.

VEG-Obj-3: In all SFAs and PHMAs, the desired condition is to maintain a minimum of 70 percent of lands capable of producing sagebrush with 10 to 30 percent sagebrush canopy cover. The attributes necessary to sustain these habitats are described in Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (BLM Tech Ref 1734-6).

Table 2-5
Estimated Acres of Treatment Needed within a 10-Year Period to Achieve Vegetation Objectives on BLM-Administered Lands¹

Population Area	Mechanical ²	Prescribed Fire (FM-15) ³	Grass Restoration (VEG-2) ⁴
Bear Lake Plateau	1,000	0	0
East Idaho Uplands	6,000	9,000	1,000
S Central Idaho/N Snake River and Mountain Valleys	18,000	11,000	162,000
Weiser	0	0	13,000
SW Idaho	52,000	10,000	444,000
SW Montana	0	0	0

Note:

¹ These are estimates of treatments required to achieve and/or maintain desired habitat conditions over a period of ten years. There are many dynamic and highly variable disturbances that may happen over that period of time that could have a significant effect on the amount, type, and timing of treatment needed. Those disturbances are factored into the ten-year simulation using stochastic, not predictive, techniques. Probabilities of events such as large wildfires are used in the model to make the simulation as realistic as possible, given empirical data about such events in the past, but the results of the simulation cannot be used to predict the future occurrence of such events, including their timing, size, or location, which are essentially random.

² Removal of conifers that have invaded sagebrush including phase one juniper that is 10 percent or less and reducing sagebrush cover in areas over 30 percent canopy cover

³ Acres are those that are greater than 30 percent sagebrush canopy cover and/or invaded by 10 percent or greater conifer.

⁴ Acres presently dominated by annual grasses that could be improved by herbicide application and seeding of perennial vegetation.

Vegetation Management

VEG-1: Implement habitat rehabilitation or restoration projects in areas that have potential to improve GRSG habitat using a full array of treatment activities as appropriate, including chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments.

VEG-2: Implement vegetation rehabilitation or manipulation projects to enhance sagebrush cover or to promote diverse and healthy grass and forb understory to achieve the greatest improvement in GRSG habitat based on FIAT Assessments, HAF assessments, other vegetative assessment data and local, site specific factors that indicate sagebrush canopy cover or herbaceous



1 conditions do not meet habitat management objectives (i.e. is minimal or
2 exceeds optimal characteristics). This may necessitate the use of prescribed
3 fire as a site preparation technique to remove annual grass residual growth
4 prior to the use of herbicides in the restoration of certain lower elevation
5 sites (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush) but such efforts will be carefully planned
6 and coordinated to minimize impacts to GRSG seasonal habitats.

7 VEG-3: Require use of native seeds for restoration based on availability, adaptation
8 (ecological site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998).
9 Non-native seeds may be used as long as they support GRSG habitat
10 objectives (Pyke 2011) to increase probability of success, when adapted seed
11 availability is low or to compete with invasive species especially on harsher
12 sites.

13 VEG-4: Implement management changes in restoration and rehabilitation areas, as
14 necessary, to maintain suitable GRSG habitat, improve unsuitable GRSG
15 habitat and to ensure long-term persistence of improved GRSG habitat
16 (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006). Management changes could be considered
17 during livestock grazing permit renewals, travel management planning, and
18 renewal or reauthorization of ROWs.

19 VEG-5: Consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed
20 production (Armstrong 2007) to provide a reliable source of locally adapted
21 seed to use during rehabilitation and restoration activities.

22 VEG-6: Allocate use of native seed to GRSG or ESA listed species habitat in years
23 when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation
24 of native seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects
25 outside of PHMA or IHMA to those inside it. Where probability of success
26 or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they
27 meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment
28 of appropriate sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory
29 plants, relative to site potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation
30 efforts.

31 VEG-7: During land health assessments, evaluate the relative value of existing
32 nonnative seeding within GRSG habitat as: 1) a component of a grazing
33 system allowing improvement of adjacent native vegetation, 2) development
34 of a forage reserve, 3) incorporation into a fuel break system (Davies et al.
35 2011) or 4) restoration/diversification for GRSG habitat improvement.
36 Where appropriate and feasible, diversify seedings, or restore to native
37 vegetation when potential benefits to GRSG habitat outweigh the other
38 potential uses of the non-native seeding, with emphasis on PHMA and
39 IHMA. Allow recolonization of seedings by sagebrush and other native
40 vegetation.

1 VEG-8: Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments
2 closest to occupied GRSG habitats and near occupied leks, and where
3 juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and
4 tools like VDDT and the FIAT report (Chambers et. al., 2014) will help
5 refine the location for specific areas to be treated.

6 *Invasive Species*

7 INV-1 (Invasive Species): Incorporate results of the FIAT Assessments into projects
8 and activities addressing invasive species.

9 INV-2: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated
10 vegetation management actions per national guidance and local weed
11 management plans for Cooperative Weed Management Areas in cooperation
12 with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands
13 owners.

14 INV-3: Conduct integrated weed management actions for noxious and invasive weed
15 populations that are impacting or threatening GRSG habitat quality using a
16 variety of eradication and control techniques including chemical, mechanical
17 and other appropriate means.

18 INV-4: Require project proponent (projects described in **Table 2-4** and which are
19 included in the anthropogenic disturbance cap evaluation) to ensure that
20 noxious weeds and invasive species caused as a result of the project are
21 treated to eliminate establishment on the disturbed project construction areas
22 for at least 3 years and monitored and treated during the life of the project.

23 ***Wildland Fire Management***

24 *Objectives*

25 FUEL-OBJ-1: Design fuel treatments to restore, enhance, or maintain GRSG habitat.
26

27 *Wildfire Preparedness/Prevention*

28 WFP-1 (Wildfire Preparedness): Support development and implementation of
29 Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) in coordination with the
30 State of Idaho.

31 WFP-2: Develop a consistent approach to fire restrictions within GRSG habitat
32 through the existing coordinated inter-agency approach to fire restrictions
33 based upon National Fire Danger Rating System thresholds (fuel conditions,
34 drought conditions, and predicted weather patterns).

35 WFP-3: Annually incorporate into existing fire management plans results and updates
36 from the Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments (FIAT
37 Assessments) described in **Appendix D**, to communicate/explain the

- 1 resource value of GRSG habitat, including fire prevention messages and
2 actions to reduce human-caused ignitions.
- 3 WFP-4: Continue to participate with the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, a
4 cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent
5 implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan
6 and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.
- 7 WFP-5: Continue annual coordination meetings held between cooperating agencies
8 that have fire suppression responsibilities. Incorporate Rangeland Fire
9 Protection Associations and other stakeholders into this coordination.
10 Discuss priority suppression areas and distribute maps showing priority
11 suppression areas at both the Conservation Area and the local office levels as
12 based on the adaptive management strategy and FIAT Assessments.
- 13 WFP-6: Ensure firefighter personnel receive annual orientation regarding GRSG
14 habitat and sagebrush management issues as related to wildfire suppression.
- 15 WFP-7: As part of the FIAT Assessments, identify roads, trails, and recreational use
16 areas with high frequency of human caused fires within or adjacent to the
17 PHMA or IHMA. Consider these areas during annual fire restriction
18 evaluations, and as appropriate, through site specific management.
- 19 WFP-8: Coordinate with Federal, State and local jurisdictions on fire and litter
20 prevention programs to reduce human caused ignitions.
- 21 WFP-9: Implement activities identified within the FIAT Assessments.
- 22 *Wildfire Suppression*
- 23 WFS-1: Complete Wildland Fire and Invasive Species Assessments (FIAT
24 Assessments) as described within **Appendix D** and incorporate results into
25 appropriate Fire Management Plans as they are completed. FIAT
26 Assessments are interdisciplinary evaluations of the threats posed by wildfire
27 and invasive species, as well as identification of focal and emphasis
28 habitats/treatment opportunities for fuels management, fire management,
29 and restoration. These FIAT Assessments identify focal and emphasis
30 habitats and describe strategies for fuels management, suppression and
31 restoration activities. Focal and Emphasis Habitats identified through the
32 FIAT Assessment to further refine priority areas for treatments to reduce the
33 threats posed by wildfire, invasive annual grass and conifer expansion.
- 34 WFS-2: As part of the FIAT Assessments incorporate a wildfire response time
35 analysis focusing on response time to identified priority areas within PHMA
36 and IHMA or on those fires that have the potential to impact PHMA and
37 IHMA. Incorporate findings into Unit Initial Attack program

1 WFS-3: As part of the FIAT Assessment incorporate a water capacity analysis for
2 suppression purposes, including potential private water sources. Provide
3 water availability to respond to fire in or threatening PHMA and IHMA
4 during initial attack.

5 WFS-4: During high fire danger conditions, stage initial attack and secure additional
6 resources closer to priority areas identified in the FIAT Assessments, based
7 on anticipated fires and weather conditions, with particular consideration of
8 the West Owyhee, Southern and Desert Conservation Areas to ensure
9 quicker response times in or near GRSG habitat after considerations and
10 placement of resources to protect human life and property.

11 WFS-5: Utilize a full range of fire management strategies and tactics through strategic
12 wildfire suppression planning consistent with appropriate management
13 response and within acceptable risk levels, to achieve resource objectives for
14 GRSG habitat consistent with land use plan direction. Utilizing both direct
15 and indirect attack as appropriate to limit the overall amount of GRSG
16 habitat burned. This could include suppressing fires in intact sagebrush
17 habitats; limiting fire growth in GHMA when suppression resources are
18 available or managing wildfire for resource benefit in areas of conifer
19 (juniper) encroachment.

20 WFS-6: Suppression priorities: Firefighter and public safety followed by property are
21 the highest priority for protection during suppression activities. Maintaining
22 GRSG habitat will be prioritized immediately after human life and property,
23 commensurate with threatened and endangered species habitat or other
24 critical habitats to be protected.

25 WFS-7: Ensure close coordination with federal and state firefighters including the
26 Rangeland Fire Protection Associations during suppression activities.

27 *Fuels Management*

28 FM-1: Design and implement fuels treatments that would reduce the potential start
29 and spread of unwanted wildfires and provide anchor points or control lines
30 for the containment of wildfires during suppression activities with an
31 emphasis on maintaining, protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems
32 and successfully rehabilitated areas and strategically and effectively reduce
33 wildfire threats in the greatest area.

34 FM-2: Enhance (or maintain/retain) sagebrush canopy cover and community
35 structure to match expected potential for the ecological site and consistent
36 with GRSG habitat objectives unless fuels management objectives requires
37 additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of
38 GRSG habitat. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel management
39 treatments against the additional loss of sagebrush cover on the local
40 landscape in the NEPA process.



- 1 FM-3: Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing vegetation and
2 fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats
3 present. Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments
4 are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter
5 range and would protect, maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat
6 quality. Ensure chemical applications are utilized where they would assist in
7 success of fuels treatments. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale
8 to prevent fire from spreading into PHMA or WUI.
- 9 FM-4: Develop a fuels continuity and management strategy to expand, enhance,
10 maintain and protect GRSG habitat informed by the FIAT Assessments
11 completed as described in **Appendix D**.
- 12 FM-5: When developing the fuels management strategy as part of the FIAT
13 Assessment described in **Appendix D** consider up-to-date fuels profiles;
14 land use plan direction; current and potential habitat fragmentation;
15 sagebrush and GRSG ecological factors; active vegetation management steps
16 to provide critical breaks in fuel continuity where appropriate; incorporate a
17 comparative risk analysis with regard to the risk of increased habitat
18 fragmentation from a proposed action versus the risk of large scale
19 fragmentation posed by wildfires if the action is not taken.
- 20 FM-6: Fuel treatments will be designed through an interdisciplinary process to
21 expand, enhance, maintain, and protect GRSG habitat which considers a full
22 range of cost effective fuel reduction techniques, including: chemical,
23 biological (including grazing and targeted grazing), mechanical and prescribed
24 fire treatments.
- 25 FM-7: Existing and proposed linear ROWs could be considered for use and
26 maintenance as vegetated fuel breaks in appropriate areas (this activity may
27 or may not be part of the ROW permit or the responsibility of the permit
28 holder, in cases where this activity is considered part of mitigation for project
29 design then it would be appropriately included as part of the ROW permit
30 and the responsibility of the permit holder for development and
31 maintenance).
- 32 FM-8: Fuel breaks would incorporate existing vegetation treatments (seedings),
33 rocky areas or other appropriate topography or features or be located
34 adjacent to existing linear disturbance areas where appropriate. Fuel breaks
35 should be placed in areas with the greatest likelihood of compartmentalizing
36 a fire and/or to foster suppression options to protect existing intact habitat.
- 37 FM-9: Strategically pre-treat areas to reduce fine fuels consistent with areas and
38 results identified within the Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments.

- 1 FM-10: Protect vegetation restoration and rehabilitation efforts/projects from
2 subsequent fire events.
- 3 FM-11: Targeted grazing as a fuels treatment to adjust the vegetation conditions to
4 reduce the potential start and spread of wildfires may be implemented within
5 existing grazing authorizations if feasible such as through temporary non-
6 renewable authorizations, or through contracts, agreements or other
7 appropriate means separate from existing grazing authorizations and permits.
- 8 FM-12: Targeted grazing to achieve fuels management objectives should conform to
9 the following criteria:
- 10 a. Targeted grazing should be implemented strategically on the
11 landscape, and directly involve the minimum footprint and grazing
12 intensity required to meet fuels management objectives.
- 13 b. Conform to the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health and
14 Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Idaho or Montana)
15 at the assessment scale (pasture/watershed).
- 16 c. Where feasible and applicable coordinate with the grazing permittee
17 to strategically reduce fuels through livestock management within the
18 Mandatory Terms and Conditions of the applicable grazing
19 authorizations
- 20 FM-13: Prioritize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on
21 availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where
22 probability of success or native seed availability is low or non-economical,
23 nonnative seeds may be used to meet GRSG habitat objectives to trend
24 toward restoring the fire regime. When reseeding, use fire resistant native and
25 nonnative species, as appropriate, to provide for fuel breaks.
- 26 FM-14: Maintain effectiveness of fuels projects, including fuel breaks, to ensure long-
27 term success, including persistence of seeded species and/or other treatment
28 components while maintaining the integrity of adjacent vegetation.
- 29 FM-15: If prescribed fire is used in GRSG habitat, the NEPA analysis for the Burn
30 Plan will address:
- 31 • why alternative techniques were not selected as a viable options;
32 • how GRSG goals and objectives would be met by its use;
33 • how the COT Report objectives would be addressed and met;
34 • a risk assessment to address how potential threats to GRSG habitat
35 would be minimized.
- 36 a. Prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment shall only be
37 considered after the NEPA analysis for the Burn Plan has



1 addressed the four bullets outlined above. Prescribed fire
2 could be used to meet specific fuels objectives that would
3 protect GRSG habitat in PHMAs (e.g., creation of fuel breaks
4 that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in
5 stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component
6 in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer reduction
7 treatments, used as a component with other treatment
8 methods to combat annual grasses and restore native plant
9 communities).

- 10 b. Prescribed fire in known winter range shall only be
11 considered after the NEPA analysis for the Burn Plan has
12 addressed the four bullets outlined above. Any prescribed fire
13 in winter habitat would need to be designed to strategically
14 reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and
15 designed to protect winter range habitat quality.

16 *Wildfire Restoration/Rehabilitation – Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation*

17 ESR-1: Utilize the findings and Restoration/Rehabilitation Strategy developed as
18 part of the FIAT Assessment process described in **Appendix D** to
19 determine if GRSG rehabilitation actions are needed, based on ecological
20 potential, and direct emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ESR) (BLM)
21 or Burned Area Emergency Restoration (BAER) (Forest Service) actions
22 after fire.

23 ESR-2: Incorporate GRSG Habitat Management Objectives into ESR/BAER plans
24 based on site potential and in accordance with the Restoration/Rehabilitation
25 Strategy developed as a result of the FIAT Assessments.

26 ESR-3: Provide adequate rest from livestock grazing to allow natural recovery of
27 existing vegetation and successful establishment of seeded species within
28 burned/ESR areas. All new seedlings of grasses and forbs should not be
29 grazed until at least the end of the second growing season, and longer as
30 needed to allow plants to mature and develop robust root systems which will
31 stabilize the site, compete effectively against cheatgrass and other invasive
32 annuals, and remain sustainable under long-term grazing management.
33 Adjust other management activities, as appropriate, to meet ESR objectives.

34 ESR-4: Adjust, as appropriate, livestock management on adjacent unburned areas to
35 mitigate the effect of the burn on local GRSG populations.

36 ESR-5: Following seedling establishment, modify grazing management practices if
37 needed to achieve long-term vegetation and habitat objectives.

38 ***Livestock Grazing***

39 RM-1 (Range Management): Maintain existing areas designated as available or
40 unavailable for livestock grazing. Existing active AUMs for livestock grazing

1 within the planning area would not be changed at the broad scale, though the
2 number of AUMs available on an allotment may be adjusted based on site-
3 specific conditions to meet management objectives during term permit
4 renewals, AMP development, or other appropriate implementation planning.
5 Additionally, temporary adjustments can be made annually to livestock
6 numbers, the number of AUMs, and season of use in accordance with
7 applicable regulations.

8 RM-2: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing
9 permits consistent with management area prioritization (MA-4), unless other
10 higher priority considerations exist such as threatened, endangered and
11 proposed species habitat that livestock grazing could affect. Where possible,
12 conduct land health assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful
13 landscape-scale.

14 RM-3: Where opportunities exist, coordinate with other land managers to encourage
15 livestock operations that utilize mixed federal, private and/or state land to be
16 managed at the landscape scale to benefit GRSG and their habitat across land
17 ownerships.

18 RM-4: PHMA & IHMA: During the land health assessment process, identify the
19 type(s) of seasonal habitat the assessed areas are capable of supporting.
20 Utilize the habitat assessment framework, (Stiver et al. 2014 as
21 amended/replaced) or other BLM or Forest Service approved methodology,
22 in accordance with current policy and guidance to determine whether
23 vegetation structure, condition and composition are meeting GRSG habitat
24 objectives including riparian and lentic areas (HM-OBJ-2; **Table 2-3**). Use
25 appropriate Ecological Site Descriptions, reference sheets and state and
26 transition models to inform desired habitat conditions and expected
27 responses to management changes for the land unit being assessed.

28 RM-5: When modifying grazing management, analyze indirect effects to habitat,
29 including changes in fuel loading and wildfire behavior.

30 RM-6: When livestock management practices are determined to not be compatible
31 with meeting or making progress towards achievable habitat objectives
32 following appropriate consultation, cooperating and coordination, implement
33 changes in grazing management through grazing authorization modifications,
34 or allotment management plan implementation. Potential modifications
35 include, but are not limited to, changes in:

- 36 1) Season or timing of use;
- 37 2) Numbers of livestock;
- 38 3) Distribution of livestock use;
- 39 4) Duration and/or level of use;



1 functional projects needed for management of habitat for other threatened,
2 endangered or proposed species or other sensitive resources.

3 RM-14: Prioritize removal, modification or marking of fences or other structures in
4 areas of high collision risk following appropriate cooperation, consultation
5 and coordination to reduce the incidence of GRSG mortality due to fence
6 strikes (Stevens et al. 2012).

7 RM-15: In response to weather conditions (i.e. drought) adjust grazing management
8 (i.e., delay turnout, adjust pasture rotations, adjust the amount and/or
9 duration of grazing) as appropriate to provide for adequate food and cover
10 for GRSG.

11 RM-16: The BLM will prioritize (1) the review of grazing permits/leases, in particular
12 to determine if modification is necessary prior to renewal, and (2) the
13 processing of grazing permits/leases in Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs)
14 followed by PHMAs outside of the SFAs. In setting workload priorities,
15 precedence will be given to existing permits/leases in these areas not meeting
16 Land Health Standards, with focus on those containing riparian areas,
17 including wet meadows. The BLM may use other criteria for prioritization to
18 respond to urgent natural resource concerns (ex., fire) and legal obligations.

19 RM-17: The NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing
20 permits/leases that include lands within SFAs and PHMAs will include
21 specific management thresholds, based on GRSG Habitat Objectives Table,
22 Land Health Standards (43 CFR 4180.2) and ecological site potential, and
23 one or more defined responses that will allow the authorizing officer to make
24 adjustments to livestock grazing that have already been subjected to NEPA
25 analysis.

26 RM-18: Allotments within SFAs, followed by those within PHMAs, and focusing on
27 those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows, will be prioritized
28 for field checks to help ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of
29 the grazing permits. Field checks could include monitoring for actual use,
30 utilization, and use supervision.

31 RM-19: At the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease,
32 the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was
33 authorized should remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other
34 resource management objectives, such as grass banks or fire breaks.

35 ***Wild Horses and Burros***

36 WHB-1: Manage herd management areas (HMAs) in GRSG habitat within established
37 AML ranges to achieve and maintain GRSG habitat objectives (**Table 2-3**).



- 1 WHB- 2: Complete rangeland health assessments for HMAs containing GRSG habitat
2 using an interdisciplinary team of specialists (e.g. range, wildlife, and
3 riparian). The priorities for conducting assessments are: 1) HMAs Containing
4 SFA; 2) HMAs containing PHMA; 3) HMAs containing IHMA; 4) HMAs
5 containing GHMA; 5) HMAs containing sagebrush habitat outside of
6 PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA mapped habitat; 6) HMAs without GRSG
7 Habitat.
- 8 WHB-3: Prioritize gathers and population growth suppression techniques in HMAs in
9 GRSG habitat, unless removals are necessary in other areas to address higher
10 priority environmental issues, including herd health impacts. Place higher
11 priority on Herd Areas not allocated as HMAs and occupied by wild horses
12 and burros in SFAs followed by PHMA.
- 13 WHB-4: In SFAs and PHMA outside of SFA, assess and adjust AMLs through the
14 NEPA process within HMAs when wild horses or burros are identified as a
15 significant causal factor in not meeting land health standards, even if current
16 AML is not being exceeded.
- 17 WHB-5: In SFAs and PHMA outside of SFA, monitor the effects of wild horse and
18 burro use in relation to GRSG seasonal habitat objectives on an annual basis
19 to help determine future management actions.
- 20 WHB-6: Develop or amend herd management area plans (HMAPs) to incorporate
21 GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all HMAs
22 within GRSG habitat, with emphasis placed on SFAs and other PHMAs.
- 23 WHB-7: Consider removals or exclusion of wild horse and burros during or
24 immediately following emergency situations (such as fire, floods, and
25 drought) to facilitate meeting GRSG habitat objectives where HMAs overlap
26 with GRSG habitat.
- 27 WHB-8: When conducting NEPA analysis for wild horse and burro management
28 activities, water developments, or other rangeland improvements for wild
29 horses, address the direct and indirect effects to GRSG populations and
30 habitat. Implement any water developments or rangeland improvements
31 using the criteria identified for domestic livestock.
- 32 WHB-9: Coordinate with professionals from other federal and state agencies,
33 researchers at universities, and others to utilize and evaluate new
34 management tools (e.g., population growth suppression, inventory
35 techniques, and telemetry) for implementing the wild horse and burro
36 program.

1 ***Lands and Realty***

2 LR-1 (Lands and Realty): PHMA: Designate and manage PHMA as ROW
3 avoidance areas, consistent with AD-3 and subject to RDFs, buffers and
4 seasonal timing restrictions (**Appendices B and C**). IHMA: Designate and
5 manage IHMA as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-4 and subject
6 to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. GHMA (Idaho and
7 Montana): Designate and manage GHMA as open with proposals subject to
8 RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.

9 LR-2: PHMA: Designate and manage PHMA as exclusion areas for utility scale (20
10 MW) wind and solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower
11 energy development. IHMA: Designate and manage IHMA as avoidance
12 areas for wind and solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower
13 development. GHMA (Idaho): Designate and manage GHMA as open for
14 wind and solar testing and development and nuclear and hydropower
15 development subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.
16 GHMA (Montana): Designate and manage GHMA as avoidance for wind
17 and solar testing and development and nuclear and hydropower
18 development.

19 LR-3: PHMA: Development of commercial service airports and facilities (as
20 defined by FAA 2014 – publically owned airports that have at least 2,500
21 passenger boardings each calendar year and receive scheduled passenger
22 service) would not be allowed within PHMA. IHMA and GHMA are
23 Avoidance and Open respectively for these types of ROW applications as
24 described in LR-1.

25 LR-4: PHMA: Development of new or expansion of existing landfills would not be
26 allowed within PHMA. IHMA and GHMA are Avoidance and Open
27 respectively for these types of ROW applications as described in LR-1.

28 LR-5: Consistent with LR-2, LR-3 and LR-4, Rights-of-way for development of
29 new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations (including permits and
30 leases) in PHMA would only be considered when consistent with the
31 Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria (AD-3); Rights-of-way for
32 development of new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations
33 (including permits and leases) in IHMA could be considered consistent with
34 the IHMA Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4).
35 GHMA: New ROW and land use authorizations could be considered.

36 LR-6: In PHMA, if a higher voltage transmission line is required adjacent to an
37 existing line (i.e. the project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of
38 existing development (i.e. powerline capacity upgrade):



- 1 • the existing transmission line must be removed and area rehabilitated
2 within a specified amount of time after the new line is installed and
3 energized; and
 - 4 • the new line must be constructed in the same alignment as the
5 existing line unless an alternate route would benefit GRSG or GRSG
6 habitat.
- 7 LR-7: Existing designated corridors, including Section 368 Corridors, will remain
8 Open in all habitat management areas (subject to the ongoing settlement
9 agreement).
- 10 LR-8: Process unauthorized use. If the use is subsequently authorized, it would be
11 authorized consistent with direction for the Management Areas within which
12 it is located and the RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. If the use
13 is not subsequently authorized the site would be reclaimed by removing these
14 features and rehabilitating the habitat.
- 15 LR-9: Land use authorizations that are temporary (less than 3 years) in nature and
16 are not otherwise excluded or restricted would be subject to seasonal or
17 timing restrictions and mitigation requirements regarding habitat loss as
18 needed.
- 19 LR-10: New ROW applications for water facilities (ditches, canals, pipelines), or
20 amendments to existing water facilities which include additional structures to
21 improve fish passage or benefits to fisheries (new diversions, fish screens)
22 would be allowed on a case-by-case bases subject to RDFs to reduce impacts
23 to GRSG habitat and mitigation requirements regarding GRSG habitat loss
24 as needed.
- 25 LR-11: When a ROW grant expires and is not requested to be renewed, is
26 relinquished, or terminated, the lease holder would be required to reclaim the
27 site by removing overhead lines and other infrastructure and to eliminate
28 avian predator nesting opportunities provided by anthropogenic
29 development on public lands associated with the now void ROW grant (e.g.,
30 remove powerline and communication facilities no longer in service).
- 31 LR-12: As opportunities and priorities indicate work with existing ROW holders to
32 retrofit existing towers and structures consistent with RDFs described in
33 **Appendix B.**
- 34 LR-13: PHMA and IHMA (Idaho and Montana), and GHMA (Montana only) are
35 designated as avoidance areas for high voltage transmission line and large
36 pipeline ROWs, except for the transmission projects specifically identified
37 below. All authorizations in these areas, other than the excepted projects,
38 must comply with the conservation measures outlined in this proposed plan,
39 including the RDFs and avoidance criteria presented in AD-3 and AD-4 of

1 this document. The BLM is currently processing an application for Gateway
2 West and Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Projects and the NEPA
3 review for this project is well underway. The BLM is analyzing GRSG
4 mitigation measures through the projects' NEPA review process.

5 LR-14: Lands classified as PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA for GRSG will be retained in
6 federal management unless: (1) the agency can demonstrate that disposal of
7 the lands will provide a net conservation gain to the GRSG or (2) the agency
8 can demonstrate that the disposal of the lands will have no direct or indirect
9 adverse impact on conservation of the GRSG. Land tenure adjustments
10 would be subject to the following disposal, exchange, and acquisition criteria,
11 which include retaining lands with GRSG habitat. Retention of areas with
12 GRSG would reduce the likelihood of habitat conversion to agriculture,
13 urbanization, or other uses that would remove sagebrush habitat and
14 potentially impact sensitive plants. Criteria:

- 15 a. Lands within PHMA, IHMA and GHMA would only be available for
16 disposal through exchange (**Appendix K**).
- 17 b. Acquire habitat within PHMA and IHMA, when possible (i.e. willing
18 landowner), and retain ownership of habitat within all Areas, except
19 if a land exchange would allow for additional or more contiguous
20 federal ownership patterns.
- 21 c. Lands within PHMA, IHMA and GHMA would be retained unless
22 exchange of those lands would increase the extent or provide for
23 connectivity of PHMA or IHMA.
- 24 d. Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality
25 GRSG habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands
26 of higher quality habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRSG habitats
27 or lands providing for threatened and endangered species. These
28 potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the extent or
29 continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of PHMA. Higher
30 priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of
31 sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of sagebrush areas
32 within PHMA currently in public ownership. Lower priority would
33 be given to other lands that would promote enhancement in the
34 PHMA and IHMA (i.e., areas with fragmented or less in-tact
35 sagebrush).
- 36 e. Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide
37 for connectivity of PHMA.



1 **Minerals**

2
3 *Fluid Minerals (Oil, Gas, and Geothermal)*

4
5 Objectives

6 FLM-OBJ-1: Priority will be given to leasing and development of fluid mineral resources,
7 including geothermal, outside of PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA. When
8 analyzing leasing and authorizing development of fluid mineral resources,
9 including geothermal, in PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA, and subject to
10 applicable stipulations for the conservation of GRSG, priority will be given
11 to development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat
12 for GRSG. The implementation of these priorities will be subject to valid
13 existing rights and any applicable law or regulation, including, but not limited
14 to, 30 USC 226(p) and 43 CFR 3162.3-1(h).

15 FLM-OBJ-2: Where a proposed fluid mineral development project on an existing lease
16 could adversely affect GRSG populations or habitat, the BLM will work with
17 the lessees, operators, or other project proponents to avoid, reduce and
18 mitigate adverse impacts to the extent compatible with lessees' rights to drill
19 and produce fluid mineral resources. The BLM will work with the lessee,
20 operator, or project proponent in developing an APD or Geothermal
21 Drilling Permit (GDP) for the lease to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG
22 or its habitat and will ensure that the best information about the GRSG and
23 its habitat informs and helps to guide development of such Federal leases.

24 Management

25 FLM-1 (Fluid Minerals): Idaho and Montana: Areas within SFAs would be open to
26 fluid mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to
27 NSO without waiver, exception, or modification. Areas within PHMA and
28 IHMA would be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical
29 exploration subject to NSO with a limited exception (FLM-3). GHMA would
30 be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration
31 subject to CSU which includes buffers, seasonal timing restrictions (see
32 Appendix C) and standard stipulations.

33 FLM-2: In Idaho, parcels nominated for lease in PHMA or IHMA would be
34 evaluated prior to lease offering to determine if development is feasible. In
35 GHMA, parcels that could not be developed when these buffers and
36 restrictions are applied would not be offered for lease.

37 FLM-3: PHMA and IHMA: No waivers or modifications to a fluid mineral lease
38 NSO stipulation will be granted. The Authorized Officer may grant an
39 exception to a fluid mineral lease NSO stipulation only where the proposed
40 action:

- 41 i. Would not have direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on GRSG or
42 its habitat; or,

- 1 ii. Is proposed to be undertaken as an alternative to a similar action
2 occurring on a nearby parcel, and would provide a clear conservation
3 gain to GRSG.

4 Exceptions based on conservation gain (ii) may only be considered in (a)
5 PHMAs of mixed ownership where federal minerals underlie less than fifty
6 percent of the total surface, or (b) areas of the public lands where the
7 proposed exception is an alternative to an action occurring on a nearby
8 parcel subject to a valid Federal fluid mineral lease existing as of the date of
9 this RMP amendment. Exceptions based on conservation gain must also
10 include measures, such as enforceable institutional controls and buffers,
11 sufficient to allow the BLM to conclude that such benefits will endure for the
12 duration of the proposed action's impacts.

13 Any exceptions to this lease stipulation may be approved by the Authorized
14 Officer only with the concurrence of the State Director. The Authorized
15 Officer may not grant an exception unless the applicable state wildlife
16 agency, the USFWS, and the BLM unanimously find that the proposed
17 action satisfies (i) or (ii). Such finding shall initially be made by a team of one
18 field biologist or other GRSG expert from each respective agency. In the
19 event the initial finding is not unanimous, the finding may be elevated to the
20 appropriate BLM State Director, USFWS State Ecological Services Director,
21 and state wildlife agency head for final resolution. In the event their finding is
22 not unanimous, the exception will not be granted. Approved exceptions will
23 be made publically available at least quarterly.

24 Waivers, Exceptions and Modifications (WEMs) (Source IM-2008-032):

- 25 • A waiver is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation, the
26 stipulation would no longer apply anywhere within the lease. Waivers,
27 by regulation, require a 30-day public review if the authorized officer
28 has determined, prior to lease issuance, that a stipulation involves an
29 issue of major concern to the public (43 CFR 3101.4) and are
30 approved and signed by the State Director.
- 31 • An exception is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the
32 lease; exceptions are determined on a case-by-case basis; the
33 stipulation continues to apply to all other sites within the lease. An
34 exception is a limited type of waiver.
- 35 • A modification is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation,
36 either temporarily or for the term of the lease. Depending on the
37 specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to all sites
38 within the lease to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

39 FLM-4: Incorporate required design features and best management practices
40 appropriate to the management area as COAs when post leasing activity is
41 proposed into any post-lease authorizations.



1 FLM-5: In Montana, prior to leasing conduct a Master Leasing Plan process when all
2 four of the following criteria are met:

- 3 • A substantial portion of the area to be analyzed in the MLP is not
4 currently leased.
- 5 • There is a majority Federal mineral interest.
- 6 • The oil and gas industry has expressed a specific interest in leasing,
7 and there is a moderate or high potential for oil and gas confirmed by
8 the discovery of oil and gas in the general area.
- 9 • Additional analysis or information is needed to address likely
10 resource or cumulative impacts if oil and gas development were to
11 occur where there are:
 - 12 ○ multiple-use or natural/cultural resource conflicts;
 - 13 ○ impacts to air quality;
 - 14 ○ impacts on the resources or values of any unit of the National
15 Park System, national wildlife refuge, or National Forest
16 wilderness area, as determined after consultation or
17 coordination with the NPS, the USFWS, or the Forest
18 Service; or
 - 19 ○ impacts on other specially designated areas. – analyzing likely
20 development scenarios and varying mitigation levels.

21 FLM-5: In Idaho, complete a Master Development Plan, consistent with plan
22 development guide on leases where a producing field is proposed to be
23 developed.

24 FLM-6: Encourage unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and
25 operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring). The unitization
26 must be designed in a manner to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG
27 according to the Federal Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6.

28 FLM-7: Issue Written Orders of the Authorized Officer (43 CFR 3161.2) requiring
29 reasonable protective measures consistent with the lease terms where
30 necessary to avoid or minimize effects to GRSG populations or habitat.

31 *Locatable Minerals*

32 LOC-1 (Locatable Minerals): Lands would remain open to locatable mineral entry
33 outside of SFAs.

34 LOC-2: Apply reasonable and appropriate RDFs and BMPs as Conditions of
35 Approval to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of GRSG habitat
36 when a Plan of Operations is submitted for BLM or Forest Service approval,
37 in accordance with 43 CFR 3809.411(d)(2) (or 36 CFR 228.5(a)(3) on
38 National Forest System lands).

1 LOC-3: Recommend SFAs for withdrawal from the General Mining Act of 1872, as
2 amended, subject to valid existing rights.

3 *Mineral Materials (Saleable Minerals)*

4 SAL-1 (Saleable Minerals): PHMA: All PHMAs will be closed to mineral materials
5 development. However, existing free use permits and the expansion of
6 existing free use permits may be considered only if the following criteria are
7 met:

- 8 • the project area disturbance cap is not exceeded within a BSU;
- 9 • the activity is subject to the provisions set forth in the mitigation
10 framework [**Appendix J**];
- 11 • all applicable required design features are applied; and
- 12 • the activity is permissible under the Idaho exception and
13 development criteria (AD-3 and AD-4)

14 IHMA: All IHMA will be open to mineral materials development, consistent
15 with the Idaho Anthropogenic Disturbance Criteria (AD-4), and subject to
16 RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing
17 community pits within IHMA would be subject to seasonal timing
18 restrictions.

19 GHMA: All GHMA will be open to mineral materials development, subject
20 to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing
21 community pits within GHMA would be subject to seasonal timing
22 restrictions.

23 SAL-2: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat
24 management objectives.

25 SAL-3: Require reclamation bonding that would require restoration of GRSG habitat
26 on new site authorizations for mineral material pits in IHMA (this would not
27 apply to free use permits issued to a government entity such as a county road
28 district, but would apply to non-profit entities).

29 SAL-4: Montana: PHMAs are closed to new mineral material sales. However, these
30 areas remain “open” to free use permits and the expansion of existing active
31 pits, only if the following criteria are met:

- 32 • the activity is within the BSU and project area disturbance cap;
- 33 • the activity is subject to the provisions set forth in the mitigation
34 framework [**Appendix J**];
- 35 • all applicable required design features are applied; and



- the activity is permissible under the Montana screening criteria (AD-4) Appendix I.

Nonenergy Leasable Minerals

NEL-1 (Nonenergy Leasables): PHMAs are closed to leasing. IHMA and GHMA: Areas within Known Phosphate Leasing Areas (KPLAs) will remain open to leasing subject to standard stipulations. IHMA areas outside of KPLAs are open to prospecting and subsequent leasing provided the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) and the anthropogenic disturbance cap (AD-1) can be met. RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions shall be applied to prospecting permits. GHMA: Lands outside KPLAs are available for prospecting and subsequent leasing and initial mine development subject to RDFs, buffers, timing restrictions (seasonal and daily) and standard stipulations.

NEL-2: Require seasonal and daily timing restrictions in undeveloped nonenergy mineral leases when exploration activities or initial mine development is proposed (e.g. exploration drilling, timber removal, shrub clearing, etc.) as COAs.

NEL-3: Include RDFs as COAs to mine plans in undeveloped non-energy mineral leases for exploration activities or initial mine development.

Mineral Split Estate

MSE-1 (Mineral Split Estate): BLM Owns Mineral Estate – non-federal surface owner: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs, IHMAs, and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands in that management area, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.

MSE-2: BLM owns surface – non-federal mineral estate owner: Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs through ROW grants or other surface management instruments, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, in coordination with the mineral estate owner/lessee.

Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management

TM-1 (Travel Management): Limit off-highway vehicle motorized travel within Idaho BLM Field Offices to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails in areas where travel management planning has not been completed or is in progress. This excludes areas previously designated as open through a land use plan decision or currently under review for designation as open, currently being analyzed in ongoing RMP revision efforts in the Four Rivers, Jarbidge and

1 Upper Snake Field Offices. Upon completion of travel management plans
2 the designation would change to limited to designated roads, primitive roads
3 and trails.

4 An off-highway vehicle is any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for,
5 travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding:
6 (1) Any nonamphibious registered motorboat; (2) any military, fire,
7 emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency
8 purposes; (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the authorized
9 officer, or otherwise officially approved; (4) Vehicles in official use where
10 official use is use by an employee, agent, or designated representative of the
11 Federal Government or one of its contractors, in the course of his
12 employment, agency, or representation.; and (5) any combat or combat
13 support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies (43 CFR
14 8340.0 5).

15 TM-2: In PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA, temporary closures will be considered in
16 accordance with 43 CFR subpart 8364 (Closures and Restrictions); 43 CFR
17 subpart 8351 (Designated National Area); 43 CFR subpart 6302 (Use of
18 Wilderness Areas, Prohibited Acts, and Penalties); 43 CFR subpart 8341
19 (Conditions of Use).

20 Temporary closure or restriction orders under these authorities are enacted at
21 the discretion of the authorized officer to resolve management conflicts and
22 protect persons, property, and public lands and resources. Where an
23 authorized officer determines that off-highway vehicles are causing or will
24 cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife
25 habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered
26 species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources, the
27 affected areas shall be immediately closed to the type(s) of vehicle causing
28 the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures
29 implemented to prevent recurrence. (43 CFR 8341.2) A closure or restriction
30 order should be considered only after other management strategies and
31 alternatives have been explored. The duration of temporary closure or
32 restriction orders should be limited to 24 months or less; however, certain
33 situations may require longer closures and/or iterative temporary closures.
34 This may include closure of routes or areas.

35 TM-3: Develop Travel Management Plans for each Field Office as described in the
36 BLM Travel Management Handbook 8342.1 and according to the travel
37 management planning guidelines (**Appendix L**).

38 TM-4: During subsequent travel management planning design and designate a travel
39 system to minimize adverse effects on GRSG. Locate areas and trails to
40 minimize disturbance of GRSG and/or to have a neutral or positive effect on
41 GRSG habitat and populations. Give special attention to protect endangered
42 or threatened species and their habitats. Allow for route upgrade, closure of



1 existing routes, timing restrictions, seasonal closures, and creation of new
2 routes to help protect habitat and meet user group needs, thereby reducing
3 the potential for pioneering unauthorized routes. The emphasis of the
4 comprehensive travel and transportation planning within PHMA would be
5 placed on having a neutral or positive effect on GRSG habitat. Individual
6 route designations would occur during subsequent travel management
7 planning efforts.

8 TM-5: Conduct road construction, upgrades, and maintenance activities to avoid
9 disturbance during specific times at different seasons – see seasonal and
10 timing restrictions section.

11 ***Recreation and Visitor Services***

12 REC-1: Manage existing recreation uses and sites to minimize adverse effects on
13 GRSG or their habitat through incorporation of RDFs, buffers and seasonal
14 restrictions.

15 REC-2: In PHMA and IHMA, do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g.,
16 campgrounds, trails, trailheads, staging areas) unless the development would
17 have a net conservation gain to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating
18 recreation, diverting use away from critical areas, etc.), or unless the
19 development is required for visitor health and safety or resource protection.

20 RDFs are means, measures, or practices intended to reduce or avoid adverse environmental
21 impacts. This LUPA/EIS proposes a suite of design features that would establish the
22 minimum specifications for water developments, certain mineral development, and fire and
23 fuels management and would mitigate adverse impacts. These design features would be
24 required to provide a greater level of regulatory certainty than through implementing BMPs.

25 In general, the design features are accepted practices that are known to be effective when
26 implemented properly at the project level. However, their applicability and overall
27 effectiveness cannot be fully assessed except at the project-specific level when the project
28 location and design are known. Because of site-specific circumstances, some features may
29 not apply to some projects (e.g., when a resource is not present on a given site) or may
30 require slight variations from what is described in the LUPA/EIS (e.g., a larger or smaller
31 protective area). All variations in design features would require appropriate analysis and
32 disclosure as part of future project authorizations. Additional mitigation measures may be
33 identified and required during individual project development and environmental review.
34 The proposed RDFs are presented in **Appendix B**, Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Required
35 Design Features and Best Management Practices.

36 **2.6.3 Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment**

37 ***Forest Service Plan Components***

38 **Desired condition** - A description of specific social, economic, and/or ecological
39 characteristics of the plan area, or a portion of the plan area, toward which management of
40 the land and resources should be directed. Desired conditions must be described in terms

1 that are specific enough to allow progress toward their achievement to be determined, but
2 do not include completion dates. (36 CFR 219.7(e)(1)(i)) FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

3 **Guideline** – A constraint on project and activity decisionmaking that allows for departure
4 from its terms, so long as the purpose of the guideline is met. (§ 219.15(d)(3)). Guidelines are
5 established to help achieve or maintain a desired condition or conditions, to avoid or
6 mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements. (36 CFR
7 219.7(e)(1)(iv); FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

8 **Objective** - A concise, measurable, and time-specific statement of a desired rate of progress
9 toward a desired condition or conditions. Objectives should be based on reasonably
10 foreseeable budgets. (36 CFR 219.9(e)(1)(ii)) FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

11 **Standard** - A mandatory constraint on project and activity decisionmaking, established to
12 help achieve or maintain the desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate
13 undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements. (36 CFR 219.7(e)(1) (iii)) FSH
14 1909.12, Chapter 20)

15 ***General Greater Sage-Grouse***

16 **GRSG-GEN-DC-001-Desired Condition** – The landscape for GRSG encompasses large
17 contiguous areas, approximately 6 to 62 square miles in area, to provide for multiple aspects
18 of species life requirements. Within these landscapes, a variety of sagebrush-community
19 compositions exist, with variations in subspecies composition, co-dominant vegetation,
20 shrub cover, herbaceous cover, and stand structure, to meet seasonal requirements for food,
21 cover, and nesting for GRSG.

22 **GRSG-GEN-DC-002-Desired Condition** – Anthropogenic disturbance is focused in non-
23 habitat areas outside of PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs¹. Disturbances in GHMA are
24 limited, and there is little to no disturbances in PHMA, IHMA and SFAs except for valid
25 existing rights and existing authorize uses.

26 **GRSG-GEN-DC-003-Desired Condition** – In all seasonal habitats, 70 percent of lands
27 capable of producing sagebrush have 10 to 30 percent sagebrush canopy cover and less than
28 10 percent conifer canopy cover. In addition, within breeding and nesting habitat, sufficient
29 herbaceous vegetation structure and height provides overhead and lateral concealment for
30 nesting and early brood rearing life stages. Within brood rearing habitat, wet meadows and
31 riparian areas sustain a rich diversity of perennial forb species relative to site potential.
32 Within winter habitat, sufficient sagebrush height and density provides food and cover for
33 GRSG during this seasonal period. Specific desired conditions for GRSG based on seasonal
34 habitat requirements are in **Table 2-6**.

35 **Table 2-6. Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for GRSG on National Forest System Lands**

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATORS	DESIRED CONDITON
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¹ PHMA and GHMA may contain non-habitat, but management direction would not apply to those areas of non-habitat. However, management direction would apply to all areas within SFAs including non-habitat.

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATORS	DESIRED CONDITON
BREEDING AND NESTING ^{1,2,3} (Seasonal Use Period March 1-June 15) Apply 6.2 miles from active leks. ⁴		
Lek Security	Proximity of trees ⁵	Trees or other tall structures are none to uncommon within 1.86 miles of leks ^{6,7}
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks ⁶	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 328 feet of lek ⁶
Cover	Seasonal habitat extent ⁷	>80% of the breeding and nesting habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{6,7,8}	15 to 25%
	Sagebrush height ⁷	
	Arid sites ^{6,7,9}	12 to 32 inches
	Mesic sites ^{6,7,10}	16 to 32 inches
	Predominant sagebrush shape ⁶	>50% in spreading ¹¹
	Perennial grass canopy cover ^{6,7}	
Arid sites ^{7,9}	≥10%	
Mesic sites ^{7,10}	≥15%	
Perennial grass height ^{6,7,8}	Provide overhead and lateral concealment from predators ^{7, 15}	
Perennial forb canopy cover ^{6,7,8}		
Arid sites ⁹	≥5% ^{6,7}	
Mesic sites ¹⁰	≥10% ^{6,7}	
BROOD-REARING/SUMMER ¹ (Seasonal Use Period June 16-October 31)		
Cover	Seasonal habitat extent ⁷	>40% of the brood-rearing/summer habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{6,7,8}	10 to 25%
	Sagebrush height ^{7,8}	16 to 32 inches
	Perennial grass canopy cover and forbs ^{7,8}	>15%
	Riparian areas/mesic meadows	Proper Functioning Condition ¹²
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ^{6,7}	Preferred forbs are common with several preferred species present ¹³
WINTER ¹ (Seasonal Use Period November 1-February 28)		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent ^{6,7,8}	>80% of the winter habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow ^{6,7,8}	>10%
	Sagebrush height above snow ^{6,7,8}	>10 inches ¹⁴
¹ Seasonal dates can be adjusted; that is, start and end dates may be shifted either earlier or later, but the amount of days cannot be shortened or lengthened by the local unit. ² Doherty, K. 2008. <i>Sage-grouse and Energy Development: Integrating Science with Conservation Planning to Reduce Impacts</i> . University of Montana. Missoula, MT. ³ Holloran and Anderson. 2005. <i>Spatial Distribution of Greater Sage-grouse nests in relatively contiguous sagebrush habitats</i> . Condor 107:742-752. ⁴ Buffer distance may be changed only if 3 out of 5 years of telemetry studies indicate the 6.2 miles is not appropriate. ⁵ Baruch-Mordo, S. J.S. Evans, J.P. Séverson, D.E. Naugle, J. D. Maestas, J.M. Kiesecker, M.J. Falkowski. C.A. Hagen, and K.P. Reese. . 2013. <i>Saving sage-grouse from trees: A proactive solution to reducing a key threat to a candidate species</i> . Biological Conservation 167: 233-241. ⁶ Stiver, S.J., E.T. Rinkes, D.E. Naugle, P.D. Makela, D.A. Nance, and J.W. Karl, eds. 2015. Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: A Multiscale Assessment Tool. Technical Reference 6710-1. Bureau of Land Management and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Denver, Colorado. ⁷ Connelly, J. M. A. Schroweder, A.R. Sands, and C.E. Braun.2000. Guidelines to manage sage-grouse populations and their habitats. Wildlife Society Bulletin 28 (4): 967-985. ⁸ Connelly, J. K. Reese, and M. Schroder. 2003. <i>Monitoring of Greater sage-grouse habitats and populations</i> . Station Bulletin 80, Contribution 979. University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources Experiment Station. Moscow, ID. ⁹ 10–12 inch precipitation zone; <i>Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis</i> is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al, 2015). ¹⁰ ≥12 inch precipitation zone; <i>Artemisia tridentata vaseyana</i> is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (Stiver et al, 2015). ¹¹ Sagebrush plants with a spreading shape provide more protective cover than sagebrush plants that are more tree- or columnar shaped (Stiver et al. 2015). ¹² Existing land management plan desired conditions for riparian areas/wet meadows (spring seeps) may be used in place of properly functioning conditions, if appropriate for meeting greater sage-grouse habitat requirements. ¹³ Preferred forbs are listed in Table III-2 (Stiver et al. 2015). Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred in Table III-2. ¹⁴ The height of sagebrush remaining above the snow depends upon snow depth in a particular year. Intent is to manage for tall, healthy, sagebrush stands. ¹⁵ Projects will be designed to provide overhead and lateral concealment of nests on a site specific basis.		

1 **GRSG-GEN-ST-001-Standard** –In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not issue new
2 discretionary written authorizations unless all existing discrete anthropogenic disturbances
3 cover less than 3 percent of the total GRSG habitat within the BSU and the proposed
4 project analysis area, regardless of ownership, and the new use will not cause exceedance of
5 the 3 percent cap (**Appendix G**).

6 **GRSG-GEN-ST-002-Standard** - In PHMA, SFAs, and IHMA, only allow new authorized
7 land uses if the residual impacts to GRSG or their habitats are fully offset by compensatory
8 mitigation projects that provide a net conservation gain to the species, which will be
9 achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial
10 mitigation actions. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to
11 what would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation, as addressed in the
12 Mitigation Framework (**Appendix J**).

13 **GRSG-GEN-GL-001-Guideline** – During lekking (March 1 to April 30) restrict surface
14 disturbing and disruptive activities, including noise at 10dB above ambient (not to exceed
15 20-24 dB) measured at the perimeter of an occupied lek, to lekking birds from 6 pm to 9 am
16 within a buffer distance² of 3.1 miles.

17 **GRSG-GEN-GL-002-Guideline** – During breeding and nesting (March 1 to June 15),
18 surface disturbing and disruptive activities to nesting birds should be avoided.

19 **GRSG-GEN-GL-003-Guideline** - When breeding and nesting habitat overlaps with other
20 seasonal habitats, habitat should be managed for breeding and nesting desired habitat
21 conditions displayed in **Table 2-6**.

22 **GRSG-GEN-GL-004-Guideline** – Development of tall structures within 2.0 miles from
23 the perimeter of occupied leks, as determined by local conditions (such as vegetation or
24 topography), with the potential to disrupt breeding or nesting by creating new
25 perching/nesting opportunities avian predators or by decreasing the use of an area, should
26 be restricted within nesting habitat.

27 *Adaptive Management*

28 **GRSG-AM-ST-001-Standard** – If a hard trigger is identified, immediate action is necessary
29 to stop a severe deviation from GRSG conservation objectives. The hard trigger response
30 will be an entire restrictive alternative, or one or more appropriate components of a more
31 restrictive alternative, such as the immediate cessation of authorizing land use authorizations.
32 An interagency team will conduct an assessment to determine the causal factor(s) and
33 recommend corrective strategies (**Appendix G**).

34 **GRSG-AM-ST-002-Standard** – If a soft trigger is identified, apply more conservative or
35 restrictive implementation measures (e.g., extending seasonal restrictions for seasonal surface
36 disturbing activities, modifying seasons of use for livestock grazing, and applying additional

² During lekking (March 1 to April 30) surface disturbing and disruptive activities, including noise at 10dB above ambient (not to exceed 20-24 dB) measured at the perimeter of an occupied lek, should be restricted to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within a buffer distance of 3.1 miles.



1 restrictions on discretionary activities) for the specific causal factor in the decline of
2 populations and/or habitats, with consideration of local knowledge and conditions
3 (Appendix G).

4 ***Lands and Realty***

5 *Special Use Authorizations (Non-Recreation)*

6 **GRSG-LR-SUA-O-001-Objective** - In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, retrofit existing tall
7 structures (e.g., power poles, cellular towers) with perch deterrents or other anti-perching
8 devices within 2 years of signing the Record of Decision.

9 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, restrict issuance of new
10 lands special use authorizations for infrastructure, such as high-voltage transmission lines,
11 major pipelines, hydropower, distribution lines, and cellular towers. Exceptions must be
12 limited and based on rationale (e.g., monitoring, modeling, or best available science) that
13 explicitly demonstrates that adverse impacts to GRSG will be avoided by the exception.

14 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-002-Standard** – In GHMA, new lands special use authorizations may
15 be issued for infrastructure, such as high-voltage transmission lines, major pipelines,
16 hydropower, distribution lines, and cellular towers, if they can be located within existing
17 designated corridors and the authorization includes stipulations to protect GRSG and their
18 habitats.

19 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-003-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not authorize
20 temporary lands special uses (i.e., facilities or activities) that result in loss of habitat or would
21 have long-term (greater than 5 years) negative impact on GRSG or their habitats.

22 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-004-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, require
23 protective stipulations (e.g., noise, tall structure, guy wire removal, perch deterrent
24 installation) when issuing new authorizations or during renewal, amendment, or reissuance
25 of existing authorizations that authorize infrastructure (e.g., high-voltage transmission lines,
26 major pipelines, roads, distribution lines, and cellular towers).

27 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-005-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, locate upgrades
28 to existing transmission lines within the existing designated corridors unless an alternate
29 route would benefit GRSG or their habitats.

30 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-006-Standard** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, when a lands
31 special use authorization is revoked or terminated and no future use is contemplated the
32 authorization holder must remove overhead lines and other infrastructure in compliance
33 with 36 CFR 251.60(i).

34 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-007-Standard** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, if the potential
35 long-term (greater than 5 years) impacts of mitigation (e.g., relocation or burying) to GRSG
36 or their habitats are greater than the potential impacts from new lands special use
37 authorizations, do not pursue the mitigation. If mitigation is not feasible or would result in

1 short-term (less than 5 years) or long-term impacts, incorporate additional terms and
2 conditions in the special use authorization for protection of GRSG or their habitats

3 **GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-008-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, co-locate new
4 infrastructure (e.g., high-voltage transmission lines, major pipelines, roads, distribution lines,
5 and cellular towers) with existing infrastructure to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint,
6 or where it best limits impacts to greater sage-grouse or their habitats. When co-location of
7 new infrastructure is not accomplished, locate it adjacent to existing infrastructure, roads, or
8 already disturbed areas. Consider new communication tower sites where necessary for public
9 safety.

10 **GRSG-LR-SUA-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA and SFAs, outside of existing designated
11 corridors, new transmission lines and pipelines should be buried to limit disturbance to the
12 smallest footprint unless explicit rationale is provided that the biological impacts to GRSG
13 and its habitat are being avoided. When new transmission lines and pipelines are not buried,
14 locate them adjacent to existing transmission lines.

15 *Land Ownership Adjustments*

16 **GRSG-LR-LOA-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, do not
17 approve landownership adjustments unless the action results in a net conservation gain to
18 GRSG or it will not directly or indirectly adversely impact GRSG conservation.

19 **GRSG-LR-LOA-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs with minority
20 federal ownership, consider landownership adjustments to achieve a landownership pattern
21 (e.g., consolidation, reducing fragmentation) that supports improved GRSG population
22 trends and habitats.

23 *Land Withdrawal*

24 **GRSG-LR-LW-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, utilize land withdrawals
25 as a tool, where appropriate and subject to valid existing rights, to prevent activities that will
26 be detrimental to GRSG or their habitats.

27 *Wind and Solar*

28 **GRSG-WS-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA and SFAs, do not authorize new solar and wind
29 utility-scale and/or commercial energy development except for on-site power generation
30 associated with existing industrial infrastructure (e.g., mine site).

31 **GRSG-WS-GL-001-Guideline** – In IHMA, new wind energy utility-scale and/or
32 commercial development should be restricted. If development cannot be restricted due to
33 existing authorized use, adjacent developments, or split estate issues, then ensure that
34 stipulations are incorporated into the authorization to protect GRSG and their habitats.

35 *Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat*

36 **GRSG-GRSGH-O-001-Objective** – Every 10 years for the next 50 years, improve GRSG
37 habitat by removing invading conifers and other undesirable species in the number of acres
38 shown in **Table 2-7**.



1 **Table 2-7. Treatment Acres per Decade on National Forest System Lands**

Forest	Mechanical ¹	Prescribed Fire ²	Grass Restoration ³
Boise	1,000	2,000	0
Caribou-Targhee-Curlew	3,000	2,000	3,000
Salmon-Challis	5,000	1,000	0
Sawtooth	7,000	1,000	7,000
Beaverhead-Deerlodge	0	0	0

2 ¹ These are estimates of treatments required to achieve and/or maintain desired habitat conditions over a
3 period of ten years. There are many dynamic and highly variable disturbances that may happen over that
4 period of time that could have a significant effect on the amount, type, and timing of treatment needed.
5 Those disturbances are factored into the ten-year simulation using stochastic, not predictive, techniques.
6 Probabilities of events such as large wildfires are used in the model to make the simulation as realistic as
7 possible, given empirical data about such events in the past, but the results of the simulation cannot be used
8 to predict the future occurrence of such events, including their timing, size, or location, which are essentially
9 random.

10 ² Removal of conifers that have invaded sagebrush including phase one juniper that is 10 percent or less and
11 reducing sagebrush cover in areas over 30 percent canopy cover

12 ³ Acres are those that are greater than 30 percent sagebrush canopy cover and/or invaded by 10 percent or
13 greater conifer.

14 ⁴ Acres presently dominated by annual grasses that could be improved by herbicide application and seeding of
15 perennial vegetation.
16

17 **GRSG-GRSGH-ST-001-Standard** – Design habitat restoration projects to move towards
18 desired conditions (**Table 2-6**) and incorporate the concepts outlined in **Appendix D** -
19 *Using resistance and resilience concepts to reduce impacts of invasive annual grasses and altered fire regimes on*
20 *the sagebrush ecosystem and greater sage-grouse: A strategic multi-scale approach.*

21 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-001-Guideline** – Sagebrush removal in GRSG breeding and nesting
22 and wintering habitats should be avoided unless necessary to support attainment of desired
23 habitat conditions (**Table 2-6**).

24 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-002-Guideline** – When removing conifers that are encroaching into
25 GRSG habitat, avoid persistent woodlands (old growth relative to the site or more than 100
26 years old).

27 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-003-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, actions and
28 authorizations should be designed to limit the spread and effect of non-native plant species.

29 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-004-Guideline** - To facilitate safe and effective fire management
30 actions, in PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA and SFAs, fuels treatments should be designed to
31 reduce the spread and intensity of wildfire in high-risk areas (i.e., areas of increased potential
32 for ignition and in areas where there is a potential for wildfire that would be difficult for
33 suppression resources to contain and control).

34 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-005-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, native plant
35 species should be used, when possible, to restore, enhance, or maintain desired habitat
36 conditions (**Table 2-6**).

1 **GRSG-GRSGH-GL-006-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, vegetation treatment
2 projects should only be conducted if they restore, enhance, or maintain desired habitat
3 conditions (**Table 2-6**).

4 **Livestock Grazing**

5 **GRSG-LG-DC-001-Desired Condition** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, livestock grazing is
6 managed to ensure adequate nesting cover and does not conflict with the attainment of
7 other vegetative attributes (**Table 2-6**).

8 **GRSG-LG-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not approve construction
9 of water developments unless beneficial to GRSG habitat.

10 **GRSG-LG-GL-001-Guideline** - Grazing guidelines should be applied in each of the
11 seasonal habitats in **Table 2-8**. If values in **Table 2-8** guidelines cannot be achieved based
12 upon a site-specific analysis using Ecological Site Descriptions, long-term ecological site
13 capability analysis, or other similar analysis, adjust grazing management to move towards
14 desired habitat conditions in **Table 2-6** consistent with the ecological site capability. Do not
15 use drought and degraded habitat condition to adjust values. Grazing guidelines in **Table 2-8**
16 would not apply to isolated parcels of National Forest System lands that have less than 200
17 acres of GRSG habitat.

18 **Table 2-8. Grazing Guidelines for GRSG Seasonal Habitat**

Seasonal Habitat	Grazing Guidelines
Breeding and nesting ¹ within 6.2 miles of occupied leks	Perennial grass height: ² When grazing occurs during breeding and nesting season (March 1 to June 15) manage for upland perennial grass height of 7 inches ^{3,4,5} When grazing occurs post breeding and nesting season (June 16 to October 30) manage for 4 inches ^{4,5,6} of perennial grass height.
Brood rearing and summer ¹	Retain an average stubble height of 4 inches for herbaceous riparian/mesic meadow vegetation ^{7,8}
Winter ¹	≤35% use of sagebrush

¹ For descriptions of Seasonal Habitat and Seasonal Periods of greater sage-grouse see table 1.
² Grass heights only apply in breeding and nesting habitat with ≥10% sagebrush cover to support nesting.
³ Holloran et al. 2005. *Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat selection and success in Wyoming*.
⁴ Average droop height, assuming current vegetation composition has the capability to achieve these heights. Heights will be measured at the end of the nesting period (Connelly, 2000).
⁵ Hagen C., J.W. Connelly, and M.A. Schroeder. 2007. *A meta-analysis of greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* nesting and brood-rearing habitats*. *Wildlife Biology* 13(1): 42-50.
⁶ Stubble height to be measured at the end of the growing season.
⁷ Crawford et al. 2004. *Ecology and Management of sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat*. “In riparian brood-rearing habitat, sage-grouse prefer the lower vegetation (5-15 cm (2-6 in) vs. 30-50 cm (12-20 in); Oakleaf 1971, Neel 1980, Klebenow 1982, Evans 1986) and succulent forb growth stimulated by moderate livestock grazing (Neel 1980, Evans 1986). “Moderate use equates to a 10-cm residual stubble height for most grasses and sedges.”
⁸ Stubble height to be measured in the meadow areas used by greater sage-grouse for brood-rearing (not on the hydric greenline).

20
21 **GRSG-LG-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, consider closure of
22 grazing allotments, pastures, or portions of pastures, or managing the allotment as a forage
23 reserve as opportunities arise under applicable regulations, where removal of livestock
24 grazing would enhance the ability to achieve desired habitat conditions (**Table 2-6**).



1 **GRSG-LG-GL-003-Guideline** – Bedding sheep and placing camps within 1.2 miles from
2 the perimeter of a lek during lekking (March 1 to April 30) should be restricted.

3 **GRSG-LG-GL-004-Guideline** – During breeding and nesting season (March 1 to June 15),
4 trailing livestock through breeding and nesting habitat should be minimized. Specific routes
5 should be identified, existing trails should be used, and stopovers on active leks should be
6 avoided.

7 **GRSG-LG-GL-005-Guideline** – Fences should not be constructed or reconstructed within
8 1.2 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks, unless the collision risk can be mitigated
9 through design features or markings (e.g., mark, laydown fences, and design).

10 **GRSG-LG-GL-006-Guideline** – New permanent livestock facilities (e.g., windmills, corrals)
11 should not be constructed within 1.2 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks.

12 ***Fire Management***

13 **GRSG-FM-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, do not use
14 prescribed fire, except for pile burning, in 12-inch or less precipitation zones unless
15 necessary to facilitate site preparation for restoration of GRSG habitat consistent with
16 desired conditions in **Table 2-6**.

17 **GRSG-FM-ST-002-Standard** – In PHMA, SFAs, GHMA, if it is necessary to use
18 prescribed fire to facilitate site preparation for restoration of greater sage-grouse habitat
19 consistent with desired conditions in **Table 2-6**, the associated NEPA analysis must identify
20 how GRSG desired conditions would be met, why alternative techniques were not selected,
21 and how potential threats to GRSG habitat would be minimized.

22 **GRSG-FM-GL-001-Guideline** – In wintering or breeding and nesting habitat, sagebrush
23 removal or manipulation, including prescribed fire, should be restricted unless the removal
24 strategically reduces the potential impacts from wildfire.

25 **GRSG-FM-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, when reseeding in
26 fuel breaks, fire resistant native plant species should be used if available, or consider using
27 fire resistant non-native to meet resource objectives.

28 **GRSG-FM-GL-003-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, treatments should
29 be designed to restore, enhance, or maintain GRSG habitat.

30 **GRSG-FM-GL-004-Guideline** – Locating temporary wildfire suppression facilities (e.g.,
31 incident command posts, spike camps, helibases, mobile retardant plants) in PHMA, SFAs,
32 and GHMA should be avoided.

33 **GRSG-FM-GL-005-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, cross-country
34 vehicle travel during fire operations should be restricted whenever safe and practical to do
35 so, as determined by fireline leadership, incident commanders, etc.

1 **GRSG-FM-GL-006-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, burnout operation
2 areas should be avoided by constructing direct fire lines, whenever safe and practical to do
3 so, to improve suppression effectiveness and minimize loss of existing sagebrush habitat as
4 determined by fireline leadership, incident commanders, etc.

5 **GRSG-FM-GL-007-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, prescribed fire
6 prescriptions should minimize undesirable effects on vegetation and/or soils (e.g., minimize
7 mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of hydrophobicity).

8 **GRSG-FM-GL-008-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, roads and natural
9 fuel breaks should be incorporated into fuel break design to improve effectiveness and
10 minimize loss of existing sagebrush habitat.

11 **GRSG-FM-GL-009-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, all fire associated
12 vehicles and equipment should be power-washed before entering and exiting the area to
13 minimize the introduction of undesirable invasive plant species.

14 **GRSG-FM-GL-010-Guideline** - Unit-specific GRSG fire management toolboxes
15 containing maps, lists, contact information for qualified resource advisors, local guidance,
16 and relevant information should be developed.

17 **GRSG-FM-GL-011-Guideline** – Localized maps of PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs
18 should be provided to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders to use
19 when prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics.

20 **GRSG-FM-GL-012-Guideline** - In or near PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, a GRSG
21 resource advisor should be assigned to all extended attack fires.

22 **GRSG-FM-GL-013-Guideline** – On critical fire weather days, available fire suppression
23 resources should be pre-positioned to optimize a quick and efficient response into PHMA,
24 IHMA, and GHMA and SFAs.

25 **GRSG-FM-GL-014-Guideline** - During periods of multiple fires, line officers should be
26 involved in setting priorities to help protect PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs.

27 **GRSG-FM-GL-015-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, consider using fire
28 retardant and mechanized equipment only if it is likely to result in minimizing burned
29 acreage.

30 **GRSG-FM-GL-016-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA GHMA, to minimize sagebrush loss,
31 mop-up should be conducted where the burned areas adjoin unburned islands, doglegs, or
32 other habitat features, as safety and available resources allows.



1 ***Wild Horse and Burro***

2 **GRSG-HB-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, wild horse and
3 burro populations should be managed within established appropriate management levels to
4 restore, enhance, or maintain GRSG desired habitat conditions (**Table 2-6**).

5 **GRSG-HB-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, appropriate
6 management levels should be adjusted if GRSG management standards are not met due to
7 degradation that can be at least partially attributed to wild horse or burro populations.

8 ***Recreation***

9 **GRSG-R-DC-001-Desired Condition** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, existing and
10 new recreation special use authorizations and expansion of special use authorizations avoids
11 effects to GRSG and their habitats.

12 **GRSG-R-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not authorize temporary
13 recreation uses (i.e., facilities or activities) that result in loss of habitat or would have long-
14 term (greater than 5 years) negative impacts on GRSG or their habitats.

15 **GRSG-R-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, terms and conditions
16 that protect and/or restore GRSG habitat within the permit area should be included in new
17 recreation special use authorizations. During renewal, amendment, or reauthorization, terms
18 and conditions in existing permits and operating plans should be modified to protect and/or
19 restore GRSG habitat.

20 **GRSG-R-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, SFAs, and IHMA, new recreational facilities or
21 expansion of existing recreational facilities (e.g., roads, trails, campgrounds), including special
22 use authorizations for facilities and activities, should not be approved unless the
23 development results in a net conservation gain to GRSG and/or their habitats or the
24 development is required for visitor safety.

25 ***Roads/Transportation***

26 **GRSG-RT-DC-001-Desired Condition** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, within the
27 travel management system, GRSG experience minimal disturbance during breeding and
28 nesting (March 1 to June 15) and wintering periods (November 1 to February 28).

29 **GRSG-RT-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, do not conduct or
30 allow new road or trail construction (does not apply to realignments for resource protection)
31 except when necessary for administrative access, public safety, or to access valid existing
32 rights. If necessary to construct new roads and trails for one of these purposes, construct
33 them to the minimum standard, length, and number and avoid, minimize, and mitigate
34 impacts

35 **GRSG-RT-ST-002-Standard** – Do not conduct or allow road and trail maintenance
36 activities within 2 miles from the perimeter of active leks during lekking (March 1 to April
37 30) from 6 pm to 9 am.

1 **GRSG-RT-ST-003-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, prohibit public access on
2 temporary energy development roads, unless consistent with all other terms and conditions
3 included in the forest plan.

4 **GRSG-RT-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, new roads and road
5 realignments should be designed and administered to reduce collisions with GRSG.

6 **GRSG-RT-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, and SFAs, road construction within
7 riparian areas and mesic meadows should be restricted. If not possible to restrict
8 construction within riparian areas and mesic meadows, roads should be designed and
9 constructed at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings, unless topography
10 prevents doing so.

11 **GRSG-RT-GL-003-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, when
12 decommissioning roads and unauthorized routes, restoration activity should be designed to
13 move habitat towards desired conditions (**Table 2-6**).

14 **GRSG-RT-GL-004-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, dust abatement
15 terms and conditions should be included in road use permits when dust has the potential to
16 impact GRSG.

17 **GRSG-RT-GL-005-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, road and road-way
18 maintenance activities should be designed and implemented to reduce the risk of vehicle or
19 human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive plants.

20 **Minerals**

21 *Fluid Minerals - Unleased*

22 **GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-001-Standard** - In PHMA, and IHMA any new oil and gas leases
23 must include an NSO stipulation. There will be no waivers or modifications. An exception
24 could be granted by the authorized officer with unanimous concurrence from a team of
25 agency GRSG experts from the USFWS, Forest Service, and State wildlife agency if:

- 26 • There would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to
27 GRSG or their habitats or
- 28 • Granting the exception provides an alternative to a similar action
29 occurring on a nearby parcel and
- 30 • The exception provides a clear net conservation gain to GRSG.

31 **GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-002-Standard** – In GHMA, any new leases must include appropriate
32 CSU and TL stipulations to protect GRSG and their habitat.

33 **GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-003-Standard** – In SFAs, there will be NSO and no waivers,
34 exceptions, or modifications for fluid mineral leasing.



1 ***Fluid Minerals - Leased***

2 **GRSG-M-FML-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, and SFAs, when approving the
3 Surface Use Plan of Operation portion of the Application for Permit to Drill on existing
4 leases that are not yet developed, require that leaseholders avoid and minimize surface
5 disturbing and disruptive activities consistent with the rights granted in the lease.

6 **GRSG-M-FML-ST-002-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA, and SFAs, when facilities are no
7 longer needed or leases are relinquished, require reclamation plans to include terms and
8 conditions to restore habitat to desired conditions as described in **Table 2-6**.

9 **GRSG-M-FML-ST-003-Standard** – In GHMA, authorize new transmission line corridors,
10 transmission line ROWs, transmission line construction, or transmission line-facility
11 construction associated with fluid mineral leases with stipulations necessary to protect
12 GRSG and their habitats, consistent with the terms and conditions of the permit.

13 **GRSG-M-FML-ST-004-Standard** – Locate compressor stations on portions of a lease that
14 are non-habitat and are not used by GRSG, and if there would be no direct, indirect, or
15 cumulative effects on GRSG or their habitat. If this is not possible, work with the operator
16 to use mufflers, sound insulation, or other features to reduce noise.

17 **GRSG-M-FML-ST-005-Standard** – In PHMA, GHMA and SFAs, when authorizing
18 development of fluid mineral resources, work with the operator to minimize impacts to
19 GRSG and their habitat, such as locating facilities in non-habitat areas first and then in the
20 least suitable habitat, subject to valid existing rights, law, and regulations.

21 **GRSG-M-FML-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, operators
22 should be encouraged to reduce disturbance to GRSG habitat. At the time of approval of
23 the Surface Use Plan of Operation portion of the Application for Permit to Drill, terms and
24 conditions should be included to reduce disturbance to GRSG habitat, where appropriate
25 and feasible and consistent with the rights granted to the lessee.

26 **GRSG-M-FML-GL-002-Guideline** – On federal leases in PHMA, IHMA, and SFAs, when
27 surface occupancy cannot be restricted due to valid existing rights or development
28 requirements, disturbance and surface occupancy should be limited to areas least harmful to
29 GRSG based on vegetation, topography, or other habitat features.

30 **GRSG-M-FML-GL-003-Guideline** - In PHMA, SFAs, and GHMA, where the federal
31 government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership, coordinate
32 with the mineral estate owner/lessee to apply appropriate stipulations, conditions of
33 approval, conservation measures and RDFs to the appropriate surface management
34 instruments to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities.

35 ***Fluid Minerals - Operations***

36 **GRSG-M-FMO-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not authorize
37 employee camps.

1 **GRSG-M-FMO-ST-002-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, when feasible, do not
2 locate tanks or other structures that may be used as raptor perches. If this is not feasible, use
3 perch deterrents.

4 **GRSG-M-FMO-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, closed-loop systems
5 should be used for drilling operations with no reserve pits, where feasible.

6 **GRSG-M-FMO-GL-002-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, during drilling
7 operations, soil compaction should be reduced and soil structure should be maintained using
8 the best available techniques to improve vegetation reestablishment.

9 **GRSG-M-FMO-GL-003-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, dams,
10 impoundments and ponds for mineral development should be constructed to reduce
11 potential for West Nile virus. Examples of methods to accomplish this include:

- 12 • Increase the depth of ponds to accommodate a greater volume
13 of water than is discharged.
- 14 • Build steep shorelines (greater than 2 feet) to reduce shallow
15 water and aquatic vegetation around the perimeter of
16 impoundments to reduce breeding habitat for mosquitoes.
- 17 • Maintain the water level below that of rooted aquatic and upland
18 vegetation. Avoid flooding terrestrial vegetation in flat terrain or
19 low-lying areas.
- 20 • Construct dams or impoundments that restrict down-slope
21 seepage or overflow by digging ponds in flat areas rather than
22 damming natural draws for effluent water storage or lining
23 constructed ponds in areas where seepage is anticipated.
- 24 • Line the channel where discharge water flows into the pond with
25 crushed rock or use a horizontal pipe to discharge inflow directly
26 into existing open water.
- 27 • Line the overflow spillway with crushed rock and construct the
28 spillway with steep sides.
- 29 • Fence pond sites to restrict access by livestock and other wild
30 ungulates.
- 31 • Remove or re-inject produced water.
- 32 • Treat waters with larvicides to reduce mosquito production
33 where water occurs on the surface.

34 **GRSG-M-FMO-GL-004-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs to keep
35 habitat disturbance at a minimum, a phased development approach should be applied to
36 fluid mineral operations, wherever possible, consistent with the rights granted under the



1 lease. Disturbed areas should be reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed for mineral
2 operations.

3 ***Coal Mines - Unleased***

4 **GRSG-M-CMUL-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not authorize
5 surface disturbances (e.g., appurtenant facilities) for new underground coal mines.

6 ***Coal Mines - Leased***

7 **GRSG-M-CML-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, do not authorize new
8 appurtenant facilities for existing underground mines unless no technically feasible
9 alternative exists. If new appurtenant facilities associated with existing mine leases cannot be
10 located outside of PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, co-locate them with any existing disturbed
11 areas, if possible. If co-location is not possible, then construct new facilities to minimize
12 disturbed areas while meeting mine safety standards and requirements, as identified by Mine
13 Safety and Health Administration mine-plan approval process, and locate the facilities in an
14 area least harmful to GRSG habitats based on vegetation, topography, or other habitat
15 features.

16 **GRSG-M-CML-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, when coal
17 leases are subject to readjustment, additional requirements should be included in the
18 readjusted lease to protect and reduce threats to GRSG and their habitats to conserve,
19 enhance, and restore habitat for long-term viability.

20 ***Locatable Minerals***

21 **GRSG-M-LM-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, approve Plans of
22 Operation with mitigation to protect GRSG and their habitats, consistent with the rights of
23 the mining claimant as granted by the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended.

24 **GRSG-M-LM-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs to keep habitat
25 disturbance at a minimum, a phased development approach should be applied to operations
26 consistent with the rights granted under the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended.
27 Disturbed areas should be reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed for mineral
28 operations.

29 **GRSG-M-LM-GL-002-Guideline** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, abandoned mine
30 sites should be closed or mitigated, subject to valid or existing rights, to reduce predation of
31 GRSG by eliminating tall structures that could provide nesting opportunities and perching
32 sites for predators.

33 ***Nonenergy Leasable Minerals***

34 **GRSG-M-NEL-GL-001-Guideline** – In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, at the time of
35 issuance of prospecting permits, exploration licenses and leases, or readjustment of leases,
36 the Forest Service should provide recommendations to the BLM for the protection of
37 GRSG and their habitats.

1 **GRSG-M-NEL-GL-002-Guideline** - In PHMA, SFAs, GHMA, the Forest Service should
2 recommend to the BLM that expansion or readjustment of existing leases avoid, minimize,
3 or mitigate the effects to GRSG and their habitat.

4 ***Mineral Materials***

5 **GRSG-M-MM-ST-001-Standard** – In PHMA and SFAs, do not allow new mineral material
6 disposal or development.

7 **GRSG-M-MM-ST-002-Standard** – In PHMA, IHMA and SFAs, free-use mineral material
8 collection permits may be issued and expansion of existing active pits may be allowed,
9 except from March 1 to April 30 between 6 pm and 9 am within 2 miles from the perimeter
10 of occupied leks, if doing so is within the BSU and does not exceed the disturbance cap.

11 **GRSG-M-MM-ST-003-Standard** - In PHMA, IHMA, GHMA and SFAs, any permit for
12 existing mineral material operations must include appropriate requirements for operation
13 and reclamation of the site to restore or maintain desired habitat conditions (Table 2-6).

14 **2.7 Adaptive Management, Monitoring, and Mitigation**

15 The adaptive management, monitoring, and mitigation descriptions below apply to
16 Alternatives D, E, and the Proposed Plan. In making amendments to this plan, the BLM will
17 coordinate with the USFWS as BLM continues to meet its objective of conserving,
18 enhancing and restoring GRSG habitat by reducing, minimizing or eliminating threats to that
19 habitat.

20 If the BLM finds that the State of Montana is implementing a GRSG Habitat Conservation
21 Program that is effectively conserving the GRSG, the BLM will review the management
22 goals and objectives to determine if they are being met and whether amendment of the BLM
23 plan is appropriate to achieve consistent and effective conservation and GRSG management
24 across all lands regardless of ownership.

25 **2.7.1 Adaptive Management Plan**

26 Adaptive management is a decision process that promotes flexible resource management
27 decision making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from
28 management actions and other events become better understood. Careful monitoring of
29 these outcomes both advances scientific understanding and helps with adjusting resource
30 management directions as part of an iterative learning process. Adaptive management also
31 recognizes the importance of natural variability in contributing to ecological resilience and
32 productivity. It is not a ‘trial and error’ process, but rather emphasizes learning while doing.
33 Adaptive management does not represent an end in itself, but rather a means to more
34 effective decisions and enhanced benefits.

35 In relation to the BLM/Forest Services’ National Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy,
36 adaptive management will help identify if GRSG conservation measures presented in this
37 EIS contain the needed level of certainty for effectiveness. Principles of adaptive
38 management are incorporated into the conservation measures in the plan to ameliorate



1 threats to a species, thereby increasing the likelihood that the conservation measure and plan
2 will be effective in reducing threats to that species. The following provides the BLM/Forest
3 Service's adaptive management strategy for the Idaho and southwestern Montana sub-
4 region.

5 ***Adaptive Management and Monitoring***

6 This EIS contains a monitoring framework plan (**Appendix E**) that includes an
7 effectiveness monitoring component. The agencies intend to use the data collected from the
8 effectiveness monitoring to identify any changes in habitat conditions related to the goals
9 and objectives of the plan and other range-wide conservation strategies (US Department of
10 the Interior 2004; Stiver et al. 2006; USFWS 2013). The information collected through the
11 Monitoring Framework Plan outlined in **Appendix E** will be used by the BLM/Forest
12 Service to determine when adaptive management hard and soft triggers (discussed below) are
13 met.

14 The State of Idaho adaptive management plan is presented in **Appendix Q**. The Montana
15 Sage Grouse habitat Conservation Program established by Governor's Executive Order #
16 10-2014, states under the General Provisions heading, item # 22 "Montana Sage Grouse
17 Oversight Team (MSGOT) shall regularly reevaluate the effectiveness of the Conservation
18 Strategy, at a minimum annually, as new science, information and data emerge regarding the
19 habitats and behavior of sage grouse, and shall recommend such changes as are
20 appropriate."

21 ***Adaptive Management Triggers***

22 *Soft Triggers*

23 Soft triggers represent an intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are
24 needed at the project/implementation level to address habitat and population losses. If a soft
25 trigger is identified, the BLM/Forest Service will apply more conservative or restrictive
26 implementation conservation measures to mitigate for the specific causal factor in the
27 decline of populations and/or habitats, with consideration of local knowledge and
28 conditions. For example, monitoring data within an already federally authorized project area
29 within a given GRSG population area indicates that there has been a slight decrease in
30 GRSG numbers in this area. Data also suggests the decline may be attributed to GRSG
31 collisions with monitoring tower guy-wires from this federally authorized project. BLM then
32 receives an application for a new tower within the same GRSG population area. The
33 response would be to require the new authorization's tower guy-wires to be flagged.
34 Monitoring data then shows the decline is curtailed. The adaptive management soft trigger
35 response is to require future applications to flag for guy-wires. These types of adjustments
36 will be made to preclude tripping a "hard" trigger (which signals more severe habitat loss or
37 population declines). While there should be no expectation of hitting a hard trigger, if
38 unforeseen circumstances occur that trip either a habitat or population hard trigger, more
39 restrictive management will be required.
40

1 *Hard Triggers*

2 Hard triggers represent a threshold indicating that immediate action is necessary to stop a
3 severe deviation from GRSG conservation objectives as set forth in the BLM and Forest
4 Service plans. The hard trigger and the proposed management response to this trigger are
5 presented in **Section 2.6.2**, AM-7, AM-9, AM-12, AM-15, and AM-16.

6 **2.7.2 Monitoring for the Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy**

7 The BLM's planning regulations, specifically 43 CFR 1610.4-9, require that land use plans
8 establish intervals and standards for monitoring based on the sensitivity of the resource
9 decisions. Land use plan monitoring is the process of tracking the implementation of land
10 use plan decisions (implementation monitoring) and collecting data/information necessary
11 to evaluate the effectiveness of land use plan decisions (effectiveness monitoring). For
12 GRSG, these types of monitoring are also described in the criteria found in the Policy for
13 Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (50 CFR Vol. 68, No.
14 60). One of the Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing
15 Decisions criteria evaluates whether provisions for monitoring and reporting progress on
16 implementation (based on compliance with the implementation schedule) and effectiveness
17 (based on evaluation of quantifiable parameters) of the conservation effort are provided.

18 A guiding principle in the BLM National Sage-grouse Conservation Strategy (US
19 Department of the Interior 2004) is that "the Bureau is committed to sage-grouse and
20 sagebrush conservation and will continue to adjust and adapt our National Sage-grouse
21 Strategy as new information, science, and monitoring results evaluate effectiveness over
22 time." In keeping with the WAFWA Sage-grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy
23 (Stiver et al. 2006) and the Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Objectives: Final Report
24 (USFWS 2013), the BLM and Forest Service will monitor implementation and effectiveness
25 of conservation measures in GRSG habitats.

26 On March 5, 2010, USFWS' 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-
27 Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered were posted as a Federal
28 Register notice (75 Federal Register 13910-14014, March 23, 2010). This notice stated:

29 "...the information collected by BLM could not be used to make broad generalizations
30 about the status of rangelands and management actions. There was a lack of consistency
31 across the range in how questions were interpreted and answered for the data call, which
32 limited our ability to use the results to understand habitat conditions for sage-grouse on
33 BLM lands."

34 Standardization of monitoring methods and implementation of a defensible monitoring
35 approach (within and across jurisdictions) will resolve this situation. The BLM, Forest
36 Service, and other conservation partners use the resulting information to guide
37 implementation of conservation activities.

38 Monitoring strategies for GRSG habitat and populations must be collaborative, as habitat
39 occurs across jurisdictional boundaries (52 percent on BLM-administered lands, 31 percent



1 on private lands, 8 percent on National Forest System lands, 5 percent on state lands, 4
2 percent on tribal and other federal lands) (75 *Federal Register* 13910, March 23, 2010), and
3 state fish and wildlife agencies have primary responsibility for population level wildlife
4 management, including population monitoring. Therefore, population efforts will continue
5 to be conducted in partnership with state fish and wildlife agencies. The BLM and Forest
6 Service have finalized a monitoring framework, which can be found in **Appendix E**. This
7 framework describes the process that the BLM and Forest Service will use to monitor
8 implementation and effectiveness of RMP/LUP decisions. The monitoring framework
9 includes methods, data standards, and intervals of monitoring at broad and mid scales;
10 consistent indicators to measure and metric descriptions for each of the scales; analysis and
11 reporting methods; and the incorporation of monitoring results into adaptive management.
12 The need for fine-scale and site-specific habitat monitoring may vary by area depending on
13 existing conditions, habitat variability, threats, and land health. Indicators at the fine and site
14 scales will be consistent with the Habitat Assessment Framework; however, the values for
15 the indicators could be adjusted for regional conditions.

16 More specifically, the framework discusses how the BLM and Forest Service will monitor
17 and track implementation and effectiveness of planning decisions (e.g., tracking of waivers,
18 modifications, site-level actions). The two agencies will monitor the effectiveness of
19 RMP/LUP decisions in meeting management and conservation objectives. Effectiveness
20 monitoring will include monitoring disturbance in habitats, as well as landscape habitat
21 attributes. To monitor habitats, the BLM and Forest Service will measure and track
22 attributes of occupied habitat, PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA at the broad scale, and attributes
23 of habitat availability, patch size, connectivity, linkage/connectivity habitat, edge effect, and
24 anthropogenic disturbances at the mid-scale. Disturbance monitoring will measure and track
25 changes in the amount of sagebrush in the landscape and changes in the anthropogenic
26 footprint, including change energy development density. The framework also includes
27 methodology for analysis and reporting for field offices, states, ranger districts, BLM
28 districts, National Forests, and Forest regions, including geospatial and tabular data for
29 disturbance mapping (e.g., geospatial footprint of new permitted disturbances) and
30 management actions effectiveness.

31 **2.7.3 Regional Mitigation**

32 Consistent with the Proposed Plan's goal outlined in **Section 2.6.2**, the intent of the Idaho
33 and southwestern Montana GRSG LUPA/EIS is to provide a net conservation gain to the
34 species. To do so, in undertaking BLM and Forest Service management actions, and,
35 consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that
36 result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that
37 provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty
38 associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding,
39 minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. This is
40 also consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management, Section .02B,
41 which states “to initiate proactive conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to
42 Bureau sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of the need for listing of these species
43 under the ESA.”

1 **Mitigation**

2 *Mitigation Standards.* In undertaking BLM and Forest Service management actions, and
3 consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third party actions that
4 result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will require and ensure mitigation that
5 provides a net conservation gain to the species including accounting for any uncertainty
6 associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. Actions which result in habitat loss and
7 degradation include those identified as threats which contribute to GRSG disturbance as
8 identified by the USFWS in its 2010 listing decision (75 FR 13910) and shown in Table 1 in
9 **Appendix G**. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts
10 by applying beneficial mitigation actions. Mitigation will follow the regulations from the
11 White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20; e.g. avoid,
12 minimize, and compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If impacts from
13 BLM and Forest Service management actions and authorized third party actions that result
14 in habitat loss and degradation remain after applying avoidance and minimization measures
15 (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to provide a net
16 conservation gain to the species. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in
17 addition to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see the
18 concepts of durability, timeliness, and additionality as described further in **Appendix J**).

19 *Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team.* The BLM and Forest Service will establish a WAFWA
20 Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide
21 the conservation of GRSG, within 90 days of the issuance of the Record of Decision. This
22 Team will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy (hereafter,
23 Regional Mitigation Strategy). The Team will also compile and report on monitoring data
24 (including data on habitat condition, population trends, and mitigation effectiveness) from
25 States across the WAFWA Management Zone (see MON-1 through MON-7 and **Appendix**
26 **E**). Subsequently, the Team will use these data to either modify the appropriate Regional
27 Mitigation Strategy or recommend adaptive management actions (see AM-1 through AM-16
28 and **Appendix G**).

29 The BLM and Forest Service will invite governmental and Tribal partners to participate in
30 this Team, including the State Wildlife Agencies and USFWS, in compliance with the
31 exemptions provided for committees defined in the Federal Advisory Committee Act and
32 the regulations that implement that act. The BLM and Forest Service will strive for a
33 collaborative and unified approach between Federal agencies (e.g. USFWS, BLM, and Forest
34 Service), Tribal governments, state and local government(s), and other stakeholders for
35 GRSG conservation. The Team will provide advice, and will not make any decisions that
36 impact Federal lands. The BLM and Forest Service will remain responsible for making
37 decisions that affect Federal lands.

38 *Developing a Regional Mitigation Strategy.* The Team will develop a Regional Mitigation Strategy
39 to inform the mitigation components of NEPA analyses for BLM and Forest Service
40 management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation. The
41 Strategy will be developed within one year of the issuance of the Record of Decision. The
42 BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 will serve as a framework for developing the



1 Regional Mitigation Strategy. The Regional Mitigation Strategy will be applicable to the
2 States/Field Offices/Forests within the WAFWA Management Zone's boundaries.

3 Regional mitigation is a landscape-scale approach to mitigating impacts to resources. This
4 involves anticipating future mitigation needs and strategically identifying mitigation sites and
5 measures that can provide a net conservation gain to the species. The Regional Mitigation
6 Strategy developed by the Team will elaborate on the components identified above (i.e.
7 avoidance, minimization, and compensation; additionality, timeliness, and durability) and
8 further explained in **Appendix J**.

9 In the time period before the Strategy is developed, BLM will consider regional conditions,
10 trends, and sites, to the greatest extent possible, when applying the mitigation hierarchy and
11 will ensure that mitigation is consistent with the standards set forth in the first paragraph of
12 this section.

13 *Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into NEPA Analyses.* The BLM and Forest Service
14 will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations from the
15 Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for BLM and
16 Forest Service management actions and third party actions that result in habitat loss and
17 degradation and the appropriate mitigation actions will be carried forward into the decision.

18 *Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program.* Consistent with the principles identified above,
19 the BLM and Forest Service need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically
20 implemented to provide a net conservation gain to the species, as identified in the Regional
21 Mitigation Strategy. In order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this
22 compensatory mitigation program will be implemented at a State-level (as opposed to a
23 WAFWA Management Zone, a Field Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners
24 (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

25 To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the
26 BLM and Forest Service will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help
27 manage the State-level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the
28 Record of Decision. The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator
29 will conform to all relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM and Forest Service will
30 remain responsible for making decisions that affect Federal lands.

31 **2.8 Draft LUPA/EIS Alternatives**

32 The following are alternatives to the Proposed Plan and were presented and analyzed in the
33 Draft LUPA/EIS. Alternative F has been refined based on public comment to clarify
34 grazing and ACEC management.

35 **2.8.1 Alternative A (No Action)**

36 The No Action Alternative (Alternative A) represents the continuation of current
37 management direction in the 21 BLM Field Office LUPs and 8 Forest Service LUPs, and
38 proposes no new plan or management actions. Existing GRSG-related management

1 direction is provided in BLM WO IM 2012-043, Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management
2 Policies and Procedures; Forest Service WO 2600 Memo, Interim Conservation
3 Recommendations for Greater Sage-Grouse and Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat; BLM WO
4 IM 2013-128, Sage-Grouse Conservation in Fire Operations and Fuels Management; Forest
5 Service WO letter 5100, Sage-Grouse Conservation Methods 2013; Idaho BLM IM 2013-
6 036, Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat and Wildland Fire Objectives; and Idaho BLM
7 Information Bulletin (IB) 2013-036, Interim Framework for Evaluating Proposed Activities
8 Within Greater Sage-Grouse Preliminary Priority and Preliminary General Habitats on
9 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land in Idaho). A no action alternative is required by
10 CEQ regulations and provides a baseline for comparison of the other alternatives (CEQ
11 1981).

12 **2.8.2 Management Common to Action Alternatives**

13 The following would be common to all action alternatives:

- 14 • Allowable uses and management actions from the existing LUPs
15 that remain valid and do not require amending are carried
16 forward
- 17 • Where more restrictive land use allocations or decisions are
18 made in existing RMPs, those more restrictive land use
19 allocations or decisions will remain in effect and will not be
20 amended by this LUPA.
- 21 • Existing requirements regarding site-specific environmental
22 analysis, public involvement, consultation with tribes and other
23 agencies, or compliance with applicable laws without waiver are
24 maintained
- 25 • Appropriate, site-specific analysis as described in NEPA and any
26 requisite site-specific decision making (i.e., 43 CFR Subpart
27 4160, or 36 CFR Part 251) would be conducted prior to
28 approving proposed management actions
- 29 • Impacts analysis on other sagebrush steppe species and impacts
30 on state endowment trust lands managed by the Idaho
31 Department of Lands would be analyzed during site-specific
32 project NEPA review
- 33 • Activities not specifically addressed by the alternative would still
34 be subject to the allowances and restrictions of the applicable
35 resource management plans
- 36 • Information in the Management Plan and Conservation
37 Strategies for Sage-Grouse in Montana would be considered
38 when designing projects that may affect sensitive species or
39 federally listed species in Montana



- An oil and gas leasing decision would be made and would be consistent with the BLM and Forest Service requirements for a leasing decision as found in 43 CFR Part 3101 and 36 CFR 228.102, respectively.

Habitat boundary adjustments are described in **Appendix F**.

2.8.3 Alternative B

BLM and Forest Service management actions, in concert with other state and federal agencies and private landowners, play a critical role in the future trends of GRSG populations. The BLM National Policy Team, as part of the National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy, established the NTT in August 2011. The NTT's mission was to develop and describe conservation measures to be considered while new or revised range-wide and long term regulatory mechanisms were developed through LUPAs to conserve, enhance, and restore the portions of GRSG habitat on BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands. The BLM and Forest Service used GRSG conservation measures in A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures (Sage-Grouse National Technical Team 2011, also referred as to the NTT Report) to form management direction under Alternative B.

Conservation measures under Alternative B are focused on PHMAs (areas that have the highest conservation value to maintaining or increasing GRSG populations) and on Great Basin-wide concerns for GRSG. GRSG GHMAs are also identified, encompassing seasonal or year-round habitat. Acreages of each management area are shown in **Table 2-9**. The BLM and Forest Service would apply a three percent surface disturbance cap on anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PHMAs.

2.8.4 Alternative C

During scoping for this LUPA/EIS, individuals and conservation groups submitted management direction recommendations for protecting and conserving GRSG and habitat range-wide. The recommendations, in conjunction with resource allocation opportunities and internal sub-regional BLM and Forest Service input, were reviewed in order to develop BLM and Forest Service management direction for GRSG under Alternative C. Management actions in Alternative C are applied to all occupied habitat (PHMA) and focus on the removal of livestock grazing from the landscape to alleviate threats to GRSG. The acreage of PHMA is shown in **Table 2-9**. Similar to Alternative B, the BLM and Forest Service would apply a three percent surface disturbance cap on anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PHMAs. The BLM would designate 4 new ACECs.

2.8.5 Alternative D

This is the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region alternative. It describes conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat on BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands, while balancing resources and resource use among competing human interests, land uses, and the conservation of natural and cultural resource values, and sustaining and enhancing ecological integrity across the landscape, including plant, wildlife, and fish habitat. This alternative incorporates the NTT strategy and includes

1 local adjustments to A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures
2 (NTT 2011) and habitat boundaries to provide a balanced level of protection, restoration,
3 enhancement, and use of resources and services to meet ongoing programs and land uses.

4 Conservation measures under Alternative D apply to three GRSG management areas –
5 preliminary priority management area, GHMA, and IHMA. PHMAs contain the most
6 important and relatively intact habitats and potential restoration areas for conserving GRSG,
7 IHMAs have some level of development or disturbance that reduces the effective character
8 for GRSG but still provides better quality habitat than GHMAs. GHMAs represent the
9 remaining occupied or potentially occupied habitat outside of PHMAs and IHMAs.
10 Acreages of each management area are shown in **Table 2-9**. Under Alternative D, the BLM
11 and Forest Service would require no net unmitigated loss of PHMAs instead of a
12 disturbance cap.

13 **2.8.6 Alternative E**

14 The Idaho Governor's Alternative (Governor's Alternative), which provides the basis for
15 Alternative E in this EIS, was developed from recommendations by the State of Idaho's
16 GRSG Task Force and provides recommendations and policies to aid the State of Idaho in
17 developing a conservation plan specifically adapted to Idaho GRSG populations with the
18 objective of precluding the need to list the species under the ESA (Idaho Governor's Sage-
19 grouse Task Force 2012). Conservation measures under Alternative E for lands in Idaho
20 would apply to three GRSG management areas: CHZ, IHZ, and GHZ. Acreages of each
21 habitat zone are shown in **Table 2-9**. The three proposed habitat zones represent a
22 management continuum that includes at one end, a relatively restrictive approach aimed at
23 providing a high level of protection to the most important CHZ. On the other end is a
24 relatively flexible approach for GHZ, allowing for more multiple-use activities. Management
25 under IHZ contemplates greater flexibility than in CHZ, but the overall quality and
26 ecological importance of most of the habitat within this theme is more closely aligned with
27 the habitat in CHZ than in GHZ. Alternative E includes a three percent disturbance cap on
28 fluid mineral development in CHZ in Idaho and a five percent disturbance cap for IHZ.
29 Since the sub-regional planning boundary extends into southwestern Montana and the
30 Sawtooth National Forest portion of Utah, management for these areas in this alternative
31 reflect the approaches described through coordination with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
32 (as part of previous planning) and the State of Utah. Lands in Montana would be managed
33 under Alternative A. For the portion of the sub-region within Utah, PHMA and GHMA
34 would be delineated, with the same definitions as under Alternative B.

35 **2.8.7 Alternative F**

36 Similar to Alternative C, Alternative F was derived from individual and conservation group
37 scoping comments. This alternative contains a mixture of management actions from *A*
38 *Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures* as well as additional restrictions on
39 resource uses and increased resource protection. As such, Alternative F provides greater
40 restrictions on allowable uses and less resource management flexibility than Alternative B.
41 Conservation measures in Alternative F are focused on PHMAs, GHMAs, and RHMAs.
42 Acreages of each management area are shown in **Table 2-9**. The BLM and Forest Service



1 would apply a three percent disturbance cap on surface disturbances (including fire) in
2 PHMAs.

3 **2.9 Summary Comparison of Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives**

4 This section summarizes and compares Alternatives A through F and the BLM and Forest
5 Service Proposed Plans considered in the Final EIS. Combined with the appendices and
6 maps, **Table 2-9**, Comparative Summary of Allocation Decisions of the Proposed Plan
7 Amendment and Draft Alternatives, provides the differences among the alternatives relative
8 to what they establish and where they occur. The table compares the differences with the
9 most potential to affect resources among the alternatives.

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Resources								
GRSG Habitat Areas (acres)		<i>Figure 2-17</i>	<i>Figure 2-18</i>	<i>Figure 2-19</i>	<i>Figure 2-20</i>	<i>Figure 2-21</i>	<i>Figure 2-22</i>	<i>Figure 2-3</i>
Planning Area Acres	25,711,800							
BLM	12,449,000							
Forest Service	13,262,800							
Total GRSG Management Areas		11,338,300	11,106,900	11,106,900	11,338,300	11,149,400	11,607,200	11,106,400
BLM		9,290,100	9,243,900	9,243,900	9,290,100	9,281,100	9,744,100	9,544,500
Forest Service		2,048,200	1,863,000	1,863,000	2,048,200	1,868,300	1,863,100	1,561,900
Priority Habitat Management Area²		8,235,900	8,235,900	11,106,900	6,849,200	4,908,100	8,235,900	5,192,600
BLM		7,272,100	7,272,100	9,243,900	6,143,500	4,367,400	7,272,100	4,627,200
Forest Service		963,900	963,900	1,863,000	705,700	540,800	963,900	565,500
Preliminary General Management Area³		3,102,400	2,870,900		3,102,400	4,908,100	2,870,900	2,760,500
BLM		2,018,100	1,971,800		2,018,100	4,367,400	1,971,800	2,179,700
Forest Service		1,084,300	899,100		1,084,300	540,800	899,100	580,800
Important Habitat Management Area⁸					1,386,800	2,743,800		3,153,300
BLM					1,128,600	2,369,500		2,737,600
Forest Service					258,200	374,300		415,700
Restoration Habitat Management Area⁴							500,300	
BLM							500,200	
Forest Service							150	
Sagebrush Focal Area								3,842,900
BLM								3,606,100
Forest Service								236,800
Livestock Grazing		<i>Figure 2-23</i>	<i>Figure 2-24</i>	<i>Figure 2-25</i>	<i>Figure 2-26</i>	<i>Figure 2-27</i>	<i>Figure 2-28</i>	<i>Figure 2-5</i>
Acres available for livestock grazing (Total)		PHMA: 8,054,100	PHMA: 8,054,100	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 6,673,500	PHMA: 4,739,000	PHMA: 8,054,100	PHMA: 5,021,400
		GHMA: 3,019,700	GHMA: 2,801,000		IHMA: 1,380,600	IHMA: 2,712,000	GHMA: 2,801,000	IHMA: 3,113,500
					GHMA: 3,019,700	GHMA: 3,446,500	RHMA: 500,300	GHMA: 2,732,300
Acres available for livestock grazing (BLM)		PHMA: 7,125,700	PHMA: 7,125,700	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 5,999,800	PHMA: 4,216,900	PHMA: 7,125,700	PHMA: 4,474,400
		GHMA: 2,015,200	GHMA: 1,967,900		IHMA: 1,125,900	IHMA: 2,356,200	GHMA: 1,967,900	IHMA: 2,719,800
					GHMA: 2,015,200	GHMA: 2,557,600	RHMA: 500,200	GHMA: 2,194,600
Acres available for livestock grazing (Forest Service)		PHMA: 928,400	PHMA: 928,400	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 673,800	PHMA: 522,100	PHMA: 928,400	PHMA: 547,0100

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		GHMA: 1,004,600	GHMA: 833,100		IHMA: 254,700	IHMA: 355,800	GHMA: 833,100	IHMA: 393,800
					GHMA: 1,004,600	GHMA: 888,900	RHMA: 140	GHMA: 537,700
Acres unavailable for livestock grazing (Total)		PHMA: 179,800	PHMA: 179,800	PHMA: 11,132,500	PHMA: 173,900	PHMA: 168,000	PHMA: 179,800	PHMA: 169,800
		GHMA: 107,800	GHMA: 94,500		IHMA: 5,900	IHMA: 31,100	GHMA: 94,500	IHMA: 39,200
					GHMA: 107,800	GHMA: 75,200	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 53,100
Acres unavailable for livestock grazing (BLM)		PHMA: 146,300	PHMA: 146,300	PHMA: 9,269,500	PHMA: 143,600	PHMA: 150,400	PHMA: 146,300	PHMA: 152,800
		GHMA: 29,500	GHMA: 29,500		IHMA: 2,680	IHMA: 13,300	GHMA: 29,500	IHMA: 17,800
					GHMA: 29,500	GHMA: 12,200	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 10,700
Acres unavailable for livestock grazing (Forest Service)		PHMA: 33,500	PHMA: 33,500	PHMA: 1,863,000	PHMA: 30,300	PHMA: 17,600	PHMA: 33,500	PHMA: 17,000
		GHMA: 78,300	GHMA: 64,900		IHMA: 3,240	IHMA: 17,800	GHMA: 65,000	IHMA: 21,300
					GHMA: 78,300	GHMA: 63,000	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 42,400
Travel and Transportation		<i>Figure 2-29</i>	<i>Figure 2-30</i>	<i>Figure 2-31</i>	<i>Figure 2-32</i>	<i>Figure 2-33</i>	<i>Figure 2-34</i>	<i>Figure 2-16</i>
Acres open to cross-county motorized travel (Total)		PHMA: 2,215,000	PHMA: 790	PHMA: 1,350	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 530	PHMA: 790	PHMA: 0
		GHMA: 666,600	GHMA: 560		IHMA: 790	IHMA: 708,700	GHMA: 560	IHMA: 4,160
					GHMA: 560	GHMA: 1,075,100	RHMA: 254,800	GHMA: 420
Open to cross-country motorized travel (BLM)		PHMA: 2,214,200	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 50	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 530	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0
		GHMA: 666,100	GHMA: 50		IHMA: 0	IHMA: 50	GHMA: 50	IHMA: 3,360
					GHMA: 50	IHMA: 707,900		GHMA: 0

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
						GHMA: 1,074,600	RHMA: 254,800	
Open to cross-country motorized travel (Forest Service)		PHMA: 790 GHMA: 500	PHMA: 790 GHMA: 500	PHMA: 1,300	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 790 GHMA: 500	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 800 GHMA: 500	PHMA: 790 GHMA: 500 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 800 GHMA: 420
Acres closed to motorized travel (Total)		PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 166,000	PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 154,500	PHMA: 706,200	PHMA: 519,700 IHMA: 31,900 GHMA: 166,000	PHMA: 505,600 IHMA: 96,600 GHMA: 105,600	PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 154,500 RHMA: 10,700	PHMA: 556,000 IHMA: 82,500 GHMA: 72,200
Closed to motorized travel (BLM)		PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 159,800	PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 154,500	PHMA: 706,200	PHMA: 519,700 IHMA: 31,900 GHMA: 159,800	PHMA: 505,600 IHMA: 96,600 GHMA: 105,600	PHMA: 551,600 GHMA: 154,500 RHMA: 10,700	PHMA: 556,000 IHMA: 82,500 GHMA: 72,200
Closed to motorized travel (Forest Service)		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 6,190	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 6,190	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Acres limited to existing or designated routes (Total)		PHMA: 5,469,300 GHMA: 2,296,500	PHMA: 7,683,500 GHMA: 2,741,400	PHMA: 10,425,000	PHMA: 6,329,400 IHMA: 1,354,100 GHMA: 2,962,500	PHMA: 4,402,000 IHMA: 1,938,500 GHMA: 2,342,300	PHMA: 7,683,500 GHMA: 2,741,400 RHMA: 234,900	PHMA: 4,636,600 IHMA: 3,066,700 GHMA: 2,713,500
Limited to existing roads and trails (BLM)		PHMA: 4,506,200	PHMA: 6,720,400	PHMA: 8,563,300	PHMA: 5,623,700	PHMA: 3,861,200	PHMA: 6,720,400	PHMA: 4,071,200

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		GHMA: 1,218,800	GHMA: 1,842,800		IHMA: 1,096,700	IHMA: 1,565,000	GHMA: 1,842,800	IHMA: 2,651,800
					GHMA: 1,884,900	GHMA: 1,389,600	RHMA: 234,700	GHMA: 2,133,200
Limited to designated routes (Forest Service)		PHMA: 963,100	PHMA: 963,100	PHMA: 1,861,700	PHMA: 705,700	PHMA: 540,800	PHMA: 963,100	PHMA: 565,400
		GHMA: 1,077,600	GHMA: 898,600		IHMA: 257,400	IHMA: 373,500	GHMA: 898,600	IHMA: 414,900
					GHMA: 1,077,600	GHMA: 952,700	RHMA: 150	GHMA: 580,300
Total Acres		11,365,000	11,132,500	11,132,500	11,365,000	11,175,000	11,632,800	11,132,000
Lands and Realty (acres)								
High Voltage Transmission Line and Large Pipeline ROW		<i>Figure 2-35</i>	<i>Figure 2-36</i>	<i>Figure 2-37</i>	<i>Figure 2-38</i>	<i>Figure 2-39</i>	<i>Figure 2-40</i>	<i>Figure 2-8</i>
Right-of-way (ROW) exclusion areas (Total)		PHMA: 685,000	PHMA: 8,191,300	PHMA: 11,023,100	PHMA: 544,800	PHMA: 491,100	PHMA: 8,191,300	PHMA: 4,542,000
		GHMA: 343,500	GHMA: 292,700		IHMA: 140,300	IHMA: 178,000	GHMA: 292,700	IHMA: 2,994,900
					GHMA: 343,400	GHMA: 310,000	RHMA: 39,400	GHMA: 828,100
ROW exclusion areas (BLM)		PHMA: 609,300	PHMA: 7,229,300	PHMA: 9,162,100	PHMA: 469,700	PHMA: 417,500	PHMA: 7,229,300	PHMA: 472,400
		GHMA: 191,000	GHMA: 191,000		IHMA: 139,600	IHMA: 176,300	GHMA: 191,000	IHMA: 130,600
					GHMA: 191,000	GHMA: 208,200	RHMA: 39,400	GHMA: 247,200
ROW exclusion areas (Forest Service)		PHMA: 75,700	PHMA: 962,100	PHMA: 1,860,900	PHMA: 75,100	PHMA: 73,600	PHMA: 962,100	PHMA: 77,400
		GHMA: 152,500	GHMA: 101,700		IHMA: 670	IHMA: 1,730	GHMA: 101,700	IHMA: 1,760
					GHMA: 152,500	GHMA: 101,800	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 84,300
ROW exclusion with limited exceptions (BLM)		PHMA: 0	PHMA: 6,616,100	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0

**Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)**

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0		IHMA: 0	IHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	IHMA: 0
					GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 0
ROW exclusion with limited exceptions (Forest Service)		PHMA: 0	PHMA: 884,900	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0
		GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0		IHMA: 0	IHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	IHMA: 0
					GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 0
ROW avoidance areas (Total)		PHMA: 1,117,800	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 3,974,200	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 4,542,000
		GHMA: 838,400	GHMA: 2,539,000		IHMA: 1,241,800	IHMA: 2,553,100	GHMA: 2,539,000	IHMA: 2,994,900
					GHMA: 2,718,000	GHMA: 816,100	RHMA: 17,300	GHMA: 828,100
ROW avoidance areas (BLM)		PHMA: 601,900	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 3,507,700	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 4,125,900
		GHMA: 258,900	GHMA: 1,741,900		IHMA: 986,100	IHMA: 2,182,300	GHMA: 1,741,900	IHMA: 2,583,200
					GHMA: 1,786,400	GHMA: 274,600	RHMA: 17,100	GHMA: 365,200
ROW avoidance areas (Forest Service)		PHMA: 515,900	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 466,600	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 416,100
		GHMA: 579,500	GHMA: 797,200		IHMA: 255,700	IHMA: 370,800	GHMA: 797,200	IHMA: 411,700
					GHMA: 931,600	GHMA: 541,500	RHMA: 140	GHMA: 462,900
ROW avoidance with limited exclusion (BLM)		PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 5,633,900	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0
		GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0		IHMA: 0	IHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	IHMA: 0
					GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 0
ROW avoidance with limited exclusion (Forest Service)		PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 630,600	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0
		GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0			IHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	IHMA: 0

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
					IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	GHMA: 0	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 0
Minor ROW		<i>Figure 2-35</i>	<i>Figure 2-36</i>	<i>Figure 2-37</i>	<i>Figure 2-38</i>	<i>Figure 2-39</i>	<i>Figure 2-40</i>	<i>Figure 2-9</i>
Right-of-way (ROW) exclusion areas (Total)		PHMA: 685,000 GHMA: 343,500	PHMA: 690,400 GHMA: 292,700	PHMA: 11,023,100	PHMA: 544,800 IHMA: 140,300 GHMA: 343,400	PHMA: 491,100 IHMA: 178,000 GHMA: 310,000	PHMA: 8,191,300 GHMA: 292,700 RHMA: 39,400	PHMA: 549,800 IHMA: 132,400 GHMA: 331,500
ROW exclusion areas (BLM)		PHMA: 609,300 GHMA: 191,000	PHMA: 613,200 GHMA: 191,000	PHMA: 9,162,100	PHMA: 469,700 IHMA: 139,600 GHMA: 191,000	PHMA: 417,500 IHMA: 176,300 GHMA: 208,200	PHMA: 7,229,300 GHMA: 191,000 RHMA: 39,400	PHMA: 472,400 IHMA: 130,600 GHMA: 247,200
ROW exclusion areas (Forest Service)		PHMA: 75,700 GHMA: 152,500	PHMA: 77,200 GHMA: 101,700	PHMA: 1,860,900	PHMA: 75,100 IHMA: 670 GHMA: 152,500	PHMA: 73,600 IHMA: 1,730 GHMA: 101,800	PHMA: 962,100 GHMA: 101,700 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 77,400 IHMA: 1,760 GHMA: 84,300
ROW exclusion with limited exceptions (BLM)		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 6,616,100 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 9 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
ROW exclusion with limited exceptions (Forest Service)		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 884,900 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
ROW avoidance areas (Total)		PHMA: 1,117,800 GHMA: 838,400	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,539,000	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,241,800 GHMA: 2,718,000	PHMA: 3,974,200 IHMA: 2,553,100 GHMA: 816,100	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,539,000 RHMA: 17,300	PHMA: 4,613,900 IHMA: 2,994,900 GHMA: 664,500

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
ROW avoidance areas (BLM)		PHMA: 601,900 GHMA: 258,900	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,741,900	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 986,100 GHMA: 1,786,400	PHMA: 3,507,700 IHMA: 2,182,300 GHMA: 274,600	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,741,900 RHMA: 17,100	PHMA: 4,125,900 IHMA: 2,583,200 GHMA: 168,000
ROW avoidance areas (Forest Service)		PHMA: 515,900 GHMA: 579,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 797,200	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 255,700 GHMA: 931,600	PHMA: 466,600 IHMA: 370,800 GHMA: 541,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 797,200 RHMA: 140	PHMA: 488,000 IHMA: 411,700 GHMA: 496,400
ROW avoidance with limited exclusion (BLM)		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 5,633,900 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
ROW avoidance with limited exclusion (Forest Service)		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 630,600 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Wind and Solar ROW		Figure 2-41	Figure 2-42	Figure 2-43	Figure 2-44	Figure 2-45	Figure 2-46	Figure 2-4
Wind / Solar Exclusion Area (Total)		PHMA: 523,700 GHMA: 1,419,900	PHMA: 8,139,300 GHMA: 460,400	PHMA: 10,983,000	PHMA: 6,756,600 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 1,046,900 IHMA: 253,700 GHMA: 588,400	PHMA: 8,139,300 GHMA: 460,400 RHMA: 59,300	PHMA: 5,120,700 IHMA: 778,400 GHMA: 453,100
Wind / Solar Exclusion Area (BLM)		PHMA: 371,700 GHMA: 1,344,100	PHMA: 7,248,500 GHMA: 359,000	PHMA: 9,193,100	PHMA: 6,122,800 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 973,300 IHMA: 251,900 GHMA: 486,900	PHMA: 7,248,500 GHMA: 359,000 RHMA: 59,300	PHMA: 4,627,200 IHMA: 362,700 GHMA: 369,000

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Wind / Solar Exclusion Area (Forest Service)		PHMA: 152,000 GHMA: 75,700	PHMA: 890,800 GHMA: 101,400	PHMA: 1,789,900	PHMA: 633,800 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 73,600 IHMA: 1,730 GHMA: 101,500	PHMA: 890,800 GHMA: 101,400 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 493,500 IHMA: 415,700 GHMA: 84,100
Wind / Solar Avoidance Area (Total)		PHMA: 716,500 GHMA: 622,700	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,383,200	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,382,700 GHMA: 3,075,100	PHMA: 3,384,600 IHMA: 2,478,500 GHMA: 684,000	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,383,200 RHMA: 6,880	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 2,374,900 GHMA: 610,300
Wind / Solar Avoidance Area (BLM)		PHMA: 140,800 GHMA: 179,400	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,585,600	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,125,700 GHMA: 1,990,800	PHMA: 2,990,000 IHMA: 2,107,000 GHMA: 144,700	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,585,600 RHMA: 6,740	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 2,374,900 GHMA: 113,600
Wind / Solar Avoidance Area (Forest Service)		PHMA: 575,600 GHMA: 443,300	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 797,600	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 257,100 GHMA: 1,084,300	PHMA: 394,700 IHMA: 371,500 GHMA: 539,200	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 797,600 RHMA: 140	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 496,700
Wind / Solar Open Area (Total)		PHMA: 1,862,300 GHMA: 6,121,500	PHMA: 24,700 GHMA: 27,300	PHMA: 52,000	PHMA: 20,600 IHMA: 4,050 GHMA: 27,300	PHMA: 404,700 IHMA: 11,700 GHMA: 2,225,000	PHMA: 24,700 GHMA: 27,300 RHMA: 434,100	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,697,000
Wind / Solar Open Area (BLM)		PHMA: 1,505,500 GHMA:	PHMA: 23,600 GHMA:	PHMA: 50,800	PHMA: 20,600 IHMA:	PHMA: 404,100 IHMA:	PHMA: 23,600 GHMA:	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		5,748,500	27,200		2,940	10,600	27,200	GHMA: 1,697,000
					GHMA: 27,200	GHMA: 1,912,600	RHMA: 434,100	
Wind / Solar Open Area (Forest Service)		PHMA: 356,700 GHMA: 372,900	PHMA: 1,110 GHMA: 40	PHMA: 1,160	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,110 GHMA: 40	PHMA: 590 IHMA: 1,110 GHMA: 312,400	PHMA: 1,110 GHMA: 40 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Existing Designated Utility Corridors		<i>Figure 2-47</i>	<i>Figure 2-48</i>	<i>Figure 2-49</i>	<i>Figure 2-50</i>	<i>Figure 2-51</i>	<i>Figure 2-52</i>	<i>Figure 2-7</i>
Utility Corridors (Total)		PHMA: 44,600 GHMA: 41,000	PHMA: 44,600 GHMA: 39,200	PHMA: 83,800	PHMA: 39,800 IHMA: 4,750 GHMA: 41,000	PHMA: 31,000 IHMA: 12,800 GHMA: 40,000	PHMA: 44,600 GHMA: 39,200 RHMA: 6,450	PHMA: 28,900 IHMA: 26,000 GHMA: 33,600
Utility corridors (BLM)		PHMA: 42,800 GHMA: 40,700	PHMA: 42,800 GHMA: 39,000	PHMA: 81,700	PHMA: 39,800 IHMA: 2,940 GHMA: 40,700	PHMA: 31,000 IHMA: 11,000 GHMA: 39,800	PHMA: 42,800 GHMA: 39,000 RHMA: 6,450	PHMA: 28,900 IHMA: 23,800 GHMA: 33,600
Utility corridors (Forest Service)		PHMA: 1,800 GHMA: 250	PHMA: 1,800 GHMA: 250	PHMA: 2,050	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,800 GHMA: 250	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 1,800 GHMA: 250	PHMA: 1,800 GHMA: 250 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 2,200 GHMA: 0
Fluid Mineral Leasing (acres)¹		<i>Figures 2-53, 2-59</i>	<i>Figures 2-54, 2-60</i>	<i>Figures 2-55, 2-61</i>	<i>Figures 2-56, 2-62</i>	<i>Figures 2-57, 2-63</i>	<i>Figures 2-58, 2-64</i>	<i>Figures 2-11, 2-12</i>
Closed to fluid mineral leasing (Total)		PHMA: 1,723,900 GHMA:	PHMA: 9,101,600 GHMA:	PHMA: 20,168,900	PHMA: 6,545,200 IHMA:	PHMA: 1,142,800 IHMA:	PHMA: 8,056,200 GHMA:	SFA: 787,340 PHMA:

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		990,800	1,090,400		1,355,700	424,200	878,100	789,400
					GHMA: 990,800	GHMA: 1,045,000	RHMA: 32,100	IHMA: 163,800
								GHMA: 542,200
BLM		PHMA: 1,177,200 GHMA: 295,400	PHMA: 7,203,600 GHMA: 287,400	PHMA: 10,011,300	PHMA: 5,947,700 IHMA: 1,112,100 GHMA: 295,400	PHMA: 809,100 IHMA: 238,900 GHMA: 420,700	PHMA: 7,203,600 GHMA: 287,400 RHMA: 32,100	SFA: 775,200 PHMA: 732,700 IHMA: 136,500 GHMA: 203,900
Forest Service		PHMA: 546,700 GHMA: 695,400	PHMA: 852,600 GHMA: 590,700	PHMA: 10,157,600	PHMA: 597,500 IHMA: 243,600 GHMA: 695,300	PHMA: 333,600 IHMA: 185,300 GHMA: 624,300	PHMA: 852,600 GHMA: 590,700 RHMA: 0	SFA: 11,800 PHMA: 56,700 IHMA: 27,300 GHMA: 338,300
Open to fluid mineral leasing (Total)		PHMA: 6,973,000 GHMA: 2,531,000	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,384,600	PHMA: 6,093,000	PHMA: 217,100 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,531,000	PHMA: 4,032,300 IHMA: 2,461,100 GHMA: 2,898,000	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,384,600 RHMA: 509,500	SFA: 3,162,400 PHMA: 1,579,500 IHMA: 3,104,700 GHMA: 2,667,000
BLM		PHMA: 6,667,100 GHMA:	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,093,300	PHMA: 3,238,100	PHMA: 205,700 IHMA: 0	PHMA: 3,897,400 IHMA:	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 2,093,300	SFA: 2,924,200 PHMA:

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		2,161,200			GHMA: 2,161,200	2,304,000 GHMA: 2,593,700	RHMA: 509,300	1,379,700 IHMA: 2,761,700 GHMA: 2,435,500
Forest Service		PHMA: 305,900 GHMA: 369,800	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 291,300	PHMA: 2,854,900	PHMA: 11,500 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 369,800	PHMA: 134,900 IHMA: 157,200 GHMA: 304,300	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 291,300 RHMA: 150	SFA: 238,200 PHMA: 199,800 IHMA: 343,100 GHMA: 231,500
<i>Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to standard lease stipulations</i>		PHMA: 4,942,000 GHMA: 1,385,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,361,100	PHMA: 2,741,600	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 54,500 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,752,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,361,100 RHMA: 462,500	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
BLM		PHMA: 4,884,240 GHMA: 1,324,028	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,318,211	PHMA: 1,883,674	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 54,420 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,707,682	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,318,211 RHMA: 462,504	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Forest Service		PHMA: 57,700 GHMA: 61,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 42,900	PHMA: 857,900	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 60 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 44,900	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 42,900 RHMA: 0	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
<i>Open to leasing subject to No Surface Occupancy (NSO)</i>		PHMA: 587,700 GHMA:	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 271,100	PHMA: 928,600	PHMA: 62,600 IHMA: 0	PHMA: 3,380,400 IHMA:	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 271,100	SFA: 3,138,700 PHMA:

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		343,300				2,260,500		4,292,500
					GHMA: 368,700	GHMA: 338,500	RHMA: 5,480	IHMA: 2,913,900
								GHMA: 321,200
BLM		PHMA: 546,100 GHMA: 192,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 180,300	PHMA: 273,100	PHMA: 51,200 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 216,800	PHMA: 3,245,800 IHMA: 2,103,300 GHMA: 247,400	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 180,300 RHMA: 5,480	SFA: 2,900,500 PHMA: 3,854,500 IHMA: 2,570,800 GHMA: 239,700
Forest Service		PHMA: 41,600 GHMA: 150,800	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 90,800	PHMA: 655,500	PHMA: 11,400 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 152,000	PHMA: 134,500 IHMA: 157,200 GHMA: 91,100	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 90,800 RHMA: 0	SFA: 238,200 PHMA: 438,000 IHMA: 343,100 GHMA: 81,600
<i>Open to leasing subject to Controlled Surface Use (CSU)</i>		PHMA: 206,400 GHMA: 150,400	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 150,400	PHMA: 1,306,500	PHMA: 92,700 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 149,500	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 161,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 150,400 RHMA: 140	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,861,900
BLM		PHMA: 350 GHMA: 1,380	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,380	PHMA: 4,300	PHMA: 92,600 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,370	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,730	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,380 RHMA: 0	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,716,000
Forest Service		PHMA:	PHMA: 0	PHMA:	PHMA:	PHMA: 0	PHMA: 0	SFA: 0

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		206,100 GHMA: 149,000	GHMA: 149,000	1,302,200	40 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 148,200	IHMA: 0 GHMA: 159,800	GHMA: 149,000 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 145,900
<i>Open to leasing subject to Timing Limitations (TL)</i>		PHMA: 596,200 GHMA: 192,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 172,600	PHMA: 193,700	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,553,300	PHMA: 218,900 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 152,100	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 172,600 RHMA: 0	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 4,030
BLM		PHMA: 595,700 GHMA: 183,900	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 164,000	PHMA: 154,300	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 1,483,600	PHMA: 218,500 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 143,500	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 164,000 RHMA: 0	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Forest Service		PHMA: 430 GHMA: 8,600	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 8,570	PHMA: 39,300	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 69,700	PHMA: 360 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 8,580	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 8,570 RHMA: 0	SFA: 0 PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 4,030
Locatable Minerals, Mineral Materials, and Non-Energy Solid Leasable Minerals (acres)								
Locatable minerals		<i>Figure 2-65</i>	<i>Figure 2-66</i>	<i>Figure 2-67</i>	<i>Figure 2-68</i>	<i>Figure 2-69</i>	<i>Figure 2-70</i>	<i>Figure 2-13</i>
Locatable minerals - withdrawn or recommended for withdrawal		PHMA: 1,365,000 GHMA: 433,200	PHMA: 9,365,600 GHMA: 417,600	PHMA: 13,337,700	PHMA: 1,217,300 IHMA: 147,800 GHMA: 433,200	PHMA: 958,700 IHMA: 321,200 GHMA: 511,200	PHMA: 9,365,600 GHMA: 417,600 RHMA: 82,600	SFA: 3,861,300 PHMA: 91,800 IHMA: 447,700 GHMA: 316,300
BLM		PHMA: 1,343,200	PHMA: 8,403,700	PHMA: 11,481,100	PHMA: 1,207,600	PHMA: 951,700	PHMA: 8,403,700	SFA: 3,624,600

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
		GHMA: 390,200	GHMA: 382,200		IHMA: 135,600	IHMA: 307,300	GHMA: 382,200	PHMA: 88,700
					GHMA: 390,200	GHMA: 474,800	RHMA: 82,600	IHMA: 432,800
								GHMA: 276,500
Forest Service		PHMA: 21,800	PHMA: 962,000	PHMA: 1,856,600	PHMA: 9,680	PHMA: 7,040	PHMA: 962,000	SFA: 236,700
		GHMA: 43,000	GHMA: 35,400		IHMA: 12,100	IHMA: 13,800	GHMA: 35,400	PHMA: 3,080
					GHMA: 43,000	GHMA: 36,400	RHMA: 0	IHMA: 14,900
								GHMA: 39,800
Mineral Materials		Figure 2-77	Figure 2-78	Figure 2-79	Figure 2-80	Figure 2-81	Figure 2-82	Figure 2-15
Closed to mineral materials disposal		PHMA: 1,038,400	PHMA: 8,772,500	PHMA: 12,015,700	PHMA: 3,004,800	PHMA: 819,500	PHMA: 8,127,400	PHMA: 5,583,000
		GHMA: 820,400	GHMA: 718,600		IHMA: 359,600	IHMA: 261,000	GHMA: 717,100	IHMA: 283,100
					GHMA: 934,700	GHMA: 686,100	RHMA: 14,100	GHMA: 405,400
BLM		PHMA: 542,300	PHMA: 7,848,200	PHMA: 10,209,700	PHMA: 2,583,500	PHMA: 504,700	PHMA: 7,203,200	PHMA: 5,018,100
		GHMA: 168,500	GHMA: 168,500		IHMA: 209,300	IHMA: 103,700	GHMA: 167,000	IHMA: 86,500
					GHMA: 270,600	GHMA: 105,900	RHMA: 14,100	GHMA: 72,900
Forest Service		PHMA: 496,100	PHMA: 550,100	PHMA: 1,806,000	PHMA: 421,300	PHMA: 314,800	PHMA: 924,200	PHMA: 564,800
		GHMA: 651,900	GHMA: 924,200		IHMA: 150,300	IHMA: 157,300	GHMA: 550,100	IHMA: 196,600
					GHMA:	GHMA:	RHMA: 0	GHMA:

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
					664,100	580,200		332,500
Nonenergy Leasable Minerals		<i>Figure 2-71</i>	<i>Figure 2-72</i>	<i>Figure 2-73</i>	<i>Figure 2-74</i>	<i>Figure 2-75</i>	<i>Figure 2-76</i>	<i>Figure 2-14</i>
Closed to non-energy mineral leasing		PHMA: 1,351,600	PHMA: 8,055,600	PHMA: 10,887,500	PHMA: 1,154,800	PHMA: 1,046,800	PHMA: 8,055,600	PHMA: 5,079,100
		GHMA: 893,100	GHMA: 782,700		IHMA: 196,800	IHMA: 308,600	GHMA: 782,700	IHMA: 369,800
					GHMA: 893,100	GHMA: 788,900	RHMA: 29,800	GHMA: 465,000
BLM		PHMA: 855,100	PHMA: 7,203,200	PHMA: 9,153,400	PHMA: 805,300	PHMA: 732,000	PHMA: 7,203,200	PHMA: 4,586,100
		GHMA: 225,300	GHMA: 217,300		IHMA: 49,800	IHMA: 150,800	GHMA: 217,300	IHMA: 172,600
					GHMA: 225,300	GHMA: 193,500	RHMA: 29,800	GHMA: 116,800
Forest Service		PHMA: 496,500	PHMA: 852,400	PHMA: 1,734,100	PHMA: 349,500	PHMA: 314,800	PHMA: 852,400	PHMA: 493,000
		GHMA: 667,800	GHMA: 565,400		IHMA: 147,000	IHMA: 157,800	GHMA: 565,400	IHMA: 197,200
					GHMA: 667,800	GHMA: 595,400	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 348,300
Special Designations								
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (acres, BLM only)		<i>Figure 2-83</i>		<i>Figure 2-84</i>			<i>Figures 2-85, 2-86</i>	
ACEC		PHMA: 342,400	PHMA: 342,400	PHMA: 3,118,700	PHMA: 317,300	PHMA: 356,900	Alternative F1 PHMA: 6,929,600	PHMA: 331,900
		GHMA: 126,800	GHMA: 126,800		IHMA: 25,100	IHMA: 51,400	GHMA: 0	IHMA: 79,400
					GHMA: 126,800	GHMA: 62,000	RHMA: 0	GHMA: 57,900
							Alternative F2 PHMA: 1,379,100	
							GHMA: 0	

**Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)**

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Zoological Areas		PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 38,800	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0	RHMA: 0 Alternative F1 PHMA: 963,800 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0 Alternative F2 PHMA: 223,700 GHMA: 0 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 0 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 0
Wilderness Study Areas								
Wilderness Study Areas		PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 98,000	PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 90,000	PHMA: 510,200	PHMA: 397,600 IHMA: 22,600 GHMA: 98,000	PHMA: 335,500 IHMA: 58,300 GHMA: 119,200	PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 90,000 RHMA: 14,100	PHMA: 318,700 IHMA: 110,200 GHMA: 53,100
BLM		PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 98,000	PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 90,000	PHMA: 510,100	PHMA: 397,600 IHMA: 22,500 GHMA: 98,000	PHMA: 335,400 IHMA: 58,300 GHMA: 119,200	PHMA: 420,100 GHMA: 90,000 RHMA: 14,100	PHMA: 318,700 IHMA: 110,200 GHMA: 53,100
Forest Service		PHMA: 20 GHMA: 70	PHMA: 20 GHMA: 50	PHMA: 70	PHMA: 10 IHMA: 10 GHMA: 70	PHMA: 10 IHMA: 0 GHMA: 70	PHMA: 20 GHMA: 50 RHMA: 0	PHMA: 30 IHMA: 30 GHMA: 0

Source: BLM GIS 2015

¹Table presents acres of allocations within GRSG habitat. Acres outside occupied GRSG habitat are noted where applicable.

²Priority Habitat under Alternative A is managed on BLM-administered lands in Montana only. This row also includes Core Habitat Zones under Alternative E.

³General Habitat under Alternative A is managed on BLM-administered lands in Montana only. This row also includes General Habitat Zones under Alternative E.

⁴All acres in Restoration Habitat under Alternative F are outside occupied GRSG habitat and are presented separately in this table.

⁵Travel management decisions under Alternative D in Idaho would apply to BLM-administered lands within the entire state of Idaho regardless of GRSG habitat; travel management decisions under Alternative D in southwestern Montana would apply to only GRSG habitat in the Dillon Field Office.

Table 2-9
Comparative Summary of Alternatives by Acres Allotted¹ (Within GRSG Habitat)

Resource or Resource Use	Total Planning Area ⁶	Alternative A ⁷	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
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⁶The planning area includes acres within both GRSG habitat and nonhabitat.

⁷Acres under Alternative A represent an overlay with PPH/PGH as well as the inclusion of several Forest Service GRSG management areas that are outside of PPH/PGH.

⁸This row also includes Important Habitat Zones under Alternative E.

Note: Figures referenced in this table are presented in **Appendix A**.

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2.10 Detailed Description of Draft Alternatives

2.10.1 How to Read Tables 2-10 and 2-11

The following describes how **Table 2-10**, Goals and Objectives by Alternative and **Table 2-11**, Management Actions by Alternative, below, are written and formatted to show the land use plan decisions proposed for each alternative.

In accordance with Appendix C of the BLM's *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1), land use plan and plan amendment decisions are broad-scale decisions that guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions (BLM 2005). Land use plan decisions fall into two categories, which establish the base structure for desired outcomes (goals and objectives), and allowable uses and actions to achieve outcomes.

- Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes that usually are not quantifiable.
- Objectives identify specific desired outcomes for resources. They may be quantifiable and measurable and may have established timeframes for achievement, as appropriate.
- Allowable uses identify uses, or allocations, that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited on BLM-administered lands and mineral estate.
- Actions identify measures or criteria to achieve desired objectives, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health.

Stipulations (NSO and CSU, which fall under the allowable uses category) are also applied to surface-disturbing activities to achieve desired outcomes (i.e., objectives).

In general, only those resources and resource uses that have been identified as planning issues have notable differences between the alternatives.

Actions that are applicable to all alternatives are shown in one cell across a row. These particular objectives and actions would be implemented regardless of which alternative is ultimately selected.

Actions that are applicable to more than one but not all alternatives are indicated by either combining cells for the same alternatives, or by denoting those objectives or actions as the "same as Alternative A," for example.

In some cells, "No Similar Action" is used to indicate that there is no similar goal, objective or action to the other alternatives, or that the similar goal, objective or action is reflected in another management action in the alternative.

2.10.2 Goals and Objectives

Table 2-10
Goals and Objectives by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Goals					
A-GOAL-1: No common goal across LUPs within the sub-region	B-GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase GRSG abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which populations depend in cooperation with other conservation partners.	C-GOAL-1: Same as Alternative A.	D-GOAL-1: Maintain and/or increase GRSG abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which populations depend in cooperation with other conservation partners.	E-GOAL-1: Conserve the GRSG and its habitat to avoid a listing under the ESA (see NTT 2011).	F-GOAL -1: Maintain and increase current GRSG abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem
Objectives					
A-OBJ-1: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-1: Protect priority GRSG habitats from anthropogenic disturbances that will reduce distribution or abundance of GRSG.	C-OBJ-1: —	D-OBJ-1: Manage anthropogenic development and human disturbance in priority habitat to minimize the likelihood of adverse local population-level effects on GRSG.	E-OBJ-1: CHZ: Provide a level of protection sufficient to conserve at least 65% of the current known leks occurring in the State within CHZ through implementation of regulatory mechanisms. IHZ: Provide a population buffer to CHZ to minimize the risk of habitat loss from wildfire, invasive species while providing the opportunity to consider limited high-value infrastructure development.	F-OBJ-1: —
A-OBJ-2: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-2: Manage land uses, habitat treatments, and anthropogenic disturbances below thresholds necessary to conserve local GRSG populations, sagebrush communities and landscapes	C-OBJ-2: —	D-OBJ-2: —	E-OBJ-2: CHZ and IHZ: Limit habitat loss in CHZ and IHZ during the first three-year period of implementation (2014-2017) to no more than 10% loss due to fire and/or infrastructure development resulting in a proportionate reduction of males counted on leks within a particular CA.	F-OBJ-2: —
A-OBJ-3: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-3: Sub-objective: Manage priority GRSG habitats so that discrete anthropogenic disturbances cover less than 3% of the total GRSG habitat regardless of ownership. Anthropogenic features include but are not limited to paved highways, graded gravel roads, transmission lines, substations, wind turbines, oil and gas wells, geothermal wells and associated facilities, pipelines, landfills, homes, and mines. In priority habitats where	C-OBJ-3: —	D-OBJ-3: —	E-OBJ-3: —	F-OBJ-3: —

Table 2-10
Goals and Objectives by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	the 3% disturbance threshold is already exceeded from any source, no further anthropogenic disturbances will be permitted by BLM or Forest Service until enough habitat has been restored to maintain the area under this threshold (subject to valid existing rights). In this instance, an additional objective will be designated for the priority area to prioritize and reclaim/restore areas affected by anthropogenic disturbances so that 3% or less of the total priority habitat area is disturbed within 10 years.				
A-OBJ-4: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-4: Maintain or increase current distribution and abundance of GRSG on BLM administered lands in support of the range-wide goals	C-OBJ-4: —	D-OBJ-4: —	E-OBJ-4: —	F-OBJ-4: —
A-OBJ-5: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-5: Sub-objective: Develop quantifiable habitat and population objectives with WAFWA and other conservation partners at the management zone and/or other appropriate scales. Develop a monitoring and adaptive management strategy to track whether these objectives are being met, and allow for revisions to management approaches if they are not.	C-OBJ-5: —	D-OBJ-5: —	E-OBJ-5: —	F-OBJ-5: —
A-OBJ-6: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-6: Sub-objective: Designate priority GRSG habitats for each WAFWA management zone (Stiver et al. 2006) across the current geographic range of GRSG that are large enough to stabilize populations in the short term and enhance populations over the long term.	C-OBJ-6: —	D-OBJ-6: Sub-objective: Designate priority GRSG habitats for each WAFWA management zone (Stiver et al. 2006) across the current geographic range of GRSG that are large enough to stabilize populations in the short term and enhance populations over the long term.	E-OBJ-6: CHZ: Focus management by Federal and State agencies on the maintenance and enhancement of habitats, populations and connectivity in areas within this management zone. IHZ: Focus management by Federal and State agencies on areas within this zone that have the best opportunities for conserving, enhancing or restoring habitat for GRSG. Provide management flexibility to permit high-value infrastructure projects.	F-OBJ-6: —

Table 2-10
Goals and Objectives by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-OBJ-7: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-7: Sub-objective: To maintain or increase current populations, manage or restore priority areas so that at least 70% of the land cover provides adequate sagebrush habitat to meet GRSG needs.	C-OBJ-7: —	D-OBJ-7: Identify and expand sagebrush areas to increase the extent and condition of available habitat on the landscape.	E-OBJ-7: —	F-OBJ-7: —
A-OBJ-8: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-8: —	C-OBJ-8: —	D-OBJ-8: Manage GHMAs in a way that buffers adjoining PHMAs from disturbances.	E-OBJ-8: —	F-OBJ-8: —
A-OBJ-9: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-9: —	C-OBJ-9: —	D-OBJ-10: Reconnect and expand areas of higher native plant community integrity/rangeland health to increase the extent of high quality habitat and, where possible, to accommodate the future effects of climate change.	E-OBJ-9: —	F-OBJ-9: —
A-OBJ-10: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-10: —	C-OBJ-10: —	D-OBJ-10: Increase the amount and functionality of seasonal habitats. a. Increase canopy cover and average patch size of sagebrush in perennial grasslands. b. Increase the amount, condition and connectivity of seasonal habitats. c. Protect or improve GRSG migration/movement corridors. d. Reduce conifer encroachment within GRSG seasonal habitats. e. Improve understory (grass, forb) and/or riparian condition within breeding and late brood-rearing habitats. f. Reduce the extent of annual grasslands adjacent to priority habitat.	E-OBJ-10: —	F-OBJ-10: —
A-OBJ-11: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-11: —	C-OBJ-11: —	D-OBJ-11: Minimize the loss of existing priority sagebrush habitat. In particular, identify and strategically protect larger in-tact sagebrush areas and areas of lower fragmentation to maintain GRSG population persistence.	E-OBJ-11: CHZ: Implement the regulatory mechanisms to maintain and enhance GRSG habitats, populations and connectivity in areas within CHZ, buffered by strategic areas within IHZ, dominated by sagebrush. IHZ: Provide strategic buffers in areas dominated by sagebrush to CHZ where regulatory mechanisms maintain and enhance GRSG habitats, populations and connectivity in areas within CHZ.	F-OBJ-11: Establish a system of sagebrush reserves to anchor recovery efforts by protecting the highest quality habitats.

Table 2-10
Goals and Objectives by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-OBJ-12: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-12: —	C-OBJ-12: —	D-OBJ-12: Conserve, enhance or restore GHMAs to improve habitat condition and connectivity between PHMAs.	E-OBJ-12: —	F-OBJ-12: Restore and maintain sagebrush steppe to its ecological potential in occupied GRSG habitat.
A-OBJ-13: No common objective across LUPs within the sub-region.	B-OBJ-13: —	C-OBJ-13: —	D-OBJ-13: Reduce or minimize risk of West Nile Virus or other diseases.	E-OBJ-13: —	F-OBJ-13: —

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2.10.3 Management Actions

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
SSS – GRSG					
<p>A-SSS-1: There is no consistent mapping representation of GRSG habitat across the sub-region, nor is there any consistent designation of habitat within the sub-region (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Idaho BLM, in coordination with IDFG and LWGs, has developed and maintained a Key Sage-Grouse map over the last 12 years which depicts areas important to GRSG (Key areas) and areas where restoration could potentially occur to restore habitat conditions (R1 perennial grass dominated areas; R2 – annual grass dominated areas; and R3 – conifer encroachment areas) Montana BLM in coordination with MFWP has developed a Core Habitat map that depicts important areas for GRSG (Core areas). These maps (the Idaho Key Habitat and Montana Core Habitat) do not represent any habitat designation with associated management direction, but instead are used as an information tool to help prioritize site specific management, suppression and rehabilitation efforts.</p> <p>Several National Forests have designated GRSG habitat with associated management guidance. These include the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Caribou-Targhee and Sawtooth NFs. The habitat designations were typically define as buffers around existing leks and adjusted managed within those areas.</p>	<p>B-SSS-1: PHMA: Designate PHMAs on 8,235,900 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>PHMA includes areas that have the highest conservation value to maintaining or increasing GRSG populations. These areas include breeding, late brood-rearing, winter concentration areas, and where known, migration or connectivity corridors.</p> <p>GHMA: Designate GHMAs on 3,102,400 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA is occupied (seasonal or year-round) habitat outside of PHMA.</p>	<p>C-SSS-1: PHMA: Designate PHMA on 11,106,900 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>PHMA is all occupied (seasonal or year-round) GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>D-SSS-1: PHMA: Designate PHMA on 6,849,200 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>PHMA includes areas that have the highest conservation value to GRSG. Key characteristics include areas of higher lek attendance and lek connectivity, lower habitat fragmentation, important movement corridors and winter habitat.</p> <p>IHMA: Designate Important Habitat Management Areas (IHMA) on 1,386,800 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>IHMA includes areas of moderate to high conservation value to GRSG that are generally adjacent to PHMAs but reflect reduced GRSG population and/or habitat characteristics.</p> <p>GHMA: Designate GHMA on 2,934,100 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA is occupied (seasonal or year-round) habitat outside of PHMA and IHMA.</p>	<p>E-SSS-1: Idaho – CHZ: Designate CHZ on 4,908,100 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>CHZ focuses on conserving each of the two key meta-populations in the State. These meta-populations consist of a large aggregation of interconnected breeding subpopulations of GRSG that have the highest likelihood of long-term persistence. One meta-population is located north of the Snake River and includes the Mountain Valley and Desert CAs; the other is located south of the Snake River and includes the West Owyhee and Southern CAs.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Designate IHZ on 2,743,800 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>IHZ, while permitting more management flexibility, also contains important habitat for the species and is an important buffer against the threat of wildfire. IHZ captures high quality habitat and populations that provide a management buffer for CHZ, connect patches of CHZ, and support important populations and habitat independent of CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Designate GHZ on 4,908,100 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHZ generally includes few active leks, and fragmented or marginal habitat. It includes habitat for two isolated populations of GRSG in the East Idaho Uplands and West Central Idaho.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: All goals, objectives</p>	<p>F-SSS-1: PHMA: Designate PHMA on 8,235,900 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>PHMA conserves large expanses of sagebrush steppe and all active GRSG leks, and brood-rearing, transitional, and winter habitats.</p> <p>GHMA: Designate GHMA on 2,870,900 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA is occupied (seasonal or year-round) habitat outside of PHMA.</p> <p>RHMA: Designate Restoration Habitat Management Areas (RHMA) on 500,300 acres (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>RHMA is degraded or fragmented habitat that is currently unoccupied by GRSG but might be useful to the species if restored to its potential natural community.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>and management actions are the same as Alternative A and are summarized in Appendix U.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Designate PHMA on 71,800 acres. All lands with GRSG habitat in the portion of the Sawtooth National Forest sub-region in Utah are PHMA (see Table 2-9).</p>	
<p>A-SSS-2: —.</p>	<p>B-SSS-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-SSS-2: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-SSS-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-SSS-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Limit or ameliorate impacts from activities as identified in this matrix through the use of the following stipulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself. • No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the GRSG using the lek. • New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek. • A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise more than 10 dBs above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season. • Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise). • Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On leks from February 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding. 	<p>F-SSS-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In nesting and brood-rearing areas from April 1 – August 15. ○ In winter habitat from November 15 – March 15. • Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local Utah Department of Wildlife Resources biologist. • Avoid disturbance within PHMA (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible. If avoidance in PHMA is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation). • After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section). • Cumulative new permanent disturbance should not exceed 5% of surface area of nesting, winter, or other habitat, within the population area's PHMA. • Manage PHMA to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable. 	
A-SSS-3: No disturbance cap is managed across the sub-region.	B-SSS-3: PHMA: Apply a three percent surface disturbance cap on anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire). GHMA: —.	C-SSS-3: Same as Alternative B.	D-SSS-3: PHMA: Require no net unmitigated loss of PHMAs. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SSS-3: Idaho – CHZ: Apply a three percent surface disturbance cap on fluid mineral development. Idaho – IHZ: Apply a five percent surface disturbance cap on fluid mineral development. Idaho – GHZ: —.	F-SSS-3: PHMA: Apply a three percent disturbance cap on surface disturbances, including fire.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				Utah Habitat: —.	
Monitoring					
A-SSS-4: —.	B-SSS-4: Develop a Monitoring Framework to include: methods, data standards, and intervals of monitoring at broad and mid scales; consistent indicators to measure and metric descriptions for each of the scales [see Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF) and Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring core indicators]; analysis and reporting methods; and the incorporation of monitoring results into adaptive management.	C-SSS-4: Same as Alternative B.	D-SSS-4: Same as Alternative B.	E-SSS-4: Utilize lek monitoring and habitat monitoring to annually assess adaptive management triggers.	F-SSS-4: Same as Alternative B.
Adaptive Management					
A-SSS-5: —.	B-SSS-5: Develop an adaptive management strategy to provide certainty that unintended negative impacts on GRSG will be addressed before consequences become severe or irreversible and to provide regulatory certainty to the USFWS that appropriate action will be taken by the BLM and Forest Service.	C-SSS-5: Same as Alternative B.	D-SSS-5: Use habitat and population triggers to adjust management in IHMA. All management identified for PHMAs would apply to IHMAs in response to triggers. See Section 2.6.4 for details.	E-SSS-5: Use hard and soft population and habitat triggers to adjust management in IHZ. Management from CHZs, primarily for infrastructure, would apply to IHZ in response to triggers. Develop the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel Break Strategy • Response Time Analysis • Water Availability Analysis • Restoration Strategy (see Appendix Q)	F-SSS-5: Same as Alternative B.
Vegetation					
A-VG-1: —.	B-VG-1: PHMA: --. GHMA: —.	C-VG-1: PHMA: —	D-VG-1: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-1: PHMA: In PHMA, ensure that soil cover and native herbaceous plants are at their Ecological Site Description potential to help protect against invasive plants. In areas without Ecological Site Descriptions, reference sites would be utilized to identify appropriate vegetation communities and soil cover. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Habitat Restoration					
<p>A-VG-2: In most LUPs, either no priorities are established or prioritization is given to projects that benefit multiple resources (e.g., livestock, wildlife, wild horses and burros, special status species).</p> <p>All LUPs which recognize conifer expansion and its effects on sagebrush steppe habitat uniformly identify the need for controlling conifer expansion through various methods including: hand cutting, wood cutting, mechanical, prescribed fire, chemical treatments, and through the use of wildfire where feasible.</p> <p>Montana BLM: Restore vegetation to benefit multiple uses. Promote the use of native species where possible (See ROD pg. 51 Actions 3, 12, 14 and Appendix X of Dillon ROD/RMP). Restore and maintain desired ecological conditions and fuel loadings. Evaluate benefits against loss of sagebrush in NEPA process. Do not burn Wyoming sagebrush.</p>	<p>B-VG-2: PHMA: Prioritize implementation of restoration projects based on environmental variables that improve chances for project success in areas most likely to benefit GRSG (Meinke et al. 2009). Prioritize restoration in seasonal habitats that are thought to be limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-VG-2: PHMA: Prioritize implementation of vegetation rehabilitation projects to achieve the greatest improvement in GRSG habitat. Factors contributing to higher emphasis for implementation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites where environmental variables contribute to improved chances for project success (Meinke et al. 2009). Improvement of seasonal habitats that are thought to be limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance (wintering areas, wet meadows and riparian areas, nesting areas, leks, etc.). Re-establishment of sagebrush cover in otherwise suitable GRSG with consideration to local needs and conditions using the general priorities in the following order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native grassland with suitable forb component Nonnative grassland with suitable forb component Recently burned native areas Native grassland Nonnative grassland Where desirable perennial bunchgrasses and/or forbs are deficient in existing sagebrush stands, use appropriate mechanical, aerial or other techniques to re-establish them. Examples include but are not limited to, use of a Lawson aerator with seeding, harrow or chain with seeding, drill seeding, hand planting plugs, aerial seeding or other appropriate technique. Cooperative efforts that may improve GRSG habitat quality 	<p>E-VG-2: Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize the removal of conifers through methods appropriate for the terrain and most likely to facilitate expeditious GRSG population and habitat recovery. To the extent possible, utilize removal methods creating the least amount of disturbance.</p> <p>a. Efforts should focus on areas with highest restoration potential typically evidenced by low canopy cover, existing sagebrush understory, and adjacent current populations.</p> <p>b. Refrain from using prescribed fire and conducting removal projects in juniper stands older than one hundred years.</p> <p>c. Maximize the use of Natural Resource Conservation Service funding through permittee grants under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Wildlife Habitat Improvement programs.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Prioritize the removal of conifers through methods appropriate for the terrain and most likely to facilitate expeditious GRSG habitat recovery. Especially prioritize and target removal treatments adjacent to CHZ. To the extent possible, utilize methods creating the least amount of disturbance.</p> <p>a. Areas with highest restoration potential will typically have low canopy cover, existing sagebrush understory, and adjacent current populations.</p> <p>b. Refrain from using prescribed fire and conducting removal projects in juniper stands older than one-hundred years.</p> <p>c. Maximize the use of Natural Resource Conservation Service funding</p>	<p>F-VG-2: PHMA: Prioritize implementation of restoration projects based on environmental variables that improve chances for project success in areas most likely to benefit GRSG (Meinke et al. 2009).</p> <p>Prioritize restoration in seasonal habitats that are thought to be limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance and where factors causing degradation have already been addressed (e.g., changes in livestock management).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>over multiple ownerships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects in GHMA that may provide connectivity between suitable habitats or expand existing good quality habitats. Projects that address conifer encroachment into important GRSG habitats. In general the priority for treatment is 1) Phase 1 (≤10% conifer cover), 2) Phase 2 (10-30%), and 3) Phase 3 (>30%). Replacing stands of annual grasses within otherwise good quality habitats with desirable perennial species. Other factors that contribute to the importance of the restoration project in maintaining or improving GRSG habitat. <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>through permittee grants under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Wildlife Habitat Improvement programs.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Protection of GRSG habitat is the primary focus of conservation efforts, but many locations can be reclaimed or restored by active vegetation management actions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> removal of encroaching conifers may create new habitat or increase the carrying capacity of habitat and thereby expand GRSG populations, or the distribution of water into wet meadow areas may improve seasonal brood-rearing range and enhance GRSG recruitment. <p>Aggressively remove encroaching conifers and other plant species to expand GRSG habitat where possible.</p> <p>Sagebrush treatment projects within nesting and winter habitat should be limited and require pre-approval by the appropriate regulatory agency in discussions with DWR. Sagebrush treatment projects should maintain 80% of the available habitat as sagebrush within the project area; 20% of the habitat can be managed for younger age classes of sagebrush, if appropriate. These treatments are generally recommended only to improve brood-rearing habitat, but need to be carefully considered before use in winter and other habitat.</p>	

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>A-VG-3: Guidance and management direction for general vegetation is fairly broad and trends toward maintaining the components of the vegetative community in the same relative proportion as those which would have historically occurred in the area. Some LUPs contain objectives for maintaining, improving, or restoring sagebrush plant communities. The level of detail varies depending on the age of the land use plan.</p>	<p>B-VG-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-3: PHMA: Composition, function, and structure of native vegetation communities will be consistent with the reference state of the appropriate Ecological Site Description and will be maximized to provide for healthy, resilient, and recovering GRSG habitat components.</p>	<p>D-VG-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-4: All recent LUPs include management actions that promote use of native species where possible, acknowledging that in some instances, vegetative treatments may not be successful without the use of nonnative desired species.</p> <p>Older plans typically do not include a similar management action.</p>	<p>B-VG-4: PHMA: Require use of native seeds for restoration based on availability, adaptation (ecological site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or adapted seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they support GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke 2011).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-VG-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-VG-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-5: All LUPs, which are written in accordance with applicable program direction, include management actions that allow the administrating agency to make adjustments to livestock grazing, wild horse and burro management, and travel management on a case-by case basis following restoration activities.</p>	<p>B-VG-5: PHMA: Design post restoration management to ensure long term persistence. This could include changes in livestock grazing management, wild horse and burro management and travel management, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of the restoration effort that benefits GRSG (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-VG-5: PHMA: Implement management changes, as necessary, to maintain suitable GRSG habitat, improve unsuitable GRSG habitat and to ensure long-term persistence of improved GRSG habitat achieved through restoration efforts (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006). Management changes could be considered for livestock grazing, wild horse and burros, travel planning, and other resources.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-VG-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-6: —.</p>	<p>B-VG-6: PHMA: Consider potential changes in climate (Miller et al. 2011) when proposing restoration seedings when using native plants. Consider collection from the warmer component</p>	<p>C-VG-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-VG-6: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	of the species current range when selecting native species (Kramer and Havens 2009). GHMA: —.				RHMA: —.
A-VG-7: Most LUPs do not include specific management actions related to seedings. Plans do include generic decisions that allow maintenance of existing range improvements, which includes maintenance of historical seedings. Recently completed LUPs promote use of native species when conducting restoration activities. This would include restoration projects conducted in areas that have perennial grass cover. Older plans do not include a similar management action.	B-VG-7: PHMA: Restore native (or desirable) plants and create landscape patterns which most benefit GRSG. GHMA: —.	C-VG-7: PHMA: Exotic seedings will be rehabbed, interseeded, restored to recover sagebrush in areas to expand occupied habitats.	D-VG-7: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-8: Some LUPs contain objectives for maintaining improving, or restoring sagebrush plant communities. The level of detail varies depending on the age of the land use plan. All LUPs address vegetation treatments for improvement of wildlife habitat overall or to provide increased forage for wildlife, livestock, and wild horses and burros. Recent LUPs may include management actions that purposely restore or enhance GRSG habitat.	B-VG-8: PHMA: Make re-establishment of sagebrush cover and desirable understory plants (relative to ecological site potential) the highest priority for restoration efforts. GHMA: —.	C-VG-8: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-VG-8: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-9: —.	B-VG-9: PHMA: In fire prone areas where sagebrush seed is required for GRSG habitat restoration, consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed production (Armstrong 2007) and are a priority for protection from outside disturbances.	C-VG-9: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-VG-9: PHMA: In fire prone areas where sagebrush seed is required for GRSG habitat restoration, consider establishing seed harvest areas that are managed for seed production (Armstrong 2007).	E-VG-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-9: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: —.		
A-VG-10: —.	B-VG-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-10: PHMA: Active restoration practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of livestock water troughs, pipelines, and wells. • Where possible, without further damage to springs/water sources, remove waterline piping and maximize water at spring/stream sources supporting diverse riparian and meadow vegetation. • Promote natural healing of headcuts to the maximum extent possible by limiting disturbance throughout the watershed. At times, a combination of methods may need to be used – but gabions and structural devices and boulder dumping should be limited, and restoration should strive for a functioning system. • Ripping/recontouring of roads and seeding with native local ecotypes of shrubs and grasses. 	D-VG-10: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-10: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-11: —.	B-VG-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-11: PHMA: Active restoration of crested wheatgrass seedlings. This can be accomplished, following targeted restoration planning to expand, reconnect or recover habitats required by GRSG by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-seeding sagebrush seed or seedlings. • Removal of crested wheatgrass through plowing while minimizing use of herbicides. Subsequent re-seeding with local native ecotypes. • Active restoration of cheatgrass infestation areas. • In all cases, local native plant ecotype seeds and seedlings must be used. 	D-VG-11: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-11: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: Limit or ameliorate impacts through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section. Engage in reclamation efforts as projects advance or are completed. Recognize that stipulations for other species (e.g., raptors) may impede the ability to effectively reclaim disturbed areas, and remove those barriers in order to achieve immediate and effective reclamation, if otherwise allowable by law. Prioritize areas for habitat improvement to make best use of mitigation funds.	F-VG-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-VG-12: —.	B-VG-12: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-12: PHMA: —.	D-VG-12: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-12: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-12: PHMA Habitat: Avoid sagebrush reduction/treatments to increase livestock or big game forage in PHMA and include plans to restore high-quality habitat in areas with invasive species. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-13: —.	B-VG-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-13: PHMA: —.	D-VG-13: PHMA: Utilize cooperative planning efforts to develop and implement habitat restoration projects. Expertise and ideas from local landowners, working groups, and other federal, state, county, and private organizations should be solicited and considered in development of projects. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-VG-13: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-14: —.	B-VG-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-14: PHMA: —.	D-VG-14: PHMA: Consider design features that will contribute to the most favorable conditions for success when planning and implementing rehabilitation projects. Considerations should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful review of available plant species and their adaptation to the site when developing seed mixes. (Lambert 2005; VegSpec). The impacts of potential climate changes (Miller et al. 2011), consider utilizing the warmer component of a species' current range when selecting native species for restoration (Kramer and Havens 2009). The need to reduce annual grass densities and competition through herbicide, targeted grazing, tillage, prescribed fire, etc. (Pyke 2011). The need to reduce density and 	E-VG-14: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>competition of perennial grasses and techniques to accomplish this reduction (Pellant and Lysne 2005).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Techniques to introduce desired species to the site such as drill seeding, broadcast seeding followed by a seed coverage technique, such as harrowing, chaining or livestock trampling, and transplanting container or bare-root seedlings • Assessment of on-site vegetation to ascertain if enough desirable perennial vegetation exists to consider techniques to increase on-site seed production to facilitate an increase in density of desired species. • Use of site preparation techniques that retain existing desirable vegetation. • Use of "mother plant" techniques or planting of satellite populations of desirable plants to serve as seed sources. • The need for post-treatment control of annual grass and other invasive species. The availability of new tools and use of new science and research as it becomes available. <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		
<p>A-VG-15: Recently completed LUPs promote use of native species when conducting restoration activities. This would include restoration projects conducted in areas that have perennial grass cover.</p> <p>Older plans do not include a similar management action.</p>	<p>B-VG-15: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-15: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-VG-15: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-15: Idaho – CHZ: Emphasize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-15: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-VG-16: —.	B-VG-16: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-16: PHMA: —.	D-VG-16: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	Utah Habitat: —. E-VG-16: Idaho – CHZ: Reallocate native plant seeds for ESR from outside the Sage-Grouse Management Area and GHZ to this management zone if necessary. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-16: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-17: —.	B-VG-17: PHMA: Prioritize native seed allocation for use in GRSG habitat in years when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation of native seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects outside of PHMA to those inside it. Use of native plant seeds for ESR or BAER seedings is required based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment of appropriate sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory plants, relative to site potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation efforts. GHMA: —.	C-VG-17: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-VG-17: PHMA: Prioritize native seed allocation for use in GRSG habitat in years when preferred native seed is in short supply. This may require reallocation of native seed from ESR (BLM) and/or BAER (Forest Service) projects outside of PHMA to those inside it. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives (Pyke 2011). Re-establishment of appropriate sagebrush species/subspecies and important understory plants, relative to site potential, shall be the highest priority for rehabilitation efforts. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-VG-17: Idaho – CHZ: Where the probability of obtaining sufficient native seed is low, nonnative seeds may be used provided GRSG habitat objectives are met. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-17: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-18: All LUPs, which are written in accordance with applicable program direction, include management actions that allow the administrating agency to make adjustments to livestock grazing, wild horse and burro management, and travel management on a case-by case basis following restoration activities.	B-VG-18: PHMA: Design post ESR and BAER management to ensure long term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing, wild horse and burro, and travel management, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of ESR and BAER projects to benefit GRSG (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler	C-VG-18: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-VG-18: PHMA: Design post fuel, restoration, and ESR management to ensure long term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. Use chemical, mechanical, and seeding treatments with appropriate plant materials to attempt to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive, annual vegetation, and noxious weeds. Use native plant materials were determined	E-VG-18: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-18: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	2006). GHMA: —.		to be appropriate and practical at the project-implementation level. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing, wild horse and burro, and travel management, fuels and rehabilitation, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of ESR projects to benefit GRSG (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006). IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.		
A-VG-19: —.	B-VG-19: PHMA: Consider potential changes in climate (Miller et al. 2011) when proposing post-fire seedings using native plants. Consider seed collections from the warmer component within a species' current range for selection of native seed. (Kramer and Havens 2009). GHMA: —.	C-VG-19: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-VG-19: PHMA: Consider utilizing the warmer component of a species' current range where feasible (financially, seed availability, etc.) when selecting native species for restoration and when such a strategy would not jeopardize the success of the seeding. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-VG-19: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-19: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-20: —.	B-VG-20: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-20: PHMA: —.	D-VG-20: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-20: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-20: PHMA: Establish and strengthen networks with seed growers to assure availability of native seed for ESR projects. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-21: All LUPs, which are written in accordance with applicable program direction, include management actions that allow the administrating agency to make adjustments to livestock grazing, wild horse and burro management, and travel management on a case-by case basis following restoration activities.	B-VG-21: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-21: PHMA: —.	D-VG-21: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-21: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-21: PHMA: Post fire recovery must include establishing adequately sized exclosures (free of livestock grazing) that can be used to assess recovery. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>A-VG-22: All LUPs, which are written in accordance with applicable program direction, include management actions that allow the administrating agency to make adjustments to livestock grazing, wild horse and burro management, and travel management on a case-by case basis following restoration activities.</p>	<p>B-VG-22: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-22: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-VG-22: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-22: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-22: PHMA: Livestock grazing should be excluded from burned areas until woody and herbaceous plants achieve GRSG habitat objectives.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-23: All LUPs, which are written in accordance with applicable program direction, include management actions that allow the administrating agency to make adjustments to livestock grazing, wild horse and burro management, and travel management on a case-by case basis following restoration activities.</p>	<p>B-VG-23: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-23: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-VG-23: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-23: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-23: PHMA: Where burned GRSG habitat cannot be fenced from other unburned habitat, the entire area (e.g., allotment/pasture) should be closed to grazing until recovered.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-24: Most LUPs do not include specific management actions related to seedings.</p> <p>Plans do include generic decisions that allow maintenance of existing range improvements, which includes maintenance of historical seedings.</p> <p>Recently completed LUPs promote use of native species when conducting restoration activities. This would include restoration projects conducted in areas that have perennial grass cover.</p> <p>Older plans do not include a similar management action.</p>	<p>B-VG-24: PHMA: Evaluate the role of existing seedings that are currently composed of primarily introduced perennial grasses in and adjacent to PHMA to determine if they should be restored to sagebrush or habitat of higher quality for GRSG. If these seedings are part of an AMP/Conservation Plan or if they provide value in conserving or enhancing the rest of PHMA, then no restoration would be necessary. Assess the compatibility of these seedings for GRSG habitat or as a component of a grazing system during the land health assessments (or other analyses [Forest Service only]) (Davies et al. 2011).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-24: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-VG-24: PHMA: Assess the compatibility of existing nonnative seedings for GRSG habitat or as a component of a grazing system or forage reserve during land health assessments (Davies et al. 2011). Evaluate existing seedings currently dominated by introduced perennial grasses in and adjacent to PHMA to determine if they should be diversified with native grasses, forbs, and shrubs, including sagebrush. If these seedings are part of an AMP/Conservation Plan and if they provide value in conserving or enhancing the rest of PHMA, restoration may not be appropriate.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-VG-24: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-24: PHMA: Evaluate the role of existing seedings that are currently composed of primarily introduced perennial grasses in and adjacent to PHMA to determine if they should be restored to sagebrush or habitat of higher quality for GRSG. If these seedings are part of an AMP/Conservation Plan or if they provide value in conserving or enhancing the rest of PHMA, then no restoration would be necessary. Assess the compatibility of these seedings for GRSG habitat or as a component of a grazing system during the land health assessments (Davies et al. 2011).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-VG-25: —.</p>	<p>B-VG-25: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-VG-25: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-VG-25: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-VG-25: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-VG-25: PHMA: Any vegetation treatment plan must include pretreatment data on wildlife and habitat condition, establish non-grazing exclosures, and include long-term monitoring where treated areas are monitored for at least three years before grazing returns. Continue</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
					monitoring for five years after livestock are returned to the area, and compare to treated, ungrazed exclosures, as well as untreated areas. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-26: Many older LUPs include specific objectives for vegetation treatments that increased desirable forage species for livestock, usually focusing on reducing the sagebrush overstory. More recent LUPs generally prescribe management that moves rangeland communities toward historical vegetative conditions.	B-VG-26: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-26: PHMA: —.	D-VG-26: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-26: Idaho – CHZ: Initiate vegetative manipulation projects where sagebrush canopy cover exceeds optimal characteristics to promote grass and forb understory growth only where the project can be achieved without negatively impacting GRSG. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-26: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-27: All LUPs address vegetation treatments for improvement of wildlife habitat overall or to provide increased forage for wildlife, livestock, and wild horses and burros.	B-VG-27: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-27: PHMA: —.	D-VG-27: PHMA: Implement rehabilitation projects in areas that have the potential to provide for GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-VG-27: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-27: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-28: —.	B-VG-28: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-28: PHMA: —.	D-VG-28: PHMA: Make progress toward desired future condition in the Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass, Mid-Elevation Shrub, Mountain Shrubs, and Juniper vegetation types. Use chemical, mechanical, seeding, and prescribed fire treatments as appropriate to enhance and restore habitats that are currently in Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 2 and FRCC3. In Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass, and juniper-invaded cover types, restore sagebrush steppe with an aggressive sagebrush seeding effort, using the appropriate	E-VG-28: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-28: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>sagebrush subspecies for the treatment area. Conduct vegetation treatments in areas that pose a wildland fire risk to GRSG habitats. Treat areas within GRSG habitats that have low resiliency to disturbance (i.e., areas characterized by lower native plant species diversity than expected for the site, undesirable plant species composition, and dead or decadent sagebrush) to improve long-term habitat suitability for GRSG. Treat GRSG habitat and potential restoration areas to expand PHMA. Improve GRSG potential restoration habitats (perennial grassland, annual grassland, conifer encroachment areas) and maintain or improve sagebrush portions of PHMA. Conduct vegetation treatments (including fuel breaks) in restoration and key habitats to reduce risk of wildland fire and reconnect PHMA. Make progress toward Desired Future Condition in historically frequent fire regimes (Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer, Mid-Elevation Shrub encroached by juniper, Mountain Shrub by increasing wildfire managed for LUP objectives and prescribed fire to create a fire regime within the historical range of variability. Use mechanical and chemical treatments to prepare areas in FRCC2 and FRCC3 for prescribed fire. Monitor and control invasive vegetation post-treatment. Rest treated areas from grazing or modify grazing until vegetation objectives have been met. Ensure that any proposed sagebrush treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding seasonal habitats and landscape. Monitor and if necessary control invasive vegetation post-treatment.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			GHMA: Same as PHMA.		
A-VG-29: Allow treatments that provide benefits for multiple resources. Additional forage will be appropriated to livestock, wild horses and burros (where applicable), and wildlife.	B-VG-29: PHMA: Only allow treatments that conserve, enhance or restore GRSG habitat (this includes treatments that benefit livestock as part of an AMP/Conservation Plan to improve GRSG habitat). GHMA: —.	C-VG-29: PHMA: —.	D-VG-29: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-29: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-29: PHMA: Ensure that vegetation treatments Restore native (or desirable) plants and create landscape patterns which most benefit GRSG. Only allow treatments that conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat are demonstrated to benefit GRSG and retain sagebrush height and cover consistent with GRSG habitat objectives (this includes treatments that benefit livestock as part of an AMP/Conservation Plan to improve GRSG habitat). GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-VG-30: —.	B-VG-30: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-VG-30: PHMA: —.	D-VG-30: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-VG-30: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: The State will establish a mitigation bank of GRSG habitation restoration projects that future development projects would repay through compensatory mitigation requirements. Utah Habitat: —.	F-VG-30: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Integrated Invasive Species					
A-IIS-1: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners. In most LUPs, either no priorities are established or prioritization is given to projects that benefit multiple resources (e.g., livestock, wildlife, wild horses and burros, special status species). Montana BLM: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control, using integrated weed management, in	B-IIS-1: PHMA: Integrated Vegetation Management would be used to control, suppress, and eradicate, where possible, noxious and invasive species per BLM Handbook H-1740-2. GHMA: —.	C-IIS-1: PHMA: —.	D-IIS-1: PHMA: Implement integrated weed management actions for noxious and invasive weed populations that are impacting or threatening GRSG habitat quality. In concert with partners and/or weed management areas as appropriate apply education, inventory, prevention, control, rehabilitation, and monitoring strategies that protect or enhance GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-IIS-1: Idaho – CHZ: Actively manage exotic undesirable species sufficiently to limit presence and prevent invasion. Idaho – IHZ: Actively manage exotic undesirable species to limit presence and prevent invasion in CHZ without impairing GRSG populations. Idaho – GHZ: Aggressively manage exotic undesirable species in conjunction with coordinated weed management areas to limit presence and prevent invasion into other management zones.	F-IIS-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
cooperation with state and federal agencies, counties, and private landowners (ROD, p. 49, Action 11). Emphasize control of invasive weeds in occupied GRSG breeding habitat				<p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Aggressively respond to new infestations to keeping invasive species from spreading. Every effort should be made to identify and treat new infestations before they become larger problems. Containment of known infestations in or near sagebrush habitats should be a high priority for all land management agencies.</p>	
A-IIS-2: —.	B-IIS-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-IIS-2: PHMA: —.	D-IIS-2: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	<p>E-IIS-2: Idaho – CHZ: Control invasive vegetation within post-wildfire treatment areas for at least three years post treatment.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Immediate, proactive means to reduce or eliminate the spread of invasive species, particularly cheatgrass, after a wildfire, is a high priority.</p>	F-IIS-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-IIS-3: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.	B-IIS-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-IIS-3: PHMA: —.	D-IIS-3: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	<p>E-IIS-3: Idaho – CHZ: —.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Eradicate or control noxious weeds and/or invasive species posing a risk to GRSG habitats using a variety of chemical, mechanical and other appropriate means in coordination with the local Cooperative Weed Management Area.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Same as IHZ.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	F-IIS-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-IIS-4: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.	B-IIS-4: PHMA: Monitor for, and treat invasive species associated with existing range improvements (Gelbard and Belnap 2003; Bergquist et al. 2007). GHMA: —.	C-IIS-4: PHMA: —.	D-IIS-4: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-IIS-4: Idaho – CHZ: Treat and monitor invasive species associated with existing range improvements. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-IIS-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-IIS-5: —.	B-IIS-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-IIS-5: PHMA: —.	D-IIS-5: PHMA: Following project construction treat noxious weeds and invasive species, establish desirable perennial vegetation to compete with invasive species on disturbed areas, and monitor and continue treating the project area for noxious weed and invasive species for at least 3 years, unless control is achieved earlier. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-IIS-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-IIS-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Wild Horse and Burro					
A-WHB-1: Prepare or amend herd management area plans on an as-needed basis.	B-WHB-1: PHMA: Develop or amend BLM Herd Management Area Plans and Forest Service Wild Horse Territory Plans to incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations for all BLM HMAs) and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories. GHMA: —.	C-WHB-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A.	D-WHB-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WHB-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.	F-WHB-1: PHMA: Reduce AMLs within HMAs within occupied GRSG habitat by 25 percent to meet habitat objectives. GHMA: Same as PHMA RHMA: —.
A-WHB-2: Periodically evaluate and make adjustments to AMLs based on monitoring data.	B-WHB-2: PHMA: For all BLM HMAs and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories within PHMA, prioritize the evaluation of all AMLs based on indicators that address structure/condition/composition of vegetation and measurements specific to achieving GRSG habitat objectives. GHMA: —.	C-WHB-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative A.	D-WHB-2: PHMA: When evaluating AML on HMAs within PHMA, evaluate indicators that address structure/condition/composition of vegetation and measurements specific to achieving GRSG habitat objectives. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WHB-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.	F-WHB-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-WHB-3: —.	B-WHB-3: PHMA: Coordinate with other resources (Range, Wildlife, and Riparian) to conduct land health assessments to determine existing structure/condition/composition of vegetation within all BLM HMAs and Forest Service Wild Horse Territories. GHMA: —.	C-WHB-3: PHMA: Same as Alternative A.	D-WHB-3: PHMA: Utilize interdisciplinary land health assessments in HMAs containing GRSG habitat to determine whether vegetation characteristics are meeting appropriate seasonal habitat objectives. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WHB-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WHB-3: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WHB-4: —.	B-WHB-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WHB-4: PHMA: —.	D-WHB-4: PHMA: Do not expand HMAs. IHMA: Analysis of proposed additions to existing HMA boundaries should consider the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on GRSG habitat, including the need for additional infrastructure such as boundary fencing, and consider alternative areas outside of PHMA and IHMA. GHMA: —.	E-WHB-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WHB-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WHB-5: —.	B-WHB-5: PHMA: When conducting NEPA analysis for wild horse and burro management activities, water developments or other rangeland improvements for wild horses in PHMA, address the direct and indirect effects on GRSG populations and habitat. Implement any water developments or rangeland improvements using the criteria identified for domestic livestock identified above in PHMA. GHMA: —.	C-WHB-5: PHMA: —.	D-WHB-5: PHMA: Refer to livestock grazing actions for guidance on water and rangeland developments for wild horse management. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WHB-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WHB-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Wildland Fire					
General					
A-WFM-1: Follow BMPs for fire and fuels (BLM Washington Office IM 2013-128, see Appendix B).	B-WFM-1: PHMA: Follow RDFs for fire and fuels (BLM Washington Office IM 2013-128 and Forest Service Washington Office letter 5100, see Appendix B).	C-WFM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-WFM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. IHMA: BMPs in PHMA would apply to both IHMA and GHMA.	E-WFM-1: Idaho – CHZ: Reduce the number and size of wildfires in GRSG habitat through incorporation of the BLM Washington Office IM 2013-128.	F-WFM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		GHMA: BMPs in PHMA would apply to both IHMA and GHMA.	Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Utah Habitat: —.	RHMA: —.
A-WFM-2: —.	B-WFM-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-2: PHMA: Lands will be managed to be in good or better ecological condition to help minimize adverse impacts of fire.	D-WFM-2: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-WFM-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WFM-3: —.	B-WFM-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-3: PHMA: —..	D-WFM-3: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-WFM-3: Idaho – CHZ: Decrease wildfire response time through: a. Prioritizing, maintaining and improving a high initial attack success rate in suppression response and staging decisions; b. Utilizing available Sage-Grouse Management Area maps and spatial data depicting GRSG habitats within this zone in accordance with action 31 (Appendix Q); c. Redeploying firefighting resources not being fully utilized outside the SGMA to the extent such redeployment will not cause harm to human safety and structure protection; and d. Requesting the necessary federal appropriations to achieve this objective. Develop a consistent wildfire suppression plan that improves upon the current baseline, and a fuel and restoration strategy within 1 year of the ROD. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho- CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-WFM-4: —.	B-WFM-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-4: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-4: PHMA: Use knowledgeable resource advisors during extended attack. Resource Advisors should also be available on short notice during red flag conditions. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WFM-4: Idaho Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WFM-5: —.	B-WFM-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-5: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-5: PHMA: During high fire danger conditions, stage initial attack and secure additional resources closer to the Idaho Desert, Southern Idaho, and Owyhee populations to ensure quicker response times in or near GRSG habitat. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-WFM-5: Idaho -- Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WFM-6: —.	B-WFM-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-6: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-6: PHMA: —. IHMA: Follow Standard procedures described in Fire Management Plan. GHMA: —.	E-WFM-6: Idaho -- Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WFM-7: —.	B-WFM-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-7: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-7: PHMA: Consider conifer (juniper) encroachment areas as areas to manage wildfire for resource benefit. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-WFM-7: Idaho -- Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-WFM-8: —.	B-WFM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-8: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-8: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-WFM-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Reduce the number and size of wildfires, especially in the West Owyhee CA, by marshaling existing and targeting future federal resources. Idaho – CHZ: Utilize and employ more aggressive wildfire and invasive species management practices to prevent further encroachment of these two primary threats into CHZ on Federal lands.	F-WFM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Create and implement a statewide fire agency agreement(s) that will eliminate jurisdictional boundaries and allow for immediate response to natural fire in PHMA. These should include fire suppression actions recommended locally, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first strike agreements that allow aggressive fire control on an all-land jurisdictional basis; • allocation of resources to maintain enhanced abilities of all fire agencies to combat ignitions in PHMA. • allocation of resources to immediately commence restoration of habitats impacted by wildfire by all responsible agencies; and • removal or establishment of waiver provisions for procedural barriers that may impact the ability of responsible agencies to respond to wildfire with effective reclamation or rehabilitation, such as federal raptor stipulations, cultural assessments, and the like. 	
A-WFM-9: —.	B-WFM-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-9: PHMA: —.	D-WFM-9: PHMA: BLM and Forest Service planning units (Districts and Forests), in coordination with the USFWS and relevant state agencies, would complete and continue to update GRSG Landscape Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments to prioritize at risk habitats, and identify fuels management, preparedness, suppression and restoration priorities necessary to maintain sagebrush habitat	E-WFM-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-WFM-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>to support interconnecting GRSG populations. These assessments and subsequent assessment updates would also be a coordinated effort with an interdisciplinary team to take into account other GRSG priorities identified in this plan. Appendix D describes a minimal framework example and suggested approach for this assessment.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		
A-WFM-10: —.	B-WFM-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-10: PHMA: —.	<p>D-WFM-10: PHMA: Implementation actions will be tiered to the Local (District/Forest) GRSG Landscape Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessment described in D-WFM-1, utilizing best available science related to the conservation of GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-WFM-10: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-WFM-10: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-WFM-11: —.	B-WFM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-11: PHMA: —.	<p>D-WFM-11: PHMA: In coordination with the USFWS and relevant state agencies, BLM and Forest Service planning units (Districts/Forests) will identify annual treatment needs for wildfire and invasive species management as identified in local unit level Landscape Wildfire and Invasive Species Assessments. Annual treatment needs will be coordinated across state/regional scales and across jurisdictional boundaries for long-term conservation of GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-WFM-11: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-WFM-11: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-WFM-12: —.	A-WFM-12: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-WFM-12: PHMA: —.	<p>D-WFM-12: PHMA: Annually complete a review of landscape assessment implementation efforts with</p>	<p>E-WFM-12: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p>	<p>F-WFM-12: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			appropriate USFWS and state agency personnel. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	Utah Habitat: —.	RHMA: —.
Fuels Management					
<p>A-FM-1: Under current management, there is no designated GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Design projects to minimize the size of wildfire and prevent the further loss of sagebrush.</p> <p>Existing LUPs typically do not include specific management decisions regarding implementation of fuels treatments in sagebrush habitat. In general, both prescribed fire and non-fire fuels treatments are allowed.</p> <p>Montana BLM: Restore and maintain desired ecological conditions and fuel loadings. Evaluate benefits against loss of sagebrush in EA process. Do not burn Wyoming sagebrush.</p>	<p>B-FM-1: PHMA: Design and implement fuels treatments with an emphasis on protecting existing sagebrush ecosystems. Do not reduce sagebrush canopy cover to less than 15% (Connelly et al. 2000, Hagen et al. 2007) unless a fuels management objective requires additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of PHMA and conserve habitat quality for the species. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel break against the additional loss of sagebrush cover in future NEPA documents. Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present in PHMA. Allow no fuels treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around or in the winter range and will maintain winter range habitat quality. Do not use fire to treat sagebrush in less than 12-inch precipitation zones (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species; Connelly et al. 2000, Hagen et al. 2007, Beck et al. 2009). However, if as a last resort and after all other treatment opportunities have been explored and site specific variables allow, the use of prescribed fire for fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape could be considered, in stands where cheatgrass is a very minor component</p>	<p>C-FM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-FM-1: PHMA: Design and implement fuels treatments with an emphasis on maintaining, protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems and successfully rehabilitated areas and strategically and effectively reduce wildfire threats in the greatest area. Enhance (or maintain/retain) sagebrush canopy cover and community structure to match expected potential for the ecological site and consistent with GRSG habitat objectives unless fuels management objectives requires additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG habitat. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel management treatments against the additional loss of sagebrush cover on the local landscape in the NEPA process. Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present in PHMA. Allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and will maintain, increase, or enhance winter range habitat quality. Ensure chemical applications are utilized where they would assist in success of fuels treatments. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to prevent fire from spreading into PHMA or WUI.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-1: Idaho – CHZ: Implementation of specific, more aggressive wildlife and invasive species management practices to prevent further encroachment into CHZ should be driven by local planning efforts at the field office and ranger district level.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Habitat loss due to fire and replacement of (burned) native vegetation by invasive plants is the single greatest threat to GRSG in Utah. While unscheduled fires may occur, response to fire can have a large impact on the severity of the effects, especially over time as rehabilitation or restoration continues. Implement the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement a statewide fire agency agreement(s) that will eliminate jurisdictional boundaries and allow for immediate response to natural fire in PHMA. • Allow use of fire-retardant vegetation that will buffer areas of high quality GRSG habitat from catastrophic fire. • Use prescriptive fire with caution in sagebrush habitat. The WAFWA has prepared 	<p>F-FM-1: PHMA: Design and implement fuels treatments with an emphasis on protecting existing sagebrush ecosystems. Do not reduce sagebrush canopy cover to less than 15% (Connelly et al. 2000, Hagen et al. 2007) unless a fuels management objective requires additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of PHMA and conserve habitat quality for the species. Closely evaluate the benefits of the fuel break against the additional loss of sagebrush cover in the EA process. Apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present in PHMA. Allow no fuels treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around or in the winter range and will maintain winter range habitat quality. Do not use fire to treat sagebrush in less than 12-inch precipitation zones (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species; Connelly et al. 2000, Hagen et al. 2007, Beck et al. 2009). However, if as a last resort and after all other treatment opportunities have been explored and site specific variables allow, the use of prescribed fire for fuel breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape could be considered, in stands where cheatgrass is a very minor component</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	<p>in the understory (Brown 1982). Monitor and control invasive vegetation post-treatment. Rest treated areas from grazing for two full growing seasons unless vegetation recovery dictates otherwise (WGFD 2011). Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke 2011). Design post fuels management projects to ensure long term persistence of seeded or pre-treatment native plants. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing management, wild horse and burro management, travel management, or other activities to achieve and maintain the desired condition of the fuels management project (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>		<p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>information that explains the risks from using prescribed fire in xeric sagebrush habitats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribed fire should only be used at higher elevations and in a manner designed prescriptively to benefit GRSG. • Conduct effective research into controlling fire size and protecting remaining GRSG areas that are adjacent to high-risk cheatgrass areas. • Focus research efforts on effective reclamation and restoration of landscapes altered by wildfire. • Within winter habitat, manage to maintain maximum amount of sagebrush, especially tall sagebrush, which would be available to GRSG above snow during a severe winter. Tall sagebrush is capable of standing above heavier than normal snowfall. • Sagebrush treatment projects within winter habitat need pre-approval by the appropriate regulatory agency in coordination with the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources. Sagebrush treatment projects within winter habitat should maintain 80% of the available habitat as tall sagebrush; 20% of the habitat can be managed for younger age classes, if appropriate. • Coordinate the needs and efforts related to GRSG with the State of Utah committee that was formed to develop a collaborative process to protect the health and welfare by reducing the size and frequency of catastrophic fires. 	<p>in the understory (Brown 1982). Monitor and control invasive vegetation post-treatment. Rest treated areas from grazing for two full growing seasons unless vegetation recovery dictates otherwise (WGFD 2011). Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used as long as they meet GRSG habitat objectives (Pyke 2011). Design post fuels management projects to ensure long term persistence of seeded or pre-treatment native plants, including sagebrush. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing management, wild horse and burro management, travel management, or other activities to achieve and maintain the desired condition of the fuels management project (Eiswerth and Shonkwiler 2006).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-FM-2: Design projects to minimize	B-FM-2: PHMA: Design fuels	C-FM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative	D-FM-2: PHMA: —.	E-FM-2: Idaho – CHZ: Fuel break	F-FM-2: PHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
the size of wildfire and prevent the further loss of sagebrush.	management projects in PHMA to strategically and effectively reduce wildfire threats in the greatest area. This may require fuels treatments implemented in a more linear versus block design (Launchbaugh et al. 2007). GHMA: —.	B.	IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	prioritization should be in areas within the WUI where human life and safety are at risk. Fuel break projects should be designed to secure the WUI and free up firefighting resources to be focused on providing initial attack on wildfires in areas that have the potential to impact GRSG within CHZ and IHZ. Prioritization of fuel breaks should then go to areas of high human ignition. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-3: —.	B-FM-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-3: PHMA: —.	D-FM-3: PHMA: —. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-FM-3: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: Create and maintain effective fuel breaks in strategic locations that will modify fire behavior and increase fire suppression effectiveness through: a. Establishing fuel breaks along existing roads or other disturbances. b. Identifying and targeting higher-risk roads for fuel break construction and maintenance based on fire history maps. c. Implementing a strategic approach to using these roads for rapid fire response. d. Closely evaluating the benefits of the fuel break against the additional loss of sagebrush cover and risk of invasive weeds. e. Maintaining fire breaks properly. Idaho – GHZ: Create and maintain effective fuel breaks in strategic locations that will modify fire behavior and increase fire suppression effectiveness through targeting areas necessary to provide a buffer between	F-FM-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>GHZ and the other management zones: a. Establishing fuel breaks along existing roads or other disturbances. b. Identifying and targeting higher-risk roads for fuel break construction and maintenance based on fire history maps. c. Implementing a strategic approach for using these roads to enable rapid fire response. d. Maintaining fuel breaks properly and siting with consideration of active leks and risk of invasive weeds.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
A-FM-4: —.	B-FM-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-4: PHMA: —.	D-FM-4: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-FM-4: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: Coordinate with Federal, State and local jurisdictions on fire and litter prevention programs to reduce human caused ignitions. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-FM-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-5: Design fuels treatment projects to minimize the size of wildfire and prevent the further loss of sagebrush.	B-FM-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-5: PHMA: Mowing of grass will be used in any fuel break fuels reduction project (roadsides or other areas).	D-FM-5: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-FM-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-FM-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-6: —.	B-FM-6: PHMA: During fuels management project design, consider the utility of using livestock to strategically reduce fine fuels (Diamond et al. 2009), and implement grazing management that will accomplish this objective (Davies et al. 2011, Launchbaugh et al. 2007). Consult with ecologists to minimize impacts on native perennial grasses. GHMA: —.	C-FM-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-FM-6: PHMA: Grazing to achieve fuels management objectives should conform to the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grazing management should be implemented strategically on the landscape, and directly involve the minimum footprint and grazing intensity required to meet fuels management objectives. • Conform to the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in areas where the Standards apply. • Coordinate with the permittee to 	E-FM-6: Idaho – CHZ: Prescribe or target livestock grazing where demonstrated to be appropriate as a tool for reducing fuel loads, reducing invasive species populations and maintaining functional fire breaks and testing the effectiveness and monitoring the results on a site-specific basis through stewardship contracting. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: Prescribe or target livestock grazing as a primary tool for reducing fuel loads, reducing invasive	F-FM-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>coordinate fuels reduction by livestock within the Mandatory Terms and Conditions of the applicable grazing authorizations. However, in some cases targeted grazing may be authorized or contracted to a non-permit holder to achieve desired fuels reduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the appropriate kind and number of animals at the appropriate season, considering vegetation palatability and livestock preferences, to reduce targeted fuels types. <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>species populations and maintaining functional fire breaks to the extent such activities do not adversely affect breeding habitats (i.e., occupied leks, nesting and early brood-rearing).</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Consider the use of prescriptive grazing to specifically reduce fire size and intensity on all types of landownership, where appropriate. This could be particularly effective in areas where cheatgrass is encroaching on sagebrush habitat. This will require cooperation and coordination among different land managers and owners and livestock owners. In some cases feed supplementation and water hauling may need to be utilized to obtain the desired results.</p>	
A-FM-7: —.	B-FM-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-7: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-7: PHMA: Existing and proposed linear ROWs could be considered for use and maintenance as vegetated fuel breaks in appropriate areas to meet fire management goals and objectives.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.</p>	F-FM-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-8: —.	B-FM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-8: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-8: PHMA: Where appropriate fuel breaks would incorporate existing vegetation treatments (seedings) or be located adjacent to existing linear disturbance areas. Fuel breaks should be placed in areas with the greatest likelihood of intersecting a fire and protecting existing intact habitat.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.</p>	F-FM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-9: —.	B-FM-9: PHMA: —.	C-FM-9: PHMA: —.	D-FM-9: PHMA: Strategically pre-treat areas to reduce fine fuels through	E-FM-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.	F-FM-9: PHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		mechanical treatments, grazing strategies, chemical or biological application (brown stripping). IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	Utah Habitat: —.	GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-10: —.	B-FM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-10: PHMA: —.	D-FM-10: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-FM-10: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: Develop more aggressive strategies to reduce fuel loads, where appropriate. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-FM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-FM-11: —.	B-FM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-FM-11: PHMA: Any fuels treatments will focus on interfaces with human habitation or significant existing disturbances.	D-FM-11: PHMA: Fuel treatments will be designed through an interdisciplinary process to expand, enhance, maintain, and protect GRSG habitat. Use green strips and/or fuel breaks, where appropriate, to protect seeding efforts from subsequent fire events. In coordination with the USFWS and relevant state agencies, BLM and Forest Service planning units (Districts/Forests) with large blocks of GRSG habitat will develop, using the assessment process described in Appendix D , a fuels management strategy which considers an up-to-date fuels profile, land use plan direction, current and potential habitat fragmentation, sagebrush and GRSG ecological factors, and active vegetation management steps to provide critical breaks in fuel continuity, where appropriate. When developing this strategy, planning units will consider the risk of increased habitat fragmentation from a proposed action versus the risk of large scale fragmentation posed by wildfires if the action is not taken.	E-FM-11: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-FM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		
A-FM-12: —.	<p>B-FM-12: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-FM-12: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-12: PHMA: Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, a full range of fuel reduction techniques will be available. Fuel reduction techniques such as grazing, prescribed fire, chemical, biological and mechanical treatments are acceptable.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-12: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-FM-12: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-FM-13: —.	<p>B-FM-13: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-FM-13: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-13: PHMA: Prioritize the use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, nonnative seeds may be used to meet GRSG habitat objectives to trend toward restoring the fire regime. When reseeding, use fire resistant native and nonnative species, as appropriate, to provide for fuel breaks.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-13: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-FM-13: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-FM-14: —.	<p>B-FM-14: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-FM-14: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-14: PHMA: Upon project completion, monitor and manage fuels projects to ensure long-term success, including persistence of seeded species and/or other treatment components. Control invasive vegetation post-treatment.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-FM-14: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-FM-14: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-FM-15: —.	B-FM-15: PHMA: —.	C-FM-15: PHMA: —.	<p>D-FM-15: PHMA: Apply seasonal restriction, as needed, for implementing</p>	<p>E-FM-15: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p>	<p>F-FM-15: PHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		fuels management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitat present. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	Utah Habitat: —.	GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Preparedness					
A-PRE-1: —.	B-PRE-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-PRE-1: PHMA: —.	D-PRE-1: PHMA: Implement a coordinated inter-agency approach to fire restrictions based upon National Fire Danger Rating System thresholds (fuel conditions, drought conditions and predicted weather patterns) for GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-PRE-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-PRE-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-PRE-2: —.	B-PRE-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-PRE-2: PHMA: —.	D-PRE-2: PHMA: Develop wildfire prevention plans that explain the resource value of GRSG habitat and include fire prevention messages and actions to reduce human-caused ignitions. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-PRE-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-PRE-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Fire Management (Suppression)					
A-SUP-1: Firefighter and public safety are the highest priority. GRSG habitat will be prioritized commensurate with property values and other critical habitat to be protected, with the goal to restore, enhance, and maintain areas suitable for GRSG. Montana BLM: Emphasis on firefighter and public safety. Decisions based on relative values to be protected commensurate with fire management costs.	B-SUP-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	C-SUP-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A.	D-SUP-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-SUP-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A. Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A. Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.	F-SUP-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. GHMA: Same as PHMA. RHMA: Same as PHMA.
A-SUP-2: Montana BLM: Approximately 777,000 acres managed	B-SUP-2: PHMA: —.	C-SUP-2: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-2: PHMA: Within GRSG, PHMAs (and PACs, if so determined)	E-SUP-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.	F-SUP-2: PHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
with considerations to wildlife habitat, air quality and threatened and endangered species.	GHMA: —.		by individual LUP efforts) are the highest priority for conservation and protection during fire operations and fuels management decision making. The PHMAs will be viewed as more valuable than GHMAs when priorities are established. When suppression resources are widely available, maximum efforts will be placed on limiting fire growth in GHMAs polygons as well. These priority areas will be further refined following completion of the GRSG Landscape Wildfire and Invasive Species Habitat Assessments described in Appendix D . IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A. Utah Habitat: —.	GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SUP-3: —.	B-SUP-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SUP-3: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-3: PHMA: Within acceptable risk levels utilize a full range of fire management strategies and tactics, including the management of wildfires to achieve resource objectives, across the range of GRSG habitat consistent with land use plan direction. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-SUP-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SUP-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SUP-4: Prioritize fire suppression to protect firefighter and public safety. Each LUP supports the development and adherence to a more detailed fire management plan that outlines priorities and levels of suppression for particular vegetation classes or resource protection. Montana BLM: Emphasis on firefighter and public safety. Decisions based on relative values to be protected commensurate with fire management costs.	B-SUP-4: PHMA: In PHMA, prioritize suppression, immediately after life and property, to conserve the habitat. GHMA: In GHMA, prioritize suppression where wildfires threaten PHMA.	C-SUP-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-SUP-4: PHMA: Prioritize firefighter and public safety, followed by suppression of fires in PHMA, with consideration given to threatened and endangered species habitat. IHMA: Prioritize suppression of fires in IHMA and threatened and endangered species habitat after PHMA. GHMA: Prioritize suppression of fires in GHMA and threatened and endangered species habitat after PHMA	E-SUP-4: Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize protection of GRSG habitat after human safety and structure protection. Idaho – IHZ: Prioritize protection of GRSG habitat after human safety and structure protection and GRSG habitat in CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: Emphasize aggressive fire suppression techniques and efforts, recognizing that other local, regional, and national fire suppression priorities may take precedence.	F-SUP-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			and IHMA.	Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A. Utah Habitat: Address fire by natural ignition as a serious threat.	
A-SUP-5: —.	B-SUP-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SUP-5: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-5: PHMA: Ensure firefighter personnel receive orientation regarding GRSG/sagebrush management issues as related to wildfire suppression. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-SUP-5: Idaho Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SUP-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SUP-6: No similar action for sub-region. Montana BLM: Approximately 777,000 acres managed with considerations to wildlife habitat, air quality, and threatened and endangered species.	B-SUP-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SUP-6: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-6: PHMA: Suppress wildland fires in intact GRSG habitats and use managed wildfire where needed to improve GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-SUP-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SUP-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SUP-7: —.	B-SUP-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SUP-7: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-7: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SUP-7: Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize funding for fire suppression. Idaho – IHZ: —. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SUP-7: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SUP-8: During suppression, protect GRSG habitats from fire through strategic wildfire suppression planning. Planning measures may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting burnout/backfiring operations in a manner that minimizes the loss of sagebrush when possible • The agency administrator or duty officer will prioritize the assignment of resources for suppression in the event of multiple wildfire starts in PHMA • Retain all unburned sagebrush 	B-SUP-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SUP-8: PHMA: —.	D-SUP-8: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. IHMA: Same as Alternative A. GHMA: Same as Alternative A.	E-SUP-8: Idaho – CHZ: Develop a consistent wildfire suppression plan that improves on the current wildfire suppression baseline within 1 year of the ROD through: a. Ensuring close coordination with federal and state firefighters, local fire departments, and local expertise to create the best possible network of strategic fuel breaks and road access to minimize and reduce the size of a wildfire following ignition b. Developing consistent fire response plans and mutual aid agreements c. Requesting and placing additional	F-SUP-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>islands unless firefighter safety and the success of the suppression operations are compromised</p>				<p>firefighting resources and establish new incident attack centers, with particular emphasis in the West Owyhee CA;</p> <p>d. Creating and maintaining effective fuel breaks in strategic locations that will modify fire behavior and increase fire suppression effectiveness according to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting establishment of fuel breaks along existing roads or other disturbances • Identifying and targeting higher-risk roads for fuel break construction and maintenance based on fire history maps • Implementing a strategic approach to using these roads for rapid fire response • Analyzing the benefits of the fuel break against the additional loss of sagebrush cover and risk on invasive weeds • Maintaining fire breaks to meet objectives <p>e. Requesting the necessary federal appropriations to achieve this objective</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Develop a wildfire suppression plan that improves on the fire suppression baseline through:</p> <p>a. Ensuring close coordination with federal and state firefighters, local fire departments, and local expertise (e.g., livestock grazing permittees and road maintenance personnel) to create the best possible network of strategic fuel breaks and road access to minimize and reduce the size of a wildfire following ignition</p> <p>b. Developing consistent fire response plans and mutual aid agreements</p> <p>c. Requesting the necessary federal appropriations to achieve this objective.</p>	

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**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	
Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR-BLM) and Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER-FS)					
A-ESR-1: —.	B-ESR-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-ESR-1: PHMA: —.	D-ESR-1: PHMA: Incorporate measurable groundcover and vegetation objectives (e.g., density and cover) into ESR/BAER plans. Qualitative objectives, such as plant vigor, seed production, and growing season conditions, should also be considered. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-ESR-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-ESR-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-ESR-2: —.	B-ESR-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-ESR-2: PHMA: —.	D-ESR-2: PHMA: Ensure that appropriate GRSG seasonal habitat objectives are considered in ESR (BLM) and BAER (Forest Service) plans that contain PHMA, IHMA, or GHMA. The primary short-term objective is to establish or recover shrubs, grasses, and forbs appropriate for the ecological site. In seedings, native plant materials is preferred but introduced species may also be required to compete with invasives, especially on harsher sites. The longer-term objective (i.e., 10 years-plus) is to achieve a robust perennial herbaceous understory with at least 10% sagebrush canopy cover that provides functional GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-ESR-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-ESR-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-ESR-3: —.	B-ESR-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-ESR-3: PHMA: —.	D-ESR-3: PHMA: In the short term, ensure an appropriate rest period from livestock grazing to allow natural recovery of existing seedings or the establishment of new seedings that are within PHMA, IHMA, or GHMA.	E-ESR-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-ESR-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		
A-ESR-4: —.	<p>B-ESR-4: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-ESR-4: PHMA: —.	<p>D-ESR-4: PHMA: Once seeded or naturally recovered areas within PHMA, IHMA, or GHMA can be reopened to livestock grazing, incorporate long-term management that will maintain the seeding investment, promote long-term plant community health, and promote the achievement of GRSG habitat objectives.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-ESR-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-ESR-4: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-ESR-5: —.	<p>B-ESR-5: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-ESR-5: PHMA: —.	<p>D-ESR-5: PHMA: Consider adjusting livestock management on adjacent unburned areas to mitigate the effect of the burn on local GRSG populations.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-ESR-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-ESR-5: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Livestock Grazing					
<p>A-LG/RM-1: Continue to make GRSG habitat available for livestock grazing (see Table 2-9). Active AUMs for livestock grazing would remain the same, though the number of AUMs on a permit may be adjusted during site-specific evaluations conducted during term permit renewals, AMP development, or other appropriate implementation activity. Additionally, temporary adjustments can be made annually to livestock numbers, the number of AUMs, season of use, and other aspects of grazing within the terms and conditions of the permit based on the permittees livestock operation and/or an evaluation of a variety of forage and resource site-specific conditions.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-1: PHMA: No grazing will be allowed in occupied GRSG habitat (see Table 2-9). Grazing will remain unchanged in areas outside of occupied GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-1: PHMA: Grazing would be reduced by 25% (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Reductions by allotment will occur by Field Office based on a review of the site-specific information (e.g., range condition, utilization levels, type and condition of GRSG habitat). Based on the Field Office review, the reductions in AUMs would occur in allotments that overlap occupied GRSG habitat, whether partial reductions in active use or closing specific allotments. The reductions would be implemented during renewal of term grazing permits.</p> <p>GHMA: Grazing would be reduced by 25% (see Table 2-9).</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Montana BLM: Continue to manage under current guidance. Consider changes in grazing management on a case-by-case basis. 456,100 acres PPH available for livestock grazing and 212,200 acres PGH available for grazing					RHMA: Same as Alternative A.
A-LG/RM-2: —.	B-LG/RM-2: PHMA: Incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations into all BLM and Forest Service grazing allotments through AMPs or permit renewals and/or Forest Service Annual Operating Instructions. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-2: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-2: PHMA: Within grazing allotments containing GRSG habitat, incorporate grazing management measures designed to meet GRSG habitat objectives through AMPs, grazing permit renewal or permit modification processes. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-LG/RM-2: Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize permit renewal and land health assessment processes for allotments with declining GRSG populations in conjunction with scheduled term grazing permit renewals, or where the adaptive regulatory trigger has been tripped and livestock grazing has been identified as a potential causal factor. Idaho – IHZ: Prioritize permit renewal and land health assessment processes for allotments with declining GRSG populations. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: Same as Alternative B. RHMA: Same as Alternative B.
A-LG/RM-3: Consider adjustments to allotment boundaries that provide for single unit or landscape level grazing approaches to habitat improvement on a case-by-case basis.	B-LG/RM-3: PHMA: Work cooperatively on integrated ranch planning within GRSG habitat so operations with deeded/BLM and/or Forest Service allotments can be planned as single units. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-3: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-3: PHMA: Work cooperatively with other land managers to allow livestock operations that utilize mixed federal, private and/or state land to be managed at the landscape scale to benefit GRSG and their habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-LG/RM-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-3: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-4: Complete rangeland health assessments for each allotment at least once every ten years for consideration during the permit renewal process. Monitor vegetation trends (including composition, cover, and age class),	B-LG/RM-4: PHMA: Prioritize completion of land health assessments (Forest Service may use other analyses) and processing grazing permits within PHMA. Focus this process on allotments that have the best opportunities for conserving, enhancing or restoring habitat for GRSG. Utilize	C-LG/RM-4: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-4: PHMA: PHMA is the highest priority for BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing permits with consideration for threatened and endangered species. Where possible, conduct land health assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.	E-LG/RM-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Complete the allotment assessment process in conjunction with scheduled term grazing permit renewals (i.e., every ten years), giving priority to areas that have the potential to provide the greatest benefit to GRSG.	F-LG/RM-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>noxious weeds, riparian Proper Functioning Condition (PFC), etc. as part of the grazing management program.</p> <p>BLM plans do not contain grazing management decisions specific to conserving GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Forest Service LUPs contain specific management actions for permitted livestock grazing that take in to consideration established habitat management objectives.</p>	<p>BLM Ecological Site Descriptions (Forest Service may use other methods) to conduct land health assessments to determine if standards of range-land health are being met.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>		<p>IHMA: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing permits after PHMA with consideration for threatened and endangered species. Where possible, conduct land health assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.</p> <p>GHMA: Prioritize BLM land health assessments and processing of BLM grazing permits after IHMA, with consideration for threatened and endangered species. Where possible, conduct land health assessments at the watershed, or other meaningful landscape-scale.</p>	<p>Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize and concentrate allocation of resources for assessment and permit renewal on allotments within CHZ that have declining GRSG populations, with secondary priority given to stable or increasing populations within CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Prioritize allotments within IHZ containing breeding habitats that have decreasing lek counts after permits within CHZ. GRSG populations that are stable or trending upward will be a lower priority for permit renewal and the assessment process.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
<p>A-LG/RM-5: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-5: PHMA: Conduct land health assessments that include (at a minimum) indicators and measurements of structure/condition/composition of vegetation specific to achieving GRSG habitat objectives (Doherty et al. 2011a). If local/state seasonal habitat objectives are not available, use GRSG habitat recommendations from Connelly et al. 2000 and Hagen et al. 2007.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-5: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-5: PHMA: During the land health assessment process determine whether vegetation structure, condition and composition are meeting GRSG habitat objectives in sagebrush cover types through implementation of the habitat assessment framework, (Stiver et al. 2010 as amended/replaced) or other BLM or Forest Service approved methodology, in accordance with current policy and guidance.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Utilize a variety of information sources, when available, in the allotment assessment process, including: published characteristics of GRSG habitat; Ecological Site Descriptions; existing vegetation; habitat inventories/assessments (Stiver et al. 2010); and state and transition models that describe vegetation and other physical attributes for GRSG. Include discussion of whether the allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the existing vegetation and/or existing ecological condition (seral state) to provide GRSG habitat (Category 1); or whether the allotment (or any pasture/significant area therein) has the ecological potential to provide GRSG habitat (Category 2). When either of these categories applies, incorporate GRSG habitat management objectives as the desired conditions for the applicable allotment and pasture.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>A-LG/RM-6: Consider range improvements and/or adjust permit terms and conditions on a case-by-case basis as necessary to meet land health standards or habitat objectives identified in individual LUPs. Changes may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Rotation systems (e.g., rest rotation, deferred rotation) 2) Season or timing of use 3) Distribution of livestock use 5) Type of livestock 6) Class of livestock 7) Duration of grazing use and rest periods 	<p>B-LG/RM-6: PHMA: Implement management actions (grazing decisions, Annual Operating Instructions [Forest Service only], AMP/Conservation Plan development, or other agreements) to modify grazing management to meet seasonal GRSG habitat requirements (Connelly et al. 2011). Consider singly, or in combination, changes in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Season or timing of use; 2) Numbers of livestock (includes temporary non-use or livestock removal); 3) Distribution of livestock use; 4) Intensity of use; and 5) Type of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, llamas, alpacas and goats) (Briske et al. 2011). <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-6: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-6: PHMA: When livestock management practices determined to not be compatible with meeting or making progress towards habitat objectives, implement changes in grazing management through grazing authorization modifications, or AMP implementation. Potential considerations include, but are not limited to, changes in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Season or timing of use; 2) Numbers of livestock; 3) Distribution of livestock use; 4) Duration and/or level of use; 5) Kind of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horses, or goats) (Briske et al. 2011); 6) Voluntary measures such as temporary non-use; and 7) Grazing schedules (including rest or deferral). <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>Utah Habitat: —.</p> <p>E-LG/RM-6: Idaho – CHZ: Adjust grazing permits during the renewal process to include measures (including but not limited to measures described in Appendix Q) to achieve desired habitat conditions, if through the assessment process, livestock grazing is found to be limiting the achievement of the habitat characteristics (Appendix Q). Measures must be tailored to address the specific management issues.</p> <p>Where population and habitat triggers are being maintained within a CA, this provides that the current grazing system is adequate to maintain viable GRSG populations and therefore absent compelling information, no further changes to BLM grazing systems would be required pursuant to Standard 8 of the Idaho Rangeland Health Standards with respect to GRSG.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p> <p>E-LG/RM-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-7: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-7: PHMA: Maintain retirement of grazing privileges as an option in PHMA when the current permittee is willing to retire grazing on all or part of an allotment. Analyze the adverse impacts of no livestock use on wildfire and invasive species threats (Crawford et al. 2004) in evaluating retirement proposals.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-7: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-7: PHMA: Consider retiring an allotment if grazing privileges are relinquished or if an allotment becomes vacant. When grazing privileges are relinquished the associated allotment(s) may be retired from grazing, or converted to a forage reserve/buffer to use during fire rehabilitation or restoration efforts elsewhere (Adopted from Idaho State Plan page 4.64, Appendix Q), when such actions are determined to result in a net benefit to GRSG habitat and other priority resources.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-7: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.		
A-LG/RM-8: —.	B-LG/RM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-8: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-8: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-8: Idaho – CHZ: Establish strategically located forage reserves focusing on areas unsuitable for GRSG habitat restoration or lower priority habitat restoration areas when feasible. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-8: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-9: —.	B-LG/RM-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-9: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-9: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-9: Idaho – CHZ: Implement grazing management systems that ensure adequate nesting and early brood rearing habitat within the breeding landscape. Manage allotments only for the primary seasonal habitat that it has the potential to support. BLM will conduct fine and site scale habitat assessments based on these habitat characteristics. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-10: Consider changes in grazing management on a case-by-case basis. Changes may include, but are not limited to: 1) Rotation systems (e.g., rest rotation and deferred rotation) 2) Season or timing of use 3) Distribution of livestock use 5) Type of livestock 6) Class of livestock 7) Duration of grazing use and rest periods.	B-LG/RM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-10: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-10: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-10: Idaho – CHZ: Modify grazing management through appropriate herding, salting, and water-source management (e.g., turning troughs/pipelines on/off, extending pipelines/moving troughs) when use-pattern mapping or monitoring demonstrates an opportunity to adjust livestock distribution to benefit occupied GRSG breeding habitat. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ.	F-LG/RM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	
A-LG/RM-11: —.	B-LG/RM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-11: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-11: PHMA: Coordinate with the permittee to schedule grazing use to avoid the GRSG breeding and nesting period when practical. If a lek is located at a water trough, turn off the trough during the breeding and nesting period to minimize potential impacts on GRSG when possible. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-11: Idaho – CHZ: Graze exotic perennial grass seedings and/or annual grasslands to avoid grazing during breeding season in occupied GRSG habitat if available and feasible. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-12: Consider changes in grazing management on a case-by-case basis. Changes may include, but are not limited to: 1) Rotation systems (e.g., rest rotation and deferred rotation) 2) Season or timing of use 3) Distribution of livestock use 5) Type of livestock 6) Class of livestock 7) Duration of grazing use and rest periods	B-LG/RM-12: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-12: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-12: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-12: Idaho – CHZ: Modify authorized seasons of use within grazing permits to provide greater flexibility in managing livestock for the benefit of GRSG. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-12: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-13: —.	B-LG/RM-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-13: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-13: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-13: Idaho – CHZ: Maintain residual herbaceous vegetation at the end of the growing/grazing season to contribute to nesting and brood-rearing habitat during the coming nesting season consistent with conditions described in Appendix Q . Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-14: Consider changes in grazing management on a case-by-case basis. Changes may include, but are not	B-LG/RM-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-14: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-14: PHMA: —. IHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-14: Idaho – CHZ: Modify grazing management to meet seasonal GRSG habitat requirements (Appendix	F-LG/RM-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Rotation systems (e.g., rest rotation and deferred rotation) 2) Season or timing of use 3) Distribution of livestock use 5) Type of livestock 6) Class of livestock 7) Duration of grazing use and rest periods 			<p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>Q). Provide flexibility in grazing management through scheduling the intensity, timing, duration and frequency of grazing use over time that best promotes management objectives. The Implementation Task Force would provide recommendations throughout the process and would be given the ability to review proposed management changes and the implementation of conservation measures to ensure that the measures are being appropriately applied.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-15: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-15: PHMA: Develop specific objectives to conserve, enhance or restore PHMA based on BLM Ecological Site Descriptions (Forest Service may use other methods) and assessments (including within wetlands and riparian areas). If an effective grazing system that meets GRSG habitat requirements is not already in place, analyze at least one alternative that conserves, restores or enhances GRSG habitat in the NEPA document prepared for the permit renewal (Doherty et al. 2011b, Williams et al. 2011).</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-15: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-15: PHMA: Use monitoring information and rangeland health assessments to develop specific management objectives and grazing management plans designed to maintain, enhance or restore GRSG habitat. Prioritize implementation of grazing systems or permit modifications that make progress towards meeting habitat objectives, in areas that are not meeting these objectives.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-15: Idaho – CHZ: Conduct rangeland health assessments utilizing published characteristics of GRSG habitat and the Ecological Site Descriptions, and Appendix Q, and where available and applicable, rangeland health determinations made in accordance with 43 C.F.R. 4180.2(c).</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Consider GRSG seasonal habitat requirements when managing sagebrush rangelands. Considerations to be taken into account include the following: Leks Be cautious of man-made structures on lek sites. Reduce shrub encroachment and maintain the “open” area that characterizes a typical lek site. Identify the location of leks through discussions with DWR biologists.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-15: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>Nesting/Early Brood-Rearing Maintain and enhance the existing sagebrush/plant communities. Manage these areas to increase herbaceous cover by sustaining a mosaic of sagebrush and open areas. Avoid repeated, annual heavy use of these areas by implementing periodic rest and/or deferment periods during the critical growing season.</p> <p>Late Brood-Rearing Avoid continuous (season-long) grazing of wet meadows and riparian habitats, especially under drought conditions when temperatures are high.</p> <p>Winter Carefully manage levels of browsing or activities in sagebrush areas that constitute GRSG habitat that would reduce GRSG access to these areas for food and cover. The potential impact of livestock grazing on winter habitat can be positive or negative depending on scale and location of use.</p>	
<p>A-LG/RM-16: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-16: PHMA: In PHMA, manage for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state to achieve GRSG seasonal habitat objectives.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-16: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-16: PHMA: Manage for vegetation composition (including riparian and lentic areas) and structure consistent with appropriate GRSG seasonal habitat objectives relative to site potential.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-16: Idaho – CHZ: Maintain existing grazing management absent substantial and compelling information, if, based on the assessment, the current grazing system achieves the habitat characteristics (Appendix Q).</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Address incompatible grazing strategies through established rangeland management practices consistent with the maintenance or enhancement of habitat. Carefully manage the “time,” “timing,” and</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-16: PHMA: Manage for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state to achieve GRSG habitat objectives.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>“intensity” of grazing in sagebrush/GRSG habitats to provide for the seasonal needs of GRSG. Specific prescriptions can be applied through more intensive management to address special needs or weak links in the biological year of GRSG production. Where time-controlled grazing is not an option, moderate use of occupied GRSG habitats will usually leave mosaic or patchy areas where some plants are ungrazed. Managing for moderate utilization levels (40%) after the period of rapid vegetation growth may provide enough residual cover for GRSG nesting and early brood-rearing the subsequent spring. Evaluation of GRSG nesting and escape cover must be determined on a site-specific basis. Livestock operations with a small amount of nesting habitat should consider special management activities to protect nesting and early brood-rearing areas. Lighter use of areas may be warranted. In areas with large tracts of contiguous habitat, livestock producers should manage the vegetation on a rotational grazing basis, which may leave 10 - 20 % of the area ungrazed periodically in combination with deferring or altering timing of grazing in other areas. In areas where GRSG nesting is common, managing for moderate use of plant growth across the landscape would be appropriate. Well-managed ranches with comprehensive grazing strategies that include short-term or duration grazing, higher levels of use may be acceptable, provided these higher levels of use include rested vegetation in nearby areas.</p>	
A-LG/RM-17: —.	B-LG/RM-17: PHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-17: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-17: PHMA: Outside of occupied or potential bighorn sheep	E-LG/RM-17: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.	F-LG/RM-17: PHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		<p>habitat, allow temporary or permanent conversion of cattle AUMs to sheep and/or goat grazing to allow for fuels management opportunities using domestic livestock. Sheep and goat grazing areas must be reviewed and modified as bighorn sheep habitat maps are updated or refined.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	Utah Habitat: —.	<p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-18: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-18: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-18: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-18: PHMA: Incorporate Terms and Conditions in crossing permits to limit disturbance of leks when trailing livestock across BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands in the spring. Appropriate Terms and Conditions include, but are not limited to: required herding practices, permitted routes, timing of livestock movements during lekking season, watering, overnighing, and sheep bedding locations.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-18: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-18: PHMA: No action.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-19: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-19: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-19: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-19: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-19: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Consider additional options for scheduled grazing based on the three habitat zones in light of unintended consequences of altering grazing use, such as a possible increased risk of wildfire, before adjusting management.</p> <p>Idaho – CHZ: Altering grazing schemes in allotments within CHZ, where needed and appropriate, through enhanced grazing opportunities utilizing introduced seedings or areas with lower value to GRSG (e.g., GHZ).</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Enhance grazing</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-19: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				opportunities through utilization of areas with introduced seedings or areas with lower value to GRSG. Idaho – GHZ: Same as Idaho – IHZ. Utah Habitat: —.	
A-LG/RM-20: —.	B-LG/RM-20: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-20: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-20: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-20: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Include measures tailored to address specific management issues (Appendix Q), when livestock grazing is limiting achievement of the habitat characteristics (Appendix Q), within renewed permits. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-20: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-21: Consider changes in grazing management on a case-by-case basis. Changes may include, but are not limited to: 1) Rotation systems (e.g., rest rotation and deferred rotation) 2) Season or timing of use 3) Distribution of livestock use 5) Type of livestock 6) Class of livestock 7) Duration of grazing use and rest periods.	B-LG/RM-21: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-21: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-21: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-21: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Maintain flexibility in grazing management and the opportunity to schedule and adjust intensity, timing, duration, and frequency of grazing use over time in a manner that maintains rangeland health and habitat quality. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-21: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-22: —.	B-LG/RM-22: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-22: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-22: PHMA: Utilize existing and appropriate rangeland health assessment and GRSG habitat assessment (currently the Habitat Assessment Framework) processes to quantify GRSG habitat quality. Prioritize assessment completion in PHMA. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-LG/RM-22: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-22: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-23: —.	B-LG/RM-23: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-23: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-23: PHMA: Monitor vegetation utilizing techniques that quantify GRSG habitat attributes to	E-LG/RM-23: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Conduct fine and site scale-habitat assessments to help	F-LG/RM-23: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			determine if vegetation management objectives are being achieved. This monitoring would occur consistent with appropriate BLM and Forest Service direction which current utilizes the Habitat Assessment Framework and BLM Technical Reference 1734-4. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	inform grazing management based on habitat characteristics described in Appendix Q . Utah Habitat: —.	RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-24: Implement noxious weed and invasive species control using integrated weed management actions per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, affected counties, and adjoining private lands owners.	B-LG/RM-24: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-24: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-24: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-24: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: Monitor weed eradication program to evaluate the success of weed control efforts in conjunction with the Cooperative Weed Management Areas. Idaho – GHZ: Same as Idaho – IHZ. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-24: PHMA: No action. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-25: —.	B-LG/RM-25: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-25: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-25: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-25: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-25: PHMA: Encourage partners to monitor effects of retiring grazing permits in GRSG habitat. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-26: —.	B-LG/RM-26: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-26: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-26: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-26: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Conduct a determination of factors causing any failure to achieve the habitat characteristics (Appendix Q) at a resolution sufficient to document the habitat condition, including consideration of local spatial and inter-annual variability. Determination must utilize data from multiple years or multiple locations within an allotment. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-26: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Drought Management					
<p>A-LG/RM-27: —. Livestock grazing program/policy direction allows the BLM and Forest Service to make changes to livestock grazing in response to drought conditions. Changes may include adjusting livestock numbers based on available forage or shortening the season of use.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-27: PHMA: During drought periods, prioritize evaluating effects of the drought in PHMA relative to their needs for food and cover. Since there is a lag in vegetation recovery following drought (Thurrow and Taylor 1999; Cagney et al. 2010), ensure that post-drought management allows for vegetation recovery that meets GRSG needs in PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-27: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-27: PHMA: Adjust grazing management (i.e., delay turnout, adjust pasture rotations, adjust the amount and/or duration of grazing) as appropriate during drought to provide for adequate food and cover for GRSG during drought periods.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-27: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-27: PHMA: During drought periods, prioritize evaluating effects of the drought in PHMA relative to their biological needs for food and cover, as well as drought effects on ungrazed reference areas. Since there is a lag in vegetation recovery following drought (Thurrow and Taylor 1999; Cagney et al. 2010), ensure that post-drought management allows for vegetation recovery that meets GRSG needs in PHMA based on GRSG habitat objectives.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-28: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-28: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-28: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-28: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-28: Idaho – CHZ: Prioritize evaluation of CHZ during drought periods relative to GRSG needs for food and cover. Ensure that post-drought management allows for vegetation recovery that meets GRSG needs in priority GRSG habitat areas.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ:</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-28: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Riparian					
<p>A-LG/RM-29: Manage, maintain, protect, and restore riparian and wetland areas to PFC.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-29: PHMA: Manage riparian areas and wet meadows for proper functioning condition or other similar methodology (Forest Service only) within PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-29: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-29: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-29: Idaho – CHZ: Implement grazing management adjustments, where management changes are determined necessary (Appendix Q), that are narrowly tailored to address the specific habitat objective applied at the allotment and/or activity plan level, including but not limited to the actions outlined in (Appendix Q).</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-29: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Design water developments to enhance mesic habitat for use by GRSG and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within PHMA, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.</p>	
<p>A-LG/RM-30: Manage, maintain, protect, and restore riparian and wetland areas to PFC.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-30: PHMA: Within GRSG habitats, manage wet meadows to maintain a component of perennial forbs with diverse species richness relative to site potential (e.g., reference state) to facilitate brood rearing. Also conserve or enhance these wet meadow complexes to maintain or increase amount of edge and cover within that edge to minimize elevated mortality during the late brood rearing period (Hagen et al. 2007; Kolada et al. 2009; Atamian et al. 2010).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-30: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-30: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-30: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Design water developments to enhance mesic habitat for use by GRSG and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within PHMA, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-30: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-31: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-31: PHMA: Where riparian areas and wet meadows meet proper functioning condition or meet standards using other similar methodology (Forest Service only), strive to attain reference state vegetation relative to the ecological site description.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-31: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-31: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-31: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Same as E-LG/RM-30.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-31: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-32: Manage rangeland resources to maintain healthy, sustainable, rangeland ecosystems and to restore degraded rangelands in accordance with Idaho’s Standards for Rangeland Health or standards or guidelines established in individual Forest Service LRMPs. Rangeland health standards require that riparian</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-32: PHMA: Reduce hot season grazing on riparian and meadow complexes to promote recovery or maintenance of appropriate vegetation and water quality. Utilize fencing/herding techniques or seasonal use or livestock distribution changes to reduce pressure on riparian or wet meadow vegetation used by GRSG in</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-32: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-32: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-32: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Continue livestock grazing strategies that have proven effective in maintaining and enhancing GRSG habitat, unless compelling and credible cause-and-effect evidence indicates a disturbance exists. Address</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-32: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
areas be managed for PFC.	the hot season (summer) (Aldridge and Brigham 2002; Crawford et al. 2004; Hagen et al. 2007). GHMA: —.			incompatible grazing strategies through established rangeland management practices consistent with the maintenance or enhancement of habitat. Design water developments to enhance mesic habitat for use by GRSG and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within PHMA, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.	
A-LG/RM-33: Manage, maintain, protect, and restore riparian and wetland areas to PFC.	B-LG/RM-33: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-33: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-33: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-33: Idaho – CHZ: Manage grazing of riparian areas, meadows, springs, and seeps in a manner that promotes vegetative structure and composition appropriate to the site. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-33: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Range Improvements					
A-LG/RM-34: Consider structural range improvements on a case-by-case basis to provide for livestock grazing while maintaining rangeland health.	B-LG/RM-34: PHMA: Design any new structural range improvements and location of supplements (salt or protein blocks) to conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat through an improved grazing management system relative to GRSG objectives. Structural range improvements, in this context, include but are not limited to: cattle guards, fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures; pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments. Potential for invasive species establishment or increase following construction must be considered in the project planning process and monitored	C-LG/RM-34: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-34: PHMA: Design any new structural range improvements to conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat. Structural range improvements, in this context, include but are not limited to: cattle guards, fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures; pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments. Potential for an increase in invasive species establishment or increase following construction must be considered in the project planning process and monitored and treated post-construction.	E-LG/RM-34: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: Locate livestock fences away from leks and employ the NRCS fence standards (NRCS 2012).	F-LG/RM-34: PHMA: Avoid all new structural range developments in PHMA unless independent peer-reviewed studies show that the range improvement structure benefits GRSG. Design any new structural range improvements and location of supplements (salt or protein blocks) to conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat through an improved grazing management system relative to GRSG objectives. Structural range improvements developments, in this context, include but are not limited to cattle guards, fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures; pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water hauling), windmills,

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	and treated post-construction. GHMA: —.		IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.		ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments. Potential for invasive species establishment or increase following construction must be considered in the project planning process and monitored and treated post-construction. Consider the comparative cost of changing grazing management instead of constructing additional range developments. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-35: Consider modifications to existing structural range improvements on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration impacts on other resources.	B-LG/RM-35: PHMA: Evaluate existing structural range improvements and location of supplements (salt or protein blocks) to make sure they conserve, enhance or restore GRSG habitat. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-35: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-35: PHMA: During project inspections, evaluate the design and location of existing structural range improvements with respect to their effect on GRSG habitat, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for GRSG collisions with infrastructure. • Avian predation due to creation of roosting, perching or nesting sites. • Introduction of weeds, West Nile Virus and effects on vegetation structure or composition. • Assess existing livestock management fences within PHMA for risk of GRSG collisions based on proximity to leks, lek size, and topography (Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2011) or existing collision risk models (Stevens et al. 2012). • Prioritize fence removal, modification or marking in areas of high collision risk to reduce the incidence of GRSG mortality due to fence strikes (Stevens et al. 2012). • Avoid building new permanent fences within 2 km of occupied leks or high density fence areas (Stevens 2011). If this is not 	E-LG/RM-35: Idaho – CHZ: Place salt or mineral supplements to improve management of livestock in existing disturbed sites (areas with reduced sagebrush cover—e.g., seedings or cheatgrass sites) to reduce impacts on GRSG breeding habitat. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-35: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize temporary fencing (e.g., ESR, drop down fencing) where applicable and appropriate to meet management objectives. <p>Evaluate the locations where salt/supplements are placed. In coordination with the permittee, have salt/supplements moved to areas which would conserve or improve habitat for GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: During project inspections, evaluate the design and location of existing structural range improvements and location of supplements (salt or protein blocks) with respect to their effect on GRSG habitat, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for GRSG collisions. Avian predation due to creation of roosting, perching or nesting sites. Introduction of weeds, West Nile Virus and effects on vegetation structure or composition. Avoid building new fences within 2 km of occupied leks or winter concentration areas. If this is not feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates. 		
<p>A-LG/RM-36: —.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-36: PHMA: To reduce outright GRSG strikes and mortality, remove, modify or mark fences in high risk areas within PHMA based on proximity to lek, lek size, and topography (Christiansen 2009, Stevens</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-36: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-36: PHMA: Design and locate fences to minimize the potential for GRSG strikes.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-36: Idaho – CHZ: Mark fences on flat to gently rolling terrain in areas of moderate to high fence densities (i.e., more than one kilometer of fence per square kilometer) located within two kilometers of occupied leks</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-36: PHMA: To reduce outright GRSG strikes and mortality, remove, modify or mark fences in high risk areas of moderate or high risk of GRSG strikes within PHMA based on proximity to lek, lek size, and</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	2011). GHMA: —.		GHMA: Same as PHMA.	with permanent flagging or other suitable device to reduce GRSG collisions. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: Fences should not be located on or adjacent to leks where bird collisions would be expected to occur. Employ NRCS fence collision risk tool (NRCS 2012).	topography (Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2011). GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-37: —.	B-LG/RM-37: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-37: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-37: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-37: Idaho – CHZ: Avoid constructing new fences within 2 km of occupied leks. Place new, taller structures, such as corrals, loading facilities, water-storage tanks, windmills, etc., at least 2 km from occupied leks to reduce opportunities for perching raptors based on careful consideration of local conditions near other important seasonal habitats (winter-use areas, movement corridors etc.) to reduce potential impacts. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-37: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-38: —.	B-LG/RM-38: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-38: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-38: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-38: Idaho – CHZ: Reduce the impacts of fences and livestock management facilities on GRSG, to the extent practicable. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-38: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-LG/RM-39: —.	B-LG/RM-39: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-39: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-39: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-39: Idaho – CHZ: Remove unnecessary fences. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: Same as CHZ. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-39: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-40: —.	B-LG/RM-40: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-40: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-40: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-40: Idaho – CHZ: Consider impacts on GRSG when placing new fences and livestock management facilities, including corrals, loading facilities, water tanks and windmills. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-40: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-41: —.	B-LG/RM-41: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-41: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-41: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-41: Idaho – CHZ: Construct new fences further than one kilometer (0.6 miles) from occupied leks. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-41: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-42: —.	B-LG/RM-42: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-42: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-42: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-42: Idaho – CHZ: Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, at least one kilometer from occupied leks, to the extent practicable. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-42: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Water Development					
<p>A-LG/RM-43: Consider authorization of new water developments on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration impacts on other resources and resource values.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-43: PHMA: Authorize new water development for diversion from spring or seep source only when PHMA would benefit from the development. This includes developing new water sources for livestock as part of an AMP/conservation plan to improve GRSG habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-43: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-43: PHMA: Limit authorization of new water developments to projects that would benefit, maintain, or have a neutral effect on PHMA (such as by shifting livestock use away from critical areas). New developments that divert surface water must be designed to maintain integrity and functionality riparian or wetland vegetation and hydrology. New developments should also be sited in lower quality habitats or, disturbed areas where possible, and avoid areas that have not had significant prior grazing use (Adopted from Idaho State Plan page 4.64, Appendix Q). Ensure that troughs are fitted with wildlife escape ramps to facilitate use of and escape by animals, including GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: New water developments that divert surface water must be designed to maintain integrity and functionality of riparian or wetland vegetation and hydrology. New developments should also be sited in lower quality habitats or disturbed areas where possible (Adopted from Idaho State Plan page 4.64, Appendix Q). Ensure that troughs are fitted with wildlife escape ramps to facilitate use of and escape by animals, including GRSG.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-43: Idaho – CHZ: Place and design new water developments in GRSG breeding habitat that provide the greatest enhancement for GRSG and GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Design water developments to enhance mesic habitat for use by GRSG and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within PHMA, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-43: PHMA: Authorize no new water developments for diversion from spring or seep sources only when within PHMA would benefit from the development. This includes developing new water sources for livestock as part of an AMP/conservation plan to improve GRSG habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LG/RM-44: Consider modifications to existing water developments on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration impacts on other resources.</p>	<p>B-LG/RM-44: PHMA: Analyze springs, seeps and associated pipelines to determine if modifications are necessary to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within PHMA. Make modifications where necessary, considering impacts on other water uses when such considerations are neutral or beneficial to GRSG.</p>	<p>C-LG/RM-44: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LG/RM-44: PHMA: During project inspections, evaluate the design and condition of existing water developments (headboxes, exclosures, pipelines, ponds, and troughs) at springs, wetlands, or playas to determine if modification, repair or retrofitting or removal is needed to maintain or restore the integrity and functionality of the riparian/lentic areas</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-44: Idaho – Common to All Habitat: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-44: PHMA: Analyze springs, seeps and associated water developments pipelines to determine if modifications are necessary to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within PHMA. Make modifications where necessary, including dismantling water developments considering impacts on other water uses when such</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	GHMA: —.		<p>to current site potential within priority GRSG habitat. Modifications may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing float valves on troughs • Reconfiguring enclosure fencing • Moving troughs out of riparian/lentic areas • Modifying the slope at the edge of ponds to reduce mosquito breeding habitat and West Nile virus. <p>Ensure that troughs are fitted with functional wildlife escape ramps to facilitate use of and escape by animals, including GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		<p>considerations are neutral or beneficial to GRSG.</p> <p>GHMA: —. RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-45: Manage, maintain, protect, and restore riparian and wetland areas to PFC.	B-LG/RM-45: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-45: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-45: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-45: Idaho – CHZ: Design new spring developments in GRSG habitat to maintain or enhance the free-flowing characteristics of springs and wet meadows. Modify developed springs, seeps and associated pipelines to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area within priority GRSG habitat where necessary. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-45: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-46: —.	B-LG/RM-46: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-46: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-46: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-46: Idaho – CHZ: Install ramps in new and existing livestock troughs and open water storage tanks to facilitate the use of and escape from troughs by GRSG and other wildlife. Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho - CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —.	F-LG/RM-46: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				Utah Habitat: —.	
A-LG/RM-47: —.	B-LG/RM-47: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-47: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-47: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-47: Idaho – CHZ: Avoid installation of new water developments in higher quality native breeding/early brood habitats that have not had significant prior grazing use except in situations in which water developments may aid in better livestock distribution across the allotment and will not adversely impact the species. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-47: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
West Nile Virus					
A-LG/RM-48: —.	B-LG/RM-48: PHMA: When developing or modifying water developments in PHMA, use applicable best management practices (BMPs, see Appendix B) to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus (Clark et al. 2006; Doherty 2007; Walker et al. 2007; Walker and Naugle 2011). GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-48: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-48: PHMA: When developing or modifying water developments in PHMA, use BMPs (Appendix B) to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus (Clark et al. 2006; Doherty 2007; Walker et al. 2007; Walker and Naugle 2011). IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-LG/RM-48: Idaho – Common to All Habitat: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-48: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-49: —.	B-LG/RM-49: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-49: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-49: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-49: Idaho – CHZ: Return water to the original water source, to the extent practicable, to reduce suitable habitat for mosquitoes. Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LG/RM-49: PHMA: No action. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LG/RM-50: —.	B-LG/RM-50: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LG/RM-50: PHMA: —.	D-LG/RM-50: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LG/RM-50: Idaho – CHZ: Minimize creation of breeding habitat for mosquitoes in GRSG habitat to reduce the risk of transmission of West Nile virus to GRSG.	F-LG/RM-50: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
A-LG/RM-51: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-51: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-51: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-51: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-51: Idaho – CHZ: Permit and design new ponds or reservoirs to reduce the potential impacts of West Nile Virus transmission.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-51: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-52: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-52: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-52: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-52: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-52: Idaho – CHZ: Minimize the construction of new ponds or reservoirs except as needed to meet important resource management and/or restoration objectives.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-52: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-53: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-53: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-53: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-53: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-53: Idaho – CHZ: Develop and maintain non-pond/reservoir watering facilities, such as troughs and bottomless tanks, to provide high quality water that minimizes the development of habitat for mosquitoes.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-53: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LG/RM-54: —.	<p>B-LG/RM-54: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LG/RM-54: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LG/RM-54: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LG/RM-54: Idaho – CHZ: Construct water return features and maintain functioning float valves to prohibit water from being spilled on the ground surrounding the trough and/or</p>	<p>F-LG/RM-54: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>tank.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
Recreation and Visitor Services					
<p>A-RC-1: Consider BLM SRPs and Forest Service Recreation SUAs on a case-by-case basis. Consider measures that will minimize impacts on important resources or resource values.</p> <p>Montana BLM: Authorize SRPs in accordance with SRPH 2930-1. No acres are excluded from SRPs (Pg. 54 ROD/RMP).</p>	<p>B-RC-1: PHMA: Only allow BLM SRPs and Forest Service Recreation SUAs in PHMA that have neutral or beneficial effects on PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-RC-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>D-RC-1: PHMA: SRPs and Forest Service Recreation SUAs would be analyzed on a case-by-case basis per BLM Special Recreation Permit Manual 2930, FSH 2709.11 and through the NEPA process to minimize impacts on GRSG and/or habitat by directing use away from sensitive seasons and/or areas. Coordinate issuance of recreation permits with IDFG and Idaho Outfitter and Guide licensing board when relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-RC-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Limit or ameliorate impacts from recreation activities through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section.</p>	<p>F-RC-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-RC-2: —.</p>	<p>B-RC-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-RC-2: PHMA: Action: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>D-RC-2: PHMA: Designate or design developed recreation sites and associated facilities to direct use away from sensitive areas and provide sustainable recreational opportunities.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-RC-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitat: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-RC-2: PHMA: Seasonally prohibit camping and other non-motorized recreation within 4 miles of active GRSG leks.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-RC-3: —.</p>	<p>B-RC-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-RC-3: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-RC-3: PHMA: Incorporate seasonal restrictions for authorized activities to minimize impacts on GRSG and/or their habitat.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-RC-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitat: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-RC-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-RC-4: —.</p>	<p>B-RC-4: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-RC-4: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-RC-4: PHMA: Recreation activities and developed recreation sites and facilities within lands not designated as</p>	<p>E-RC-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-RC-4: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>a recreation management area would be managed and designed to minimize adverse effects on GRSG by directing use away from sensitive areas.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>RHMA: —.</p>
Travel Management					
<p>A-TM-1: OHV use will be managed as open, closed, or limited to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails as identified in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Montana BLM: All motorized travel is restricted to designated routes. There are 920 miles of designated routes in PPH and 400 miles in PGH. No off-road travel allowed by the public.</p> <p>Forest Service-administered lands: Travel planning is complete and all National Forest System lands with a designated route system are considered the same as the limited designation on BLM-administered lands.</p>	<p>B-TM-1: PHMA: Limit motorized travel to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails at a minimum, until such time as travel management planning is complete and routes are either designated or closed (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Same as Alternative A for National Forest System lands.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>C-TM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Same as Alternative A for National Forest System lands.</p>	<p>D-TM-1: PHMA: Limit motorized travel to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails at a minimum until such time as travel management planning is complete and routes are either designated or closed. Existing designated OHV open “play” areas would remain open (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Same as Alternative A for National Forest System lands.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-TM-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Same as Alternative A for National Forest System lands.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: PHMA with nesting and winter habitat that do not have designated routes in a Travel Management Plan would be managed at least as limited to existing roads and trails (i.e., could maintain existing OHV closures) until a Travel Management Plan designates routes. PHMA with nesting and winter habitat that have undergone Travel Management Planning with route designation would be managed at least as limited to designated routes (i.e., could maintain existing OHV closures). In these areas, existing route designations would be reviewed and adjusted where impacts on GRSG from route presence or use may exist.</p>	<p>F-TM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Same as Alternative A for National Forest System lands.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>A-TM-2: All LUPs include management actions that encourage the administrating agency to follow best management practices that reduce or minimize the impacts of development, including use of existing roads where possible.</p>	<p>B-TM-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-TM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-TM-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-TM-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-TM-2: PHMA: During travel management planning, prohibit new road construction within 4 miles of active GRSG leks, and avoid new road construction in PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-TM-3: —. Under current policy, the need for permanent or seasonal road closures is evaluated during travel management planning.</p>	<p>B-TM-3: PHMA: Travel management should evaluate the need for permanent or seasonal road closures.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-TM-3: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-TM-3: PHMA: Travel management planning would evaluate the need for permanent or seasonal road closures as per Travel Management Handbook 8342.1.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-TM-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-TM-3: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-TM-4: Consider route and trail modifications (new or existing) on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Identify travel management areas and prioritize travel management planning in areas where it would provide the most resource benefit.</p>	<p>B-TM-4: PHMA: Complete activity level travel plans within five years of the ROD. During activity level planning, where appropriate, designate routes in PHMA with current administrative/agency purpose or need to administrative access only.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-TM-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-TM-4: PHMA: Prioritize areas for complete transportation management plans as per Travel Management Handbook 8342.1.</p> <p>IHMA: Complete Transportation management plans as per Travel Management Handbook 8342.1.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-TM-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Counties should adopt and enforce travel management plans that include consideration for greater GRSG.</p>	<p>F-TM-4: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-TM-5: Consider route and trail modifications (new or existing) on a case-by-case basis using the designation criteria.</p>	<p>B-TM-5: PHMA: Limit route construction to realignments of existing designated routes if that realignment has a minimal impact on GRSG habitat, eliminates the need to construct a new road, or is necessary for motorist safety.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-TM-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-TM-5: PHMA: Consider GRSG objectives during subsequent travel management planning. Design and designate a travel system to minimize adverse effects on GRSG (i.e., designate or design routes to direct use away from sensitive areas and still provide for high-quality and sustainable travel routes and administrative access, legislatively mandated requirements, and commercial needs). Allow for route upgrade, closure of existing routes, and creation of new routes to help protect habitat and meet user group needs, thereby reducing the potential for pioneering unauthorized routes. The emphasis of the comprehensive travel</p>	<p>E-TM-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-TM-5: PHMA: Limit route construction to realignments of existing designated routes if that realignment has a minimal impact on GRSG habitat, eliminates the need to construct a new road, or is necessary for motorist safety. Mitigate any impacts with methods that have been demonstrated to be effective to offset the loss of GRSG habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			and transportation planning within PHMA would be placed on having a neutral or positive effect on GRSG habitat. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.		
A-TM-6: All LUPs include management actions that encourage the administering agency to follow best management practices that reduce or minimize the impacts of development, including use of existing roads where possible.	B-TM-6: PHMA: Use existing roads or realignments as described above to access valid existing rights that are not yet developed. If valid existing rights cannot be accessed via existing roads, then build any new road constructed to the absolute minimum standard necessary, and add the surface disturbance to the total disturbance in PHMA. If that disturbance exceeds 3 % for that area, then evaluate and implement additional, effective mitigation necessary to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat (see Objectives, Table 2-10). GHMA: —.	C-TM-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-TM-6: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-TM-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-TM-6: PHMA: Same as Alternative B using a 4-mile buffer from leks to determine road route. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-TM-7: —. The need for restoration of linear disturbances (unauthorized routes) is identified during the implementation level travel management process or on a case-by-case basis.	B-TM-7: PHMA: Conduct restoration of roads, primitive roads and trails not designated in travel management plans. This also includes primitive route/roads that were not designated in Wilderness Study Areas and within lands with wilderness characteristics that have been selected for protection in previous LUPs. GHMA: —.	C-TM-7: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-TM-7: PHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, prioritize restoration of linear disturbances (those routes not designated in a Travel Management Plan) in PHMA. IHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, prioritize restoration of linear disturbances (those routes not designated in a Travel Management Plan) after PHMA. GHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, prioritize restoration of linear disturbances (those routes not designated in a Travel Management Plan) after IHMA.	E-TM-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-TM-7: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-TM-8: —.	B-TM-8: PHMA: When reseeding roads, primitive roads and trails in PHMA, use appropriate seed mixes and consider the use of transplanted sagebrush. GHMA: —.	C-TM-8: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-TM-8: PHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, consider using seed mixes or transplant techniques that will maintain or enhance GRSG habitat when rehabilitating linear disturbances. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-TM-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-TM-8: PHMA: When reseeding closed roads, primitive roads and trails, use appropriate native seed mixes and require consider the use of transplanted sagebrush. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-TM-9: —.	B-TM-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-TM-9: PHMA: —.	D-TM-9: PHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, schedule road maintenance to avoid disturbance during sensitive periods and times to the extent practicable. Use time of day limits (After 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM) to reduce impacts on GRSG during breeding and nesting. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-TM-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-TM-9: PHMA: No action. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-TM-10: —.	B-TM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-TM-10: PHMA: —.	D-TM-10: PHMA: During subsequent travel management planning, limit snow machine travel to existing routes in GRSG wintering areas from November 1 through March 31. Assess routes during subsequent travel management planning. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-TM-10: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-TM-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-TM-11: —.	B-TM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-TM-11: PHMA: —.	D-TM-11: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-TM-11: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: Develop an educational process to advise OHV users of the potential for conflict with GRSG.	F-TM-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Lands and Realty					
Wind and Solar Energy					
A-LR-1: ROW grants are issued for wind and solar energy development on a case-by-case basis.	B-LR-1: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-1: PHMA: —.	D-LR-1: PHMA: Solar and wind energy development is not allowed. IHMA: Wind and solar energy development would be restricted where adverse effects could not be mitigated. Ancillary facilities such as roads, electric lines, etc. could potentially be authorized provided there is no net loss of GRSG habitat through mitigation. GHMA: Lands shall be considered avoidance areas for wind and solar development.	E-LR-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: See Action E-LR-3. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-1: PHMA: Do not site wind energy development in PHMA (Jones 2012). GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-2: —.	B-LR-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-2: PHMA: —.	D-LR-2: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-2: PHMA: Site wind energy development at least five miles from active GRSG leks. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Rights-of-way					
A-LR-3: Continue to manage existing ROW avoidance and exclusion areas (see Table 2-9). Montana BLM: Manage designated ROW avoidance areas on 123,300 acres and ROW exclusion areas on 6,470 acres	B-LR-3: PHMA: Make PHMA an exclusion area for new BLM ROW or Forest Service SUA permits (see Table 2-9). Consider the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within designated ROW or SUA corridors encumbered by existing ROW or SUA authorizations: new ROWs or SUAs may be co-located only if the entire footprint of the proposed project (including construction and staging), can be completed within the existing disturbance associated with the authorized ROWs or SUAs. • Subject to valid existing rights: where new ROWs or SUAs associated with valid existing rights 	C-LR-3: PHMA: New corridors/ facilities will be sited in non-habitat and bundled with existing corridors to the maximum extent possible (see Table 2-9).	D-LR-3: PHMA: Designate PHMA as ROW Avoidance areas and exclusion areas for wind and solar development (see Table 2-9). New authorizations for the following uses are not allowed: Transmission facilities (greater than 50kV in size), wind energy testing and development, commercial solar development, nuclear development, airports, and ancillary facilities associated with any of the aforementioned development; paved roads and graded gravel roads, landfills, airports, and hydroelectric projects. Communication sites would be allowed. IHMA: Designate IHMA as ROW	E-LR-3: Idaho – CHZ: Designate CHZ as ROW avoidance areas with limited exceptions permissible and subject to BMPs. Compensatory mitigation would be required (see Table 2-9). Idaho – IHZ: Designate IHZ as ROW avoidance areas. New ROWs and infrastructure are permissible subject to certain criteria and BMPs similar to those required for habitat in Utah. Mitigate unavoidable impacts. Idaho – GHZ: Manage new ROWs consistent with local resource management plans.	F-LR-3: PHMA: PHMA shall be an exclusion area for new ROWs permits (see Table 2-9). Consider the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within designated ROW corridors encumbered by existing ROW authorizations: new ROWs may be co-located only if the entire footprint of the proposed project (including construction and staging), can be completed within the existing disturbance associated with the authorized ROWs. • Subject to valid existing rights: where new ROWs associated with valid existing rights are required, co-locate new ROWs within

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
	<p>are required, co-locate new ROWs or SUAs within existing ROWs or SUAs or where it best minimizes GRSG impacts. Use existing roads, or realignments as described above, to access valid existing rights that are not yet developed. If valid existing rights cannot be accessed via existing roads, then build any new road constructed to the absolute minimum standard necessary, and add the surface disturbance to the total disturbance in PHMA. If that disturbance exceeds 3% for that area, then evaluate and implement additional effective mitigation on a case-by-case basis to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: Make GHMA an avoidance area for new ROWs or SUAs.</p>		<p>Avoidance areas. Access roads or loop roads would be addressed during the ROW authorization processing and on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as IHMA.</p>	<p>There are no special conservation measures for GRSG in addition to those measures contained within existing land use plans regarding infrastructure development within GHZ.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Management stipulations and conditions should focus on mitigating direct disturbance during construction for all ROWs in PHMA. Should new research demonstrate indirect impacts on GRSG production, additional mitigation measures may be required. PHMA would be designated as an avoidance area for new ROWs.</p> <p>Limit or ameliorate impacts from ROW location, including from wind and solar energy development, through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section, as well as best management practices accepted by industry and state and federal agencies.</p> <p>For electrical transmission lines, and where feasible and consistent with federally required electrical separation standards, site new linear transmission features in existing corridors, or at a minimum, in concert with existing linear features in GRSG habitat. Siting linear features accordingly shall be deemed to be mitigation for the siting of that linear feature. Mitigation for the direct effects of construction is still required. PHMA would be available for wind energy development, though it would be designated as an avoidance area for wind energy development.</p>	<p>existing ROWs or where it best minimizes GRSG impacts. Use existing roads, or realignments as described above, to access valid existing rights that are not yet developed. If valid existing rights cannot be accessed via existing roads, then build any new road constructed to the absolute minimum standard necessary, and add the surface disturbance to the total disturbance in PHMA. If that disturbance exceeds 3% for that area, then make additional effective mitigation necessary that has been demonstrated to be effective to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-LR-4: The presence of sensitive resources, such as sagebrush habitat, is typically examined before a ROW grant is issued.	B-LR-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-4: PHMA: ROWs will be amended to require features that enhance GRSG habitat security.	D-LR-4: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-4: Idaho – CHZ: Maintain and improve GRSG populations within CHZ, while allowing, and mitigating, for new and limited infrastructure development identified by the Implementation Commission as high value and where the proposed action can meet certain criteria. Idaho – IHZ: Infrastructure is generally permissible, but requires analysis of whether it can be reasonably accomplished outside IHZ. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-5: —.	B-LR-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-5: PHMA: —.	D-LR-5: PHMA: New ROW and land use authorizations, unless otherwise excluded, would be avoided whenever possible. Any new ROW and land use authorizations would not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat of the respective PHMA. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: New ROW and land use authorizations would be avoided whenever possible.	E-LR-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-6: —.	B-LR-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-6: PHMA: —.	D-LR-6: PHMA: New authorizations and amendments to existing ROW and land use authorizations would be subject to siting prescriptions and design features considered on a case-by-case basis, in subsequent NEPA analysis. This could include amendments to the types of uses that are excluded from consideration as new authorizations. For example upgrade of an existing 50-kV power line to a 115-kV power line, to eliminate the need for an additional line could be considered.	E-LR-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>IHMA: New authorizations and amendments to existing ROW and land use authorizations would be considered subject to siting prescriptions and design features considered on a case-by-case basis, in subsequent NEPA analysis.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as IHMA.</p>		
A-LR-7: —.	<p>B-LR-7: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: Where new ROWs or SUAs are necessary in GHMA, co-locate new ROWs or SUAs within existing ROWs or SUAs where possible.</p>	C-LR-7: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-7: PHMA: New authorizations or amendments to existing ROW and land use authorizations should be sited substantially within an existing disturbance or minimum necessary adjacent to the existing footprint, where feasible.</p> <p>IHMA: New authorizations or amendments to existing ROW and land use authorizations should be sited substantially within the existing disturbance footprints where feasible.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as IHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-7: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LR-8: —.	<p>B-LR-8: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LR-8: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-8: PHMA: When reauthorizing transmission or authorizing and/or reauthorizing distribution lines, incorporate RDFs into the authorization.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-8: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LR-9: —.	<p>B-LR-9: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	C-LR-9: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-9: PHMA: Site new authorizations or facilities, not otherwise excluded, outside the 3 km (1.86 miles) occupied lek avoidance buffer areas unless NEPA analysis suggests that a greater or lesser distance is required, based on topographic features or other mitigating factors. If new distribution lines (50 kV or less) cannot be sited outside the 3 km buffer, they should be buried or designed to minimize use by avian predators.</p>	<p>E-LR-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-9: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		
<p>A-LR-10: —.</p>	<p>B-LR-10: PHMA: Evaluate and take advantage of opportunities to remove, bury, or modify existing power lines within PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-10: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-LR-10: PHMA: New power and communication lines (50 kV or less), outside of existing ROWs, would be buried, where physically feasible, and associated above-ground disturbance areas would be seeded with perennial vegetation as per vegetation management.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as IHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-10: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-10: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LR-11: All LUPs include management actions that require reclamation/restoration of disturbed areas that are no longer used in support of authorized actions.</p>	<p>B-LR-11: PHMA: Where existing leases or ROWs or SUAs have had some level of development (road, fence, well, etc.) and are no longer in use, reclaim the site by removing these features and restoring the habitat.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-11: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-LR-11: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LR-11: Idaho – CHZ: Prohibit the development of infrastructure, except if developed pursuant to valid existing rights or incremental upgrade and/or capacity increase of existing development (authorized prior to the ROD) subject to best management practices in Appendix Q.</p> <p>a. Limit impacts of proposed actions to the existing authorized footprint with no more than a fifty percent (50%), depending on industry practice, increase in footprint size and associated impacts; and</p> <p>b. Include compensatory mitigation if new significant and unavoidable impacts are demonstrated to be associated with the project.</p> <p>c. Any exceptions to ROW development in CHZ would conform to the standards set forth for IHZ within the same CA.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Authorize new infrastructure development where the following circumstances exist.</p> <p>a. The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically,</p>	<p>F-LR-11: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>outside of this management zone; and b. The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. In the event co-location is not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources; and c. The project does not result in unnecessary and undue habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant CA; and d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through an appropriate compensatory mitigation plan; and e. The project complies with the applicable best management practices in Appendix Q.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: Authorize infrastructure construction consistent with the relevant land management components as provided for in Appendix Q.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
<p>A-LR-12: —.</p>	<p>B-LR-12: PHMA: Planning Direction Note: Relocate existing designated ROW corridors crossing PHMA void of any authorized ROWs, outside of PHMA. If relocation is not possible, undesignate that entire corridor during the planning process.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-12: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-LR-12: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LR-12: Idaho – CHZ: Prohibit the development of infrastructure with limited exceptions analyzed by the Implementation Task Force as part of the site-specific NEPA analysis. The following criteria would be used in those assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The project is developed pursuant to a valid existing authorization; b. The project is an incremental upgrade/capacity increase of existing development; c. Cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of CHZ; d. Can be co-located within the existing infrastructure; 	<p>F-LR-12: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>e. Demonstrates the population trend for the species within the relevant CA is stable or increasing over a three-year period;</p> <p>f. Project would benefit the state of Idaho</p> <p>g. Shall mitigate unavoidable impacts according to Idaho's Mitigation Framework (Appendix Q).</p> <p>The Governor would consult with the BLM and Forest Service on the Implementation Task Force's recommendation, which the BLM and Forest Service must consider during the project's permit application.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: —.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	
A-LR-13: —.	B-LR-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-13: PHMA: —.	D-LR-13: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-13: Idaho – CHZ: Allow for exemptions to new infrastructure development where a project proponent can satisfy all of the stringent criteria identified in the regulatory language and provide compensatory mitigation.	F-LR-13: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-14: —.	B-LR-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-14: PHMA: —.	D-LR-14: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-14: Idaho – CHZ: In allowing for new infrastructure development exemptions, the project proponent must demonstrate that the project would provide a high-value benefit to meet critical existing needs or important societal objectives to the State of Idaho. Coordinate exemptions with the State Implementation Commission.	F-LR-14: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-15: —.	B-LR-15: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-15: PHMA: —.	D-LR-15: PHMA: Process unauthorized use. If the unauthorized use does not serve the best interest of the public, reclaim the site by removing	E-LR-15: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-15: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			<p>these features and restoring the habitat. If the use needs to be authorized, management actions for new authorizations would need to be consistent with objectives for conserving GRSG.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>		RHMA: —.
A-LR-16: —.	B-LR-16: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-16: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-16: PHMA: Land authorizations that are temporary in nature (e.g., film permits, apiaries), that do not result in loss of GRSG habitat would be subject to seasonal or timing restrictions and are otherwise exempt from mitigation requirements regarding habitat loss.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-16: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-16: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LR-17: —.	B-LR-17: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-17: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-17: PHMA: Guy wires will be avoided where feasible. Where guy wires are necessary and appropriate without causing a human safety risk, bird collision diverters will be required.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-17: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-17: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
A-LR-18: —.	B-LR-18: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-LR-18: PHMA: —.	<p>D-LR-18: PHMA: Design structures and facilities to reduce perching and nesting opportunities for avian predators. Follow APLIC guidelines to minimize electrocution and collision risks.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-18: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Predation control and management should be managed by Wildlife Services, Department of Agriculture and Food, in coordination with the Division of Wildlife Resources. Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids, particularly dumps, waste transfer facilities, and road kill. Apply habitat management practices (e.g., grazing management, vegetation treatments) that decrease the effectiveness of predators.</p>	<p>F-LR-18: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Land Tenure					
<p>A-LR-19: In order to be considered for any form of land tenure adjustment, all lands not specifically identified for disposal must meet criteria included in FLPMA and in each LUP.</p> <p>Montana BLM: Retention Lands identified on 31,600 acres of PPH; 25,400 acres of PGH. Disposal Lands identified on 426 acres of PPH and 2,191 acres of PGH.</p>	<p>B-LR-19: PHMA: Retain public ownership of PHMA. Consider exceptions where: There is mixed ownership, and land exchanges would allow for additional or more contiguous federal ownership patterns within PHMA. In PHMA with minority federal ownership, include an additional, effective mitigation agreement for any disposal of federal land. As a final preservation measure, consideration should be given to pursuing a permanent conservation easement.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-19: PHMA: All BLM-administered lands in ACECs, occupied habitats, and identified restoration and rehab land areas will be retained in public ownership.</p>	<p>D-LR-19: PHMA: Acquire habitat when possible and retain ownership of habitat, including lands identified for disposal in current land use plans, except if a disposal would allow for additional or more contiguous federal ownership patterns within PHMA.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-LR-19: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-19: PHMA: Same as Alternative B, without exceptions for disposal to consolidate ownership that would be beneficial to GRSG.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LR-20: —.</p>	<p>B-LR-20: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-20: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LR-20: PHMA: Lands currently identified for retention within PHMA would be retained unless disposal of those lands would increase the extent or provide for connectivity of PHMA.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-LR-20: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-20: PHMA: No action.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-LR-21: —.</p>	<p>B-LR-21: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-LR-21: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-LR-21: PHMA: Evaluate potential land exchanges containing historically low-quality GRSG habitat that may be too costly to restore in exchange for lands of higher quality habitat, lands that connect seasonal GRSG habitats or lands providing for threatened and endangered species. These potential exchanges should lead to an increase in the extent or continuity of or provide for improved connectivity of PHMA. Higher priority will be given to exchanges for those in-tact areas of sagebrush that will contribute to the expansion of PHMA sagebrush areas currently in public ownership. Lower priority will be given to those lands that will promote enhancement the other</p>	<p>E-LR-21: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-LR-21: PHMA: No action.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			PHMA and GHMA areas. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.		
A-LR-22: Most LUPs include a management action that allows for acquisition of lands that have important resource values including crucial wildlife habitat and land tenure adjustments to improve the manageability of BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands. In order to be considered for any form of land tenure adjustment, all lands not specifically identified for disposal must meet criteria included in the LUPs.	B-LR-22: PHMA: Where suitable conservation actions cannot be achieved in PHMA, seek to acquire state and private lands with intact subsurface mineral estate by donation, purchase or exchange in order to best conserve, enhance or restore GRSG habitat. GHMA: —.	C-LR-22: PHMA: Acquisition will be prioritized over easements.	D-LR-22: PHMA: —. IHMA: Identify lands for acquisition that increase the extent of or provide for connectivity of PHMA. Acquisition of GRSG PHMA will have priority over the acquisition of land for other program purposes subject to the approval of the Authorized officer. GHMA: —.	E-LR-22: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-22: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-LR-23: Most LUPs include a management action that allows for acquisition of lands that have important resource values including crucial wildlife habitat and land tenure adjustments to improve the manageability of BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands. In order to be considered for any form of land tenure adjustment, all lands not specifically identified for disposal must meet criteria included in the LUPs.	B-LR-23: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Identify areas where acquisitions (including subsurface mineral rights) or conservation easements, would benefit GRSG habitat. GHMA: —.	C-LR-23: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-LR-23: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-23: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-23: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Withdrawal					
A-LR-24: —.	B-LR-24: PHMA: Recommend lands within PHMA for mineral withdrawal. GHMA: —.	C-LR-24: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-LR-24: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-24: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: —. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: Do not propose additional federal lands or non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within PHMA for locatable mineral withdrawal. PHMA that is not already withdrawn or recommended for withdrawal would be available for	F-LR-24: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				locatable mineral entry. To the extent allowable by laws and regulations and to the extent the claimant would be willing to apply the standards, limit or ameliorate impacts through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section. Recognize that surface vents associated with underground mining are essential for human safety, and must be permitted under the provisions of this alternative.	
A-LR-25: —.	B-LR-25: PHMA: In PHMA, do not recommend withdrawal proposals not associated with mineral activity unless the land management is consistent with GRSG conservation measures (e.g., in a recommended withdrawal for a military training range buffer area, manage the buffer area with GRSG conservation measures). GHMA: —.	C-LR-25: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-LR-25: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-LR-25: Idaho – CHZ: —. Idaho – IHZ: —. Idaho – GHZ: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-LR-25: PHMA: Do not approve withdrawal proposals not associated with mineral activity unless the land management is consistent with GRSG conservation measures (e.g., in a recommended withdrawal for a military training range buffer area, manage the buffer area with GRSG conservation measures that have been demonstrated to be effective). GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Utility Corridors					
A-LR-26: Continue to manage 85,600 acres of utility corridors, including 64,200 acres of West-Wide Energy Corridors.	B-LR-26: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. GHMA: Manage 39,200 acres of utility corridors.	C-LR-26: PHMA: Manage 83,800 acres of utility corridors.	D-LR-26: PHMA: Manage 39,800 acres of utility corridors. IHMA: Manage 4,750 acres of utility corridors. GHMA: Same as Alternative A.	E-LR-26: Idaho – CHZ: Manage 31,000 acres of utility corridors. Idaho – IHZ: Manage 12,800 acres of utility corridors. Idaho – GHZ: Manage 40,000 acres of utility corridors. Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.	F-LR-26: PHMA: Same as Alternative A. GHMA: Manage 39,200 acres of utility corridors. RHMA: Manage 6,450 acres of utility corridors.
Fluid Minerals - Leased Federal Fluid Mineral Estate					
A-MLS-1: No similar action for sub-region. Montana BLM: When leases expire, apply oil and gas stipulations listed in Table 5 pg. 44 of Dillon Field Office ROD/RMP also refer to Appendix K	B-MLS-1: PHMA: Apply the following nine conservation measures through LUP implementation decisions (e.g., approval of an Application for Permit to Drill, Sundry Notice, etc.) and upon completion of the environmental record of review (43	C-MLS-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-1: PHMA: Use RDFs as COAs for post-leasing actions, such as surface use plan of operations, application for permit to drill, or master development plan. IHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-MLS-1: Idaho – CHZ: All valid existing rights are protected. In CHZ and IHZ, projects to develop an existing fluid mineral lease (i.e., implementation decisions) would be subject to the following BMPs: i. Utilize existing roads, or realignments	F-MLS-1: PHMA: Apply the following conservation measures as COAs at the project and well permitting stages, and through LUP implementation decisions and upon completion of the environmental record of review (43 CFR § 3162.5), including appropriate

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>and M of the Dillon ROD/RMP.</p>	<p>CFR 3162.5), including appropriate documentation of compliance with NEPA. In this process evaluate, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the conservation measure is “reasonable” (43 CFR 3101.1-2) with the valid existing rights; and • Whether the action is in conformance with the approved LUP. <p>GHMA: —.</p>		<p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>of existing routes to the extent possible.</p> <p>ii. Construct new roads to minimum design standards needed for production activities.</p> <p>iii. To the extent possible, micro-site linear facilities to reduce impacts on GRSG habitats.</p> <p>iv. Locate staging areas outside CHZ to the extent possible.</p> <p>v. To the extent possible, co-locate linear facilities within one kilometer of existing linear facilities.</p> <p>vi. New transmission lines, excluding those lines under (viii), will be deemed co-located and/or permissible if construction occurs between July 1 and March 14 (or between July 1 and November 30 in winter concentration areas) and within one kilometer either side of existing 115-kilovolt (kV) or larger transmission lines to create a corridor no wider than two kilometers.</p> <p>vii. New transmission lines, excluding those lines under (viii), outside of this two kilometer corridor can only be constructed where it can be demonstrated that the activity will not cause declines in GRSG populations or if the activity reduces cumulative impacts and/or avoids other important natural, cultural or societal resources.</p> <p>viii. Locate essential public services, including but not limited to, distribution lines, domestic water lines and gas lines, at least one kilometer from active GRSG leks. If one kilometer avoidance is not possible, construct lines outside of March 15 to June 30.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative</p>	<p>documentation of compliance with NEPA. In this process evaluate, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the conservation measure is “reasonable” (43 CFR § 3101.1-2) with the valid existing rights; and • Whether the action is in conformance with the approved LUP. <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

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Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: All existing uses are explicitly recognized by this alternative and shall not be affected by the implementation of this alternative. The GRSG conservation measures identified in the associated NEPA documents for each of these projects would continue to be implemented to protect GRSG and its habitat. Provisions of this plan would not be added to the measures identified each specific project.</p>	
<p>A-MLS-2: —. Measures that reduce or eliminate impacts on GRSG are considered on a case-by-case basis during implementation level planning.</p>	<p>B-MLS-2: PHMA: Provide the following conservation measures as terms and conditions of the approved LUP: Do not allow new surface occupancy on federal leases within PHMA, this includes winter concentration areas (Doherty et al. 2008, Carpenter et al. 2010) during any time of the year. Consider an exception: If the lease is entirely within PHMA, apply a 4-mile NSO around the lek, and limit permitted disturbances to 1 per section with no more than 3% surface disturbance in that section. If the entire lease is within the 4-mile lek perimeter, limit permitted disturbances to 1 per section with no more than 3% surface disturbance in that section. Require any development to be placed at the most distal part of the lease from the lek, or, depending on topography and other habitat aspects, in an area that is less demonstrably harmful to GRSG.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MLS-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MLS-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-MLS-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: All existing uses are explicitly recognized by this alternative and shall not be affected by the implementation of this alternative. The GRSG conservation measures identified in the associated NEPA documents for each of these projects would continue to be implemented to protect GRSG and its habitat. Provisions of this plan would not be added to the measures identified each specific project.</p>	<p>F-MLS-2: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-MLS-3: Most LUPs include a management action that prohibits surface disturbing or other disruptive within GRSG breeding and nesting habitat within a certain distance and</p>	<p>B-MLS-3: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Apply a seasonal restriction on exploratory drilling that prohibits surface-disturbing activities during the nesting and early brood-rearing season</p>	<p>C-MLS-3: PHMA: Timing avoidance periods will be required.</p>	<p>D-MLS-3: PHMA: See D-MLS-1.</p> <p>IHMA: See D-MLS-1.</p> <p>GHMA: See D-MLS-1.</p>	<p>E-MLS-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Allow exploratory drilling within PHMA, subject to the</p>	<p>F-MLS-3: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Apply a seasonal restriction on exploratory drilling that prohibits surface-disturbing activities during the nesting and brood-rearing season in</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
between certain dates. The protect buffers around leks vary.	in PHMA during this period. GHMA: —.			same seasonal and controlled surface use stipulations as would be applied to leases within PHMA.	PHMA during this period. This seasonal restriction shall also to apply to related activities that are disruptive to GRSG, including vehicle traffic and other human presence. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-4: —.	B-MLS-4: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Complete Master Development Plans in lieu of Application for Permit to Drill (APD)-by-APD processing for all but wildcat wells. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-4: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-4: PHMA: Conservation Measure: For leases where a producing field is proposed to be developed, complete a Master Development Plan in lieu of APD-by-APD processing. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-MLS-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-4: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-5: —.	B-MLS-5: PHMA: Conservation Measure: When permitting APDs on existing leases that are not yet developed, the proposed surface disturbance cannot exceed 3% for that area. Consider an exception if: Additional, effective mitigation is demonstrated to offset the resulting loss of GRSG (see Objectives, Table 2-10). When necessary, conduct additional, effective mitigation in 1) PHMA or – less preferably – 2) GHMA (dependent upon the area-specific ability to increase GRSG populations). Conduct additional, effective mitigation first within the same population area where the impact is realized, and if not possible then conduct mitigation within the same Management Zone as the impact, per Stiver et al. (2006), pg. 2-17. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-5: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-5: PHMA: Conservation Measure: When approving a Master Development Plan on a lease, if on-site mitigation is inadequate to restore habitat, consider off-site mitigation to improve habitat, in accordance with Stiver et al. (2006), pg. 2-17, and current BLM and/or Forest Service policy regarding offsite mitigation. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-MLS-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: All existing uses are explicitly recognized by this alternative and shall not be affected by the implementation of this alternative. The GRSG conservation measures identified in the associated NEPA documents for each of these projects would continue to be implemented to protect GRSG and its habitat. Provisions of this plan would not be added to the measures identified each specific project.	F-MLS-5: PHMA: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
A-MLS-6: —. Current policy allows unitization to occur on a case-by-case basis.	B-MLS-6: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Require unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring) to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG according to the Federal Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-6: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-6: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Require unitization when deemed necessary for proper development and operation of an area (with strong oversight and monitoring). The unitization must be designed in a manner to minimize adverse impacts on GRSG according to the Federal Lease Form, 3100-11, Sections 4 and 6. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-MLS-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-6: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-7: —. Reclamation bonds are currently required under 43 CFR 3104 for all fluid mineral leases.	B-MLS-7: PHMA: Conservation Measure: For future actions, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site in accordance with 43 CFR 3104.2, 3104.3, and 3104.5. Insure bonds are sufficient for costs relative to reclamation (Connelly et al. 2000, Hagen et al. 2007) that would result in full restoration of the lands to the condition it was found prior to disturbance. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM or Forest Service will perform the work. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-7: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-7: PHMA: Conservation Measure: If surface disturbing activities are proposed on a future lease, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site. Ensure reclamation bonds are sufficient to cover costs that would result in full rehabilitation. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Same as PHMA.	E-MLS-7: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-7: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-8: —. Individual land use plans may contain an appendix that outlines BMPs that are applied on a case-by-case basis.	B-MLS-8: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Make applicable BMPs (Appendix B) mandatory as COAs within PHMA. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-8: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B.	D-MLS-8: PHMA: Conservation Measure: When an APD is submitted for approval on a lease, make applicable BMPs (Appendix B) mandatory as COAs. IHMA: Same as PHMA. GHMA: Conservation Measure: When an APD is submitted for approval on a lease, consider making applicable BMPs mandatory as COAs.	E-MLS-8: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-8: PHMA: Conservation Measure: Same as Alternative B. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-9: —.	B-MLS-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-9: PHMA: Include conditions that require relinquishment of leases/authorizations if doing so will: 1)	D-MLS-9: PHMA: —. IHMA: —.	E-MLS-9: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.	F-MLS-9: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
		mitigate the impact of a proposed development, or 2) mitigate the unanticipated impacts of an approved development.	GHMA: —.	Utah Habitat: —.	RHMA: —.
A-MLS-10: —.	B-MLS-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-10: PHMA: No waivers will be issued.	D-MLS-10: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-MLS-10: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-10: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-MLS-11: —.	B-MLS-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-MLS-11: PHMA: Any oil, gas, geothermal activity will be conducted to maximize avoidance of impacts, based on evolving scientific knowledge of impacts.	D-MLS-11: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-MLS-11: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-MLS-11: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
Unleased Federal Fluid Mineral Estate					
<p>A-MLS-12: Fluid mineral leasing in GRSG habitat will be managed as shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Additional stipulations, such as CSU, TL, or NSO, may be attached to a lease if the standard lease stipulations do not adequately protect a sensitive resource. If a resource cannot be adequately protected through the use of stipulations, the BLM may close that area to leasing. The Forest Service may choose not to consent to leasing on the lands it administers.</p> <p>Most LUPs include a management action that prohibits surface disturbing or other disruptive within GRSG breeding and nesting habitat within a certain distance and between certain dates. The protect buffers around leks vary.</p> <p>Montana BLM: Current oil and gas stipulations listed in Table 5 pg. 44 of Dillon Field Office ROD/RMP. Conservation actions also in Appendix X of Dillon ROD/RMP.</p>	<p>B-MLS-12: PHMA: Close PHMA to fluid mineral leasing (see Table 2-9). Upon expiration or termination of existing leases, do not accept nominations/expressions of interest for parcels within PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>C-MLS-12: PHMA: No new leases or permits will be issued (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>D-MLS-12: PHMA: Areas of no and low potential for the discovery of fluid minerals are closed to leasing (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Areas of moderate and high potential for the discovery of fluid minerals are open to leasing subject to CSU, timing restrictions in breeding and winter habitat, disturbance density not to exceed 1/640 acres, maximum 3% disturbance/section, NSO within 0.6 mile of occupied or undetermined status leks. Consider use of low profile structures/facilities.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: GHMA is open to leasing subject to timing limitations in breeding and winter habitat, 0.6 mile NSO near occupied and undetermined status leks, and implementation of appropriate BMPs.</p>	<p>E-MLS-12: Idaho – CHZ: Fluid mineral leases in CHZ and IHZ shall be subject to an NSO stipulation. The BLM State Director may waive the stipulation only in situations where the development will not accelerate and/or cause declines in GRSG populations within the relevant CA, based on the application of the following criteria:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The development cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of the management zone. Demonstrates the population trend for the species within the relevant Conservation Area is stable or increasing over a 3-year period. Demonstrates the individual or cumulative exceptions under this provision will not result in habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline of the species within the relevant Conservation Area. Can be co-located with existing infrastructure to the maximum extent practicable. Shall mitigate unavoidable impacts through an appropriate compensatory mitigation plan. If the NSO stipulation is waived, any 	<p>F-MLS-12: PHMA: Upon expiration or termination of existing leases, do not accept nominations/expressions of interest for parcels within PHMA (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>proposed development would be subject to the following BMPs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the affected area in accordance with the process outlined in the State of Wyoming's Executive Order 2011-5. 2. In PHMA, surface disturbance will be limited to three percent of suitable habitat per an average of 640 acres. Development within IHZ will be limited to five percent of suitable habitat per an average of 640 acres. 3. NSO within one kilometer of the perimeter of occupied GRSG leks. This distance may be modified, provided it is supported by the best available science at the time the development undergoes site-specific environmental analysis. 4. Activity (production and maintenance activity exempted) will be allowed from July 1 to March 14 outside of the one kilometer perimeter of a lek where brood-rearing, nesting, and early brood-rearing habitat is present. 5. In areas solely used as winter concentration areas, exploration and development activity will be allowed March 14 to December 1. 6. Locate main roads used to transport production and/or waste products over 1.5 kilometers from the perimeter of occupied GRSG leks. Locate other roads used to provide facility site access and maintenance over 1.5 	

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Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>kilometers from the perimeter of occupied GRSG leks. Construct roads to minimum design standards needed for production activities.</p> <p>7. New noise levels, at the perimeter of a lek, should not exceed 10dBA above ambient noise (existing activity included) from 6:00 PM to 8:00 AM during the initiation of breeding (March 1-May 15). Ambient noise level should be determined by measurements taken at the perimeter of a lek at sunrise.</p> <p>8. Absent some demonstration to the contrary, the proposed sagebrush treatment associated with this activity will not reduce canopy cover to less than 15 percent.</p> <p>Idaho – IHZ: Same as Idaho – CHZ.</p> <p>Idaho – GHZ: —.</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Unleased Areas within PHMA: PHMA would be designated as open to oil and gas leasing subject to controlled surface use stipulations (see list below) and the timing stipulations (see Table 2-9). Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats (specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15 • Nesting and brood-rearing areas 	

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**Table 2-11
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Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
				<p>from Apr 1 – Aug 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 <p>Where leasing/development is allowed within PHMA, Within PHMA, limit or ameliorate impacts from development through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section.</p>	
<p>A-MLS-13: Allow geophysical exploration in areas that are not closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p>	<p>B-MLS-13: PHMA: Allow geophysical exploration within PHMA to obtain exploratory information for areas outside of and adjacent to PHMA. Allow geophysical operations only by helicopter-portable drilling methods and in accordance with seasonal timing restrictions and/or other restrictions that may apply.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MLS-13: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MLS-13: PHMA: Allow geophysical exploration subject to seasonal timing restrictions.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MLS-13: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Allow geophysical exploration within PHMA to obtain exploratory information. Geophysical exploration would be subject to the same seasonal and controlled surface use stipulations as would be applied to leases within PHMA.</p>	<p>F-MLS-13: PHMA: Allow geophysical exploration within PHMA to obtain exploratory information for areas outside of and adjacent to PHMA. Only allow geophysical operations by helicopter-portable drilling methods and in accordance with seasonal timing restrictions and/or other restrictions that may apply. Geophysical exploration shall be subject to seasonal restrictions that preclude activities in breeding, nesting, brood rearing and winter habitats during their season of use by GRSG.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-MLS-14: —.</p>	<p>B-MLS-14: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MLS-14: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-MLS-14: PHMA: When a surface disturbing activity is proposed on a future fluid mineral lease, include in the NEPA analysis an alternative that sites the activity at the most distal part of the lease from any lek, or in an area that is less harmful to GRSG habitat.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MLS-14: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MLS-14: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Locatable Minerals					
<p>A-MLM-1: Locatable minerals would be managed as shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Procedures and standards are established to ensure that operators and</p>	<p>B-MLM-1: PHMA: Recommend withdrawal from mineral entry based on risk to the GRSG and its habitat from conflicting locatable mineral potential and development (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>C-MLM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>D-MLM-1: PHMA: Lands would remain open to locatable mineral entry (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MLM-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative</p>	<p>F-MLM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>mining claimants meet their obligation to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation and to reclaim disturbed areas.</p> <p>The existing land use plans identify areas that are closed to mineral entry but are silent on mitigation measures to be taken in GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Montana BLM: 2,520 acres of PPH recommended for withdrawal, 320 acres of PGH recommended for withdrawal.</p>	<p>Make any existing claims within the withdrawal area subject to validity exams or buy out. Include claims that have been subsequently determined to be null and void in the recommended withdrawal. In plans of operations required prior to any proposed surface disturbing activities, include the following: Additional, effective mitigation in perpetuity for conservation (In accordance with existing policy, WO IM 2008-204). Example: purchase private land and mineral rights or severed subsurface mineral rights within PHMA and deed to US Government). Consider seasonal restrictions if deemed effective.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>		<p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p>A-MLM-2: The existing land use plans do not identify mitigation measures to be taken in GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>B-MLM-2: PHMA: Make applicable BMPs (see Appendix B) mandatory as COAs within PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MLM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MLM-2: PHMA: —.</p> <p>IHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>E-MLM-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MLM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-MLM-3: The existing land use plans do not identify mitigation measures to be taken in GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>B-MLM-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MLM-3: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-MLM-3: PHMA: Ensure compliance with regulations in 43 CFR 3809 and 36 CFR 228 to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation (from WO IM 2012-044).</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MLM-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MLM-3: PHMA: No action.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Salable Minerals					
<p>A-MSM-1: Salable minerals in GRSG habitat will be managed as shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Most BLM- and Forest Service-administered land in Idaho is available for consideration of mineral material disposal, however existing guidance in many of the LUPs in the planning area</p>	<p>B-MSM-1: PHMA: Close PHMA to mineral material sales (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>C-MSM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>D-MSM-1: PHMA: No new authorizations would be approved within 3 km of an occupied lek (see Table 2-9). Newly authorized disposals would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions and BMPs, as appropriate. Sales from existing community pits within PHMA would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions.</p>	<p>E-MSM-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: PHMA would be open to mineral materials (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>F-MSM-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

Table 2-11
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Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>encourages the use of existing disposal sites until the material is depleted.</p> <p>Montana BLM: See Appendix N, SOP of Dillon ROD/RMP for Mineral material sites on pg. 169 of ROD/RMP. 30,300 acres of PPH are closed to mineral material disposal; 22,600 acres of PGH are closed to mineral material disposal.</p>			<p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: No new authorizations would be approved within 3 km of an occupied lek. Disposals would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Limit or ameliorate impacts through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section.</p>	
<p>A-MSM-2: —.</p>	<p>B-MSM-2: PHMA: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MSM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MSM-2: PHMA: Restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MSM-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MSM-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
<p>A-MSM-3: —.</p>	<p>B-MSM-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MSM-3: PHMA: —.</p>	<p>D-MSM-3: PHMA: Reclamation bonding will be required on new authorizations for mineral material sales in PHMA (this would not apply to free use permits issued to a government entity such as a county road district, but would apply to non-profit entities).</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MSM-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MSM-3: PHMA: —.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Non-Energy Leasable Minerals					
<p>A-MNL-1: Manage non-energy leasable minerals on federal lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within GRSG habitat as shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Montana BLM: All BLM-administered lands in Dillon Field Office are available for development of leasable solid minerals except 124,200 acres of Bear Trap Wilderness and 9 WSA's (see ROD/RMP pg. 44).</p>	<p>B-MNL-1: PHMA: Close PHMA to non-energy leasable mineral leasing (see Table 2-9). This includes not permitting any new leases to expand an existing mine.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>C-MNL-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>D-MNL-1: PHMA: Future leasing and prospecting of non-energy minerals in PHMA is closed (see Table 2-9). Exceptions may be made for lease modifications and fringe leases where valid existing rights may be affected. Consider offsite mitigation, CSU and timing restrictions, as appropriate.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Lands are available for leasing subject to applicable timing restrictions (seasonal and daily) for exploration</p>	<p>E-MNL-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Manage non-energy leasable minerals on federal lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within GRSG habitat as shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Consider leasing federal lands and non-</p>	<p>F-MNL-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>RHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
			activities and initial mine development, subject to mandatory lease stipulations, timing restrictions and CSU. Consider offsite mitigation opportunities.	federal lands with federal mineral interests within PHMA for non-energy leasable minerals. Limit or ameliorate impacts from mineral leasing and development through the use of the general stipulations identified in the GRSG section. Recognize that surface vents associated with underground mining are essential for human safety, and must be permitted under the provisions of this alternative. Commercial prospecting activities associated with non-energy leasable minerals would be required to comply with the same stipulations identified for leasing and development, above.	
<p>A-MNL-2: Individual land use plans may contain an appendix that outlines BMPs that are applied on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>The 2011 Pocatello RMP establishes operational standards and guidelines for reclamation plans; identifies interagency standards for contaminant levels in vegetation, surface, and groundwater; and implements best management practices to control sedimentation and contaminant release.</p>	<p>B-MNL-2: PHMA: For existing non-energy leasable mineral leases in PHMA, in addition to the solid minerals BMPs (Appendix B), follow the same BMPs applied to Fluid Minerals (Appendix B), when wells are used for solution mining.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MNL-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MNL-2: PHMA: For existing undeveloped non-energy mineral leases, require timing restrictions (seasonal and daily) when exploration activities or initial mine development is proposed, as appropriate. Also require appropriate BMPs (Appendix B) as COAs to the mine plan, and require restoration of habitat or off-site mitigation, if on-site restoration is not feasible.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MNL-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MNL-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
Mineral Split Estate					
<p>A-MSE-1: Under current management, there is no designated GRSG habitat. Decisions included in current management plans apply to both federal surface and mineral estate.</p>	<p>B-MSE-1: PHMA: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMA, and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply the conservation measures applied on BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MSE-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>D-MSE-1: PHMA: Where the federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMA and the surface is in non-federal ownership, apply stipulations, conservation measures, and design features consistent with those applied to BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands in PHMA in the area.</p> <p>IHMA: Same as PHMA.</p>	<p>E-MSE-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Because the surface estate is the key to conservation of habitat, the GRSG habitat has been mapped according to surface ownership. However, implementation of his alternative will have to accommodate the dominant nature of the mineral estate, and react accordingly.</p>	<p>F-MSE-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>A-MSE-2: —.</p> <p>Under current management, there is no designated GRSG habitat. Decisions included in current management plans apply to both federal surface and mineral estate.</p> <p>Individual land use plans may contain an appendix that outlines BMPs that are applied on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>B-MSE-2: PHMA: Where the federal government owns the surface, and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PHMA, apply appropriate Fluid Mineral RDFs (Appendix B) to surface development.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p>	<p>C-MSE-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>GHMA: Same as PHMA.</p> <p>D-MSE-2: PHMA: Where the federal government owns the surface, and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PHMA, recommend to the state regulatory entity to apply a timing restriction stipulation, COAs, and restrict activities within 3 km (1.86 miles) of an occupied lek, when concurring to the approval of authorizations for mineral-related surface disturbance on lands in PHMA.</p> <p>IHMA: Where the federal government owns the surface, and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in IHMA, recommend to the state regulatory agency to apply a timing restriction stipulation and restrict activities within 3 km (1.86 miles) of an occupied lek, when concurring to the approval of authorizations for mineral-related surface disturbance on lands in IHMA.</p> <p>GHMA: Recommend to the state regulatory agency to apply a timing restriction stipulation and restrict activities within 3 km (1.86 miles) of an occupied lek, when concurring to the approval of authorizations for mineral-related surface disturbance on lands in GHMA.</p>	<p>E-MSE-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: —.</p>	<p>F-MSE-2: PHMA: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>GHMA: —.</p> <p>RHMA: —.</p>
ACECs					
<p>A-SD-1: No existing ACECs include GRSG as a relevant and important value. The acres of existing ACECs are shown in Table 2-9.</p> <p>Montana BLM: No existing ACECs include GRSG as a relevant and important value. Maintain designation of existing ACECs, including 35,361 acres overlapping PPH and 1,476 acres overlapping PGH.</p>	<p>B-SD-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>C-SD-1: PHMA: Designate and manage ACECs (BLM) and GRSG Zoological Areas (Forest Service) to function as sagebrush reserves to conserve GRSG (see Table 2-9).</p>	<p>D-SD-1: PHMA: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>IHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>GHMA: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>E-SD-1: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: Same as Alternative A (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>Montana Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Utah Habitat: Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>F-SD-1, Sub-alternative 1: PHMA: Designate and manage all PPH as ACECs (BLM) and GRSG Zoological Areas (Forest Service) to function as sagebrush reserves to conserve GRSG (see Table 2-9).</p> <p>F-SD-1, Sub-alternative 2: PHMA: Designate and manage a system of ACECs (BLM) and GRSG Zoological Areas (Forest Service) to function as</p>

**Table 2-11
Management Actions by Alternative**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
					sagebrush reserves to conserve GRSG (see Table 2-9). This area is a subset of the acreage under sub-alternative 1.
A-SD-2: —.	B-SD-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SD-2: PHMA: Industrial solar projects will be prohibited in ACECs and occupied habitats.	D-SD-2: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SD-2: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SD-2: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SD-3: —.	B-SD-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SD-3: PHMA: New transmission corridors, ROWs for corridors (oil, gas, water/aquifer mining), and communication or other towers are prohibited in ACECs and occupied habitats.	D-SD-3: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SD-3: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SD-3: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SD-4: —.	B-SD-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SD-4: PHMA: BLM and Forest Service will strive to acquire important private lands in BLM-designated ACECs and Forest Service Sage-Grouse Special Areas.	D-SD-4: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SD-4: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SD-4: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SD-5: —.	B-SD-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SD-5: PHMA: Existing designated corridors in BLM ACECs and Forest Service Special Areas may be accessed for maintenance.	D-SD-5: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SD-5: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SD-5: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.
A-SD-6: —.	B-SD-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —.	C-SD-6: PHMA: Agencies will explore options to amend, cancel, or buy out leases in ACECs and occupied habitats.	D-SD-6: PHMA: —. IHMA: —. GHMA: —.	E-SD-6: Idaho – Common to All Habitats: —. Utah Habitat: —.	F-SD-6: PHMA: —. GHMA: —. RHMA: —.

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1 **2.11 Issues and/or Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Analysis**

2 The following alternatives were considered but were not carried forward for detailed analysis
3 because (1) they would not fulfill the requirements of FLPMA, NFMA or other existing laws
4 or regulations, (2) they did not meet the purpose and need, (3) they were already part of an
5 existing plan, policy, or administrative function, or (4) they did not fall within the limits of
6 the planning criteria. FLPMA requires the BLM and Forest Service to manage the public
7 lands and resources in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

8 **2.11.1 USFWS-Listing Alternative**

9 Comments provided through scoping requested analysis of an alternative based on the
10 assumption that GRSG become listed under the ESA. This is outside the scope; the purpose
11 and need of this plan amendment is to address inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms that
12 were identified as one of the listing factors for GRSG in the USFWS finding on the petition
13 to list GRSG. The USFWS identified the principal regulatory mechanism for the BLM and
14 Forest Service as conservation measures in LUPs. In response to the USFWS findings, as
15 well as the BLM and Forest Service's requirement to manage sensitive species, the BLM and
16 Forest Service are preparing plan amendments with associated EISs to evaluate the
17 incorporation of conservation measures in LUPs for GRSG. Because the purpose of the
18 LUP amendments is to identify and potentially incorporate appropriate conservation
19 measures in LUPs to conserve, enhance and/or restore GRSG habitat by reducing,
20 eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat, the alternatives in this EIS, therefore,
21 focus on those conservation measures that can be incorporated into the LUPs. Although the
22 potential listing of GRSG would also include conservation measures identified by the
23 USFWS, those conservation measures are not known at this time. Therefore, an alternative
24 that includes USFWS-listing with associated conservation measures for GRSG is not being
25 analyzed in detail.

26 **2.11.2 Elimination of Recreational Hunting**

27 Neither the BLM nor the Forest Service regulate hunting activities on federal lands; this
28 responsibility resides with IDFG, MFWP, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. IDFG,
29 MFWP, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources manage wildlife within Idaho,
30 Montana, and Utah, respectively, while the BLM and Forest Service manage wildlife habitat.
31 Recreational hunting of GRSG, including hunting seasons, is directed by the relevant state
32 conservation plans for GRSG and criteria therein.

33 **2.11.3 Predation**

34 Commenters stated that predator control was needed to protect GRSG from predation.
35 IDFG and MFWP possess primary responsibility for managing the wildlife within Idaho and
36 Montana, respectively, while the BLM and Forest Service are responsible for managing
37 habitat. Consistent with an MOU between the BLM and the USDA, APHIS-Wildlife
38 Services, the BLM and Forest Service would continue to work with IDFG and MFWP to
39 meet state wildlife population objectives. Predator control is allowed on BLM-administered
40 lands and is regulated by IDFG and MFWP. Avian predators such as ravens and birds of
41 prey are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act; eagles are protected under the Bald



1 and Golden Eagle Act. Control of these avian predators is under the jurisdiction of the
2 USFWS. Therefore, these comments relate to state- and federal-regulated actions that are
3 outside of BLM or Forest Service authority and are outside the scope of the LUPA/EIS.
4 The BLM and Forest Service will continue to work with agencies to address current
5 predation of GRSG. The BLM and Forest Service-administered lands in the planning area
6 will remain open to predator control under state laws.

7 **2.11.4 Close All or Portions of PHMA or GHMA to Off-Highway Vehicle**
8 **Use**

9 Through this LUPA/EIS, the BLM has identified, but has not studied in detail, an
10 alternative to designate new area closures for OHV use within PHMA and GHMA. The
11 BLM has analyzed alternatives to designate all areas within PHMAs and GHMAs as
12 “limited” to existing roads and trails for OHV use, if not already closed by existing planning
13 efforts. Subsequent Travel Management Plans will be developed to identify specific routes
14 within limited areas that will be closed in order to protect and conserve GRSG and its
15 habitat. The BLM and Forest Service have analyzed existing OHV area closures within
16 PHMAs and GHMAs as part of the No Action alternative and as a decision common to all
17 alternatives. The following provides the BLM and Forest Service’s rationale:

- 18 1. There are areas within PHMAs and GHMAs that are currently closed to OHV
19 use (e.g., Wilderness Areas). While these areas were closed to OHV use for
20 purposes other than GRSG conservation, the BLM and Forest Service will
21 analyze the impacts that these closures have on protection of GRSG and GRSG
22 habitat. These closures are analyzed in the No Action alternative and will be
23 carried forward across all alternatives in this EIS/Amendment.
- 24 2. This GRSG Amendment is considering eliminating cross-country travel by
25 analyzing limiting travel to existing roads and trails, as no new areas will be
26 designated as open to OHV use. In at least one alternative, all existing areas that
27 are designated as open will become limited to existing roads and trails.
- 28 3. Route inventories in PPH and PGH are currently underway based on
29 coordinated efforts between the BLM, Forest Service, and USFWS staff. Once
30 the inventories are complete, the BLM and Forest Service will initiate travel and
31 transportation planning, which will undergo a NEPA analysis and will include
32 public involvement. Through subsequent Travel and Transportation planning,
33 the BLM will identify and consider closing specific existing routes that may be
34 affecting GRSG habitat. Any decision to close routes to OHV use in the Travel
35 and Transportation plans would be based on consideration of the habitat
36 objectives and the overall goal of conserving, enhancing, or restoring sagebrush
37 ecosystems upon which GRSG populations depend.

38 In addition, during the District or Field Office plan revision/amendment
39 process, travel and transportation area decisions (open, limited or closed) would
40 be revisited at the local level based on existing inventory information associated
41 with a myriad of resources and resource uses.

- 1 4. During the public scoping period for this LUPA, there were no specific areas
2 identified for closure to carry forward for detailed analysis.

3 **2.11.5 Consideration of Coal Mining**

4 According to 43 CFR 3420.1-4(e), the BLM can only lease coal in areas identified as having
5 development potential. While there are several historic coal developments, including Teton
6 Basin and Goose Creek, to date, no areas have been identified with economic reserves to
7 support future leasing analysis. Under all alternatives, the BLM would consider proposals for
8 coal and oil shale leasing on a case-by-case basis for minerals resources under the
9 administration of the federal government. Site-specific environmental analysis and a plan
10 amendment would be required to lease for coal or oil shale. There are currently no
11 regulations governing the leasing of oil shale. Any leases would be issued under the authority
12 of 30 USC 241, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to lease deposits of oil shale.
13 For these reasons, coal leasing and oil shale development are not addressed in this planning
14 effort.

15 **2.12 Incorporated in Whole or In Part**

16 **2.12.1 Custer County and Owyhee County Sage-Grouse Plans**

17 Both Custer and Owyhee Counties prepared and submitted county approved GRSG
18 Management Plans to the BLM and Forest Service for consideration and inclusion in the
19 Sub-Regional EIS Amendment effort. These plans were developed and approved in 2013.
20 Custer County consulted several sage-grouse plans during the development of the Custer
21 County Sage-Grouse Comprehensive Plan, including the Challis Local Working Group Plan
22 (2007). During the initial development of the range of alternatives considered in detail the
23 BLM and Forest Service considered the Challis (2007) and Owyhee (2004; revised 2013)
24 Local Working Group Plans. Both Counties' Plans are limited in scope to the specific county
25 areas they address and do not represent a complete management scenario for all of the
26 BLM-administered and National Forest System areas within the sub-region. The plans, their
27 objectives, GRSG habitat mapping and management actions were each evaluated to
28 determine whether the components included in those plans augmented or provided direction
29 outside of the range of detailed alternatives. The results of this analysis showed the Custer
30 County plan objectives and management actions to be consistent with Alternative A. The
31 Custer County mapping is similar to the mapping of Alternative C, with only one habitat
32 category. The extent of identified habitat, based on the LWG Key Habitat map, is most
33 similar to Alternative E and, while within the range of alternatives, it is not exactly reflected
34 within any of the alternatives. The Owyhee County Plan is consistent with Alternative A for
35 mapping, objectives and most management actions. Several management actions identified
36 in the Owyhee County plan are included as parts of Alternatives B, C, D, E and F. Since the
37 direction in these plans is already included within the existing range of alternatives these
38 county plans were not included as additional unique alternatives for detailed analysis.
39 **Appendix R** contains an evaluation of each of these plans and the management actions
40 within those plans in relation to the existing Custer and Owyhee land use plans and the
41 alternatives analyzed in detail.



1 **2.12.2 Greater Yellowstone Coalition ACECs and Audubon Suggested**
2 **Management Actions**

3 During the scoping period the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and Audubon Society
4 provided management actions that were considered for analysis. The Greater Yellowstone
5 Coalition proposed several new areas of critical environmental concern that overlap other,
6 broader ACEC proposals that are included for analysis within Alternative F. The Audubon
7 Society also provided management actions that were similar or effectively the same as
8 proposals and management actions included in Alternative B, C or F. These submissions are
9 contained within the existing range of alternatives and will be considered in detail.

10 **2.12.3 Broad-scale Increased Grazing**

11 During scoping and the alternatives development process, a number of individuals and
12 cooperating agencies requested that the BLM and Forest Service consider an alternative that
13 would increase the amount of livestock grazing across all GRSG habitat. This
14 recommendation was based on the supposition that there is a correlation between declines in
15 GRSG and declines in the amount of livestock grazing on public BLM-administered and
16 National Forest System lands. While this alternative was considered but eliminated from
17 detailed analysis for the following reasons, site specific, targeted grazing opportunities are
18 included as parts of Alternatives D and E:

- 19 • Alternatives being considered in this LUPA/EIS are science-
20 based conservation measures that would meet the purpose and
21 need for the project, which is to identify and incorporate
22 appropriate conservation measures in LUPs to conserve,
23 enhance, and restore GRSG habitat by reducing, eliminating, or
24 minimizing threats to that habitat. There are currently no
25 science-based studies that demonstrate that increased livestock
26 grazing on public lands would enhance or restore GRSG habitat
27 or maintain or increase GRSG abundance and distribution.
- 28 • Actual livestock use within GRSG habitat on BLM-administered
29 lands in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-region is
30 generally less than permitted use. Actual livestock use in many
31 areas is below permitted use due to restrictions placed on
32 permittees and annual fluctuations in permittee operations.
33 Although no alternative specifically considers an increase in
34 livestock grazing, under all alternatives except Alternative C, the
35 BLM and Forest Service would retain flexibility to consider
36 increases in livestock grazing on a case-by-case basis. Increases
37 would be dependent on permittee interest and rangeland
38 conditions. Increases in livestock grazing may be facilitated in
39 GRSG habitat if there are changes in management, such as
40 changes to existing grazing management systems, that optimize
41 range conditions.

1 **2.13 Summary Comparison of Environmental Consequences**
2 **Table 2-12**, Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwestern
3 Montana Sub-region and **Table 2-13**, Summary Comparison of Environmental
4 Consequences, present a comparison summary of impacts from management actions
5 proposed for the management alternatives. **Chapter 4** provides a more detailed impact
6 analysis.

7
8

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Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Fire, Fuels Treatments including Prescribed Fire						
Varied treatment options – no standard.	In PPMA, there would be no treatments in winter habitat, no prescribed fire in areas with less than 12 inches precipitation, and all projects would use native seeds. GRSG habitat would be a high priority for wildfire suppression efforts and BMPs in IM 2013-128 would be followed. Use of native seed would be required and fuels treatments would be designed for long-term success. Development of a wildfire suppression strategy with regard to GRSG habitat would occur post-decision.	Some actions similar to Alternative B, though provides less guidance on fire suppression and fuels management. Relies on passive restoration efforts to indirectly reduce the risk of wildfires. Restores areas affected by anthropogenic disturbance outside the historic range of viability, such as nonnative seeding, fences, livestock grazing.	Similar to Alternative B with additional fuels management and suppression guidance.	Idaho – Provides guidance to reduce wildfire effects through development of a response time and water availability analysis, along with a consistent wildfire suppression plan and a fuels break strategy. Utah - Prescribed fire would only be considered at high elevations. Statewide fire agency agreements would be implemented. Loss of winter habitat would be limited to approximately 20 percent.	Same as Alternative B.	Similar to Alternatives B and D. In addition, recommendations from the Wildfire, Invasive Annual Grasses and Conifer Expansion Assessment (Appendix D) will direct field offices to prioritize landscapes for fire prevention and fuels management within GRSG habitat to minimize the risk of wildfire in PHMA and IHMA. Prescribed fire in GRSG habitat could be permitted if analysis showed a net benefit to GRSG. Adaptive management would be used to improve management in GRSG habitat.
Summary	All action alternatives will decrease habitat loss from prescribed fire and wildfire by limiting prescribed fire and prioritizing wildfire suppression efforts in the sub-region, which respond to the Conservation Objectives Team report objectives. Alternatives B, D, E, F and the Proposed Plan would also try to lessen the future probability of large fires in GRSG by putting in fire breaks which would further benefit GRSG. Alternatives B, C, D, F and the Proposed Plan all move to lessen habitat loss from treatments within winter habitat to varying degrees, which is consistent with the objective to retain sagebrush. Alternative C is passive toward fire and fuels management emphasizing natural restorative processes following a reduction in anthropogenic disturbance. In Alternative C, reduction in the threat of wildfire would occur over the long term from overall improvement of habitat. The Proposed Plan would allow prescribed fire if net benefit for GRSG, and would use an adaptive management approach.					
Invasive Species						
Various control measures – no standard. Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation plans and strategic wildland fire suppression would be implemented. Invasive annuals would continue to be introduced and spread as a result of ongoing vehicle traffic in and	Invasive weeds would be controlled, suppressed, and eradicated. Limits anthropogenic disturbance to 3 percent. This alternative would also require native seed for restoration efforts, the use of BMPs for fire and fuels treatments, and invasive species prevention measures.	Relies on passive restoration efforts to indirectly reduce the risk of invasive annuals. Minimizes use of herbicides and emphasizes mechanical treatment methods. Reduces spread of invasive annuals by eliminating livestock grazing.	Similar to Alternative B with the additional requirement that noxious weeds and invasive species would be treated and monitored for at least 3 years after project construction.	Idaho - Similar to Alternative D with the additional requirement to treat and monitor invasive species associated with existing range improvements. Utah – Guidance to aggressively respond to new infestations and prevent invasive spread after wildfire.	Similar to Alternative B. Would also prioritize restoring sagebrush steppe invaded by nonnative plants. Limits anthropogenic disturbance to one instance per section and a cumulative 3 percent disturbance cap.	Similar to Alternative D with an adaptive management approach, enhanced monitoring and mitigation.

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	out of the planning area, recreational activities, wildlife, improper livestock grazing, fire, and surface-disturbing activities (energy and infrastructure).						
Summary	All action alternatives respond to the COT report objectives by implementing actions to maintain and restore healthy sagebrush communities. Alternative D provides the lowest surface disturbance threshold (no unmitigated loss of habitat), which would reduce opportunities for incursion of nonnative species. Alternatives B, C, F and the Proposed Plan propose 3 percent thresholds in PPMA. Alternatives B, D, E, F and the Proposed Plan prioritize restoration of areas with invasive weed infestations and emphasize restoration, which would further reduce habitat degradation. Alternative C prioritizes restoration of invasive infestations but limits restoration to natural processes following a reduction in anthropogenic uses (livestock removal, fencing and roads infrastructure removal).						
Pinyon-Juniper Encroachment							
	Varying degrees of habitat objectives identified for maintenance, improvement, and restoration of sagebrush communities – no standard.	Does not provide specific guidance regarding pinyon-juniper encroachment. Would prioritize restoration in seasonal habitats.	Alternative C prioritizes restoration in seasonal habitats as in Alternative B; however, local native plant ecotype seeds and seedlings would be used to restore treated habitats. It could take longer for these habitats to recover and could be a loss of habitat for a certain amount of time. In addition, passive restoration is preferred for restoring these areas over active restoration methods.	Would prioritize projects that address conifer encroachment into important GRSG habitats. Conifer encroachment areas would be considered as areas to manage wildfire for resource benefit.	Idaho - Would prioritize conifer removal in CHZ and IHZ. Utah – Would aggressively remove encroaching conifers and other plant species to expand GRSG habitat where possible.	Same as Alternative B.	Similar to Alternative D with an adaptive management approach, enhanced monitoring and mitigation.
Summary	All action alternatives except Alternative C would respond to the pinyon-juniper objective in the Conservation Objectives Team report. The objective is to remove pinyon-juniper from areas of sagebrush that are most likely to support GRSG at a rate that is at least equal to rate of pinyon-juniper incursion. Alternatives D and E directly address juniper removal and prioritization and the Proposed Plan includes enhanced monitoring and mitigation. Alternatives B, C, and F talk more generally about restoration and thus may not provide the greatest assurance for improvement of GRSG habitat.						
Livestock Grazing, Structure Range Improvements and Wild Horses							
	There is no set direction to specifically consider GRSG in grazing decisions. Structural range improvements are considered on a case-by-case basis while maintaining rangeland	Same open/closed acreages as Alternative A. Rangeland would be managed for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state to achieve GRSG seasonal habitat	Alternative C would make public lands unavailable to livestock grazing. This could benefit GSRG by improving ground cover, leaving more grass and forbs. However, there could be possible increases in wildfire and invasive species risks. Wild horse and burro	Same open/closed acreages as Alternative A. PPMA would be the highest priority for BLM land health assessments. Desired cover percentages and heights for sagebrush, grasses, and forbs in seasonal habitats will follow habitat	Idaho - Same open/closed acreages as Alternative A. Similar to Alternative D with emphasis on adaptive management. Wild horse and burro management would be the same as Alternative A. Utah - Livestock grazing would continue using BMPs. Repeated,	Alternative F requires a 25% reduction in livestock grazing. Other management would be similar to Alternative B. Wild horse and burro management would be the same as Alternative B.	Similar to Alternative D with enhanced monitoring and mitigation. In SFAs, grazing permit review, rangeland health assessment and HMA review would be prioritized in GRSG habitat.

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	health. Wild horses would be managed within appropriate management levels.	objectives in Connelly et al. 2000 and Hagen et al. 2007. GRSG would benefit by having the structural components needed for all of their life cycle needs. Structural range improvements must conserve, maintain, enhance or restore GRSG habitat through improved grazing management system. Water development would need to be neutral or beneficial to GRSG. Wild horses would be managed within appropriate management levels and the evaluation of AMLs would be prioritized in PPMA. Herd Management Area Plans would be developed for all HMAs.	management would be the same as Alternative A.	guidelines in the habitat assessment framework (Stiver et al. 2010). Any new structural range improvements would be designed to maintain, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat through an improved grazing management system relative to GRSG objectives. Existing structural range improvements and supplements would be reevaluated in PPMA and PMMA. New water developments within PPMA would be limited and need have a neutral effect or be beneficial to PPMA. Wild horse and burro management would be the same as Alternative B with the additional requirement that HMAs would not be expanded in PPMA.	annual heavy use during critical growing seasons and of season-long grazing on wet meadows and riparian areas would be avoided. Water developments would enhance or maintain GRSG mesic habitat. Range improvement structures would avoid leks. Wild horse and burro management would be the same as Alternative A.		
Summary	All action alternatives would manage grazing to better meet the ecological conditions that maintain or restore healthy sagebrush shrub and native perennial grass and forb communities and conserve the essential habitat components for GRSG (e.g., shrub cover, nesting cover), which responds to the Conservation Objectives Team report objective. All action alternatives emphasize GRSG in decision making for livestock grazing; however, Alternative C would remove grazing from PPMA and Alternative F would reduce grazing. Grazing management would be similar between Alternatives B, D, E, and the Proposed Plan with slightly different guidance or priorities. For wild horses there would be a focus on GRSG habitat and priority for gathers in GRSG habitat for Alternatives B, D, F and the Proposed Plan. These alternatives include evaluation of HMAs and Wild Horse Territories to consider adjustments in AML to meet GRSG habitat standards. Alternatives C and E do not directly address WHB.						
Infrastructure - Right-of-way							
	Various areas managed as ROW avoidance and exclusion, but most are not specific to protect GRSG and GRSG habitat.	In addition to exclusion and avoidance in Alternative A, all PPMA would be managed as ROW exclusion and all PGMA as ROW avoidance. Emphasizes opportunities for co-location within designated corridors and	All GRSG habitat would be managed as ROW exclusion. Provides for review of all existing transmission lines to amend ROWs to require features that enhance GRSG habitat security.	In addition to exclusion and avoidance in Alternative A, all GRSG habitat would be managed as ROW avoidance. New authorizations would not be allowed in PPMA for transmission facilities greater than 50 kV, mineral and energy development, roads, airports, and associated	CHZ (Idaho) and PPMA (Utah) would be ROW avoidance with limited exceptions.	Same as Alternative B.	Similar to Alternative D, with PHMA and IHMA managed as avoidance areas for ROWs, and GHMA open (avoidance for high-voltage ROWs in Montana).

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	within the footprint of existing disturbance. Recommends removing, burying, or modifying existing power lines within priority habitat		ancillary facilities.			
Summary	All alternatives respond to the conservation objective for infrastructure identified in the Conservation Objectives Team report, which is to avoid development within priority areas for conservation. Alternatives B, C, D, and F all close certain areas to new ROWs. The difference between these alternatives is the amount of GRSG habitat that would be closed and the type of ROWs that would be prohibited or restricted. Alternative C closes all occupied GRSG habitat to new ROWs and is the most restrictive. Alternatives B and F include the same restrictions as Alternative C; however, these restrictions would be applied to a smaller geographic area. Alternative D and the Proposed Plan would provide fewer restrictions, as all GRSG habitat would be ROW avoidance with exclusions for certain ROWs in PPMA. Also under Alternative E, some GRSG habitat would be managed as ROW avoidance. This may eliminate habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation in important seasonal habitats. However, because there are few if any exclusions under this alternative, there is less assurance of protection for GRSG on federal land. All alternatives seek to avoid conflict with GRSG habitat, to utilize existing corridors, and to co-locate within existing development footprints.					
Infrastructure – Roads						
Some GRSG habitat on BLM-administered land is open to cross-country motorized travel. All Forest Service-administered lands are limited to designated routes. Road ROWs would be issued on a case-by-case basis.	In addition to current limited and closed designations in the No Action alternative, all PPMA would be designated as limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation. PPMA would be ROW exclusion areas for road ROWs and PGMA would be ROW exclusion areas for road ROWs. Provides guidance for restricting new road construction and mitigation where roads are allowed under prior existing rights. Provides for road closure and rehabilitation. Provides for seasonal road closures. PGMA would be designated as per the travel management plan	Same as Alternative B. PPMA would be ROW exclusion areas for road ROWs.	All GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation. PPMA would be ROW exclusion areas for road ROWs. All other GRSG management areas would be ROW avoidance areas for road ROWs. The emphasis of the comprehensive travel and transportation planning would be placed on having a neutral or positive effect on GRSG habitat. Would prioritize restoration of linear disturbances.	Idaho - All GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation. CHZ (Idaho) and PPMA (Utah) would be ROW avoidance with limited exceptions for road ROWs. Utah: PPMA with nesting and winter habitat that do not have designated routes in a Travel Management Plan would be managed at least as limited to existing routes.	Same as Alternative B, except decisions would be applied to all occupied GRSG habitat. Also no new routes would be allowed within 4 miles of a lek.	Similar to Alternative E, and would prioritize travel planning to designate open and closed areas, similar to Alternative D.

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	in the current planning document.					
Summary	All alternatives respond to the Conservation Objectives Team report objective to varying degrees. All alternatives would limit motorized travel to existing or designated routes in certain areas, which would eliminate unauthorized route creation. The difference between alternatives is the amount of GRSG habitat that would be changed from an open to a limited category. Alternative A would have the fewest acres limited to existing roads and trails, followed by Alternatives B and F. Under Alternatives C, D, E, and the Proposed Plan all GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads and trails.					
Infrastructure - Fences						
No decisions	Fences would be removed, modified, or marked in high risk areas within PPMA.	No decisions	Fences would be designed and located to minimize the potential for GRSG strikes. Fences would be priorities for removal, modification, or marking in PPMA and PMMA in areas of moderate or high collision risk.	Idaho – Fences would be marked in areas of moderate to high fence densities. Utah – Fences would not be located on or adjacent to leks where bird collisions would be expected to occur.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative D.
Summary	Some of the alternatives respond to the intent of the Conservation Objectives Team report objectives, which is to minimize impacts from fences on GRSG. Alternatives B, D, and F would consider more of the conservation options identified in the Conservation Objectives Team report. For example, marking fences would decrease bird/fence collisions, and removal of unneeded fences would decrease collisions and opportunities for avian predation. Alternative E in Idaho would only include marking fences.					
Energy Development (Non-renewable)						
Most areas would be open to energy development. Various stipulations apply, with a range of protective buffers around leks. In general, recently completed plans include a larger protective buffer. Recently completed plans also include a management action that prohibits surface disturbing activities or disruptive activities during certain dates in seasonal habitats.	PPMA would be closed to new leasing, though development of existing leases in PPMA would still cause fragmentation, direct and indirect habitat loss, disruption of GRSG, and degradation of habitat. Required design features would reduce the effects of development. Disturbance would be clustered on the landscape and would be limited to 3 percent per section on average. Seasonal restrictions would decrease seasonal disruption to GRSG populations.	Same as Alternative B, except a larger geographic area would be closed to leasing.	Low potential and no known potential areas would be closed to leasing in PPMA and PMMA. Moderate and high potential areas in PPMA and PMMA would be open to leasing subject to CSU, timing restrictions in breeding and winter habitat, disturbance density not to exceed 1/640 acres, maximum 3% disturbance/section, NSO within 0.6 mile of occupied or undetermined status leks. PGMA would be open to leasing subject to timing limitations in breeding and winter habitat, 0.6 mile NSO near occupied and undetermined status leks, and implementation of appropriate BMPs.	Idaho – Same as Alternative A. Utah – PPMA would be open to leasing subject to CSU and TL stipulations.	Same as Alternative B.	Similar to Alternative D, but BMPS/RDFs would be required on new leases. In SFAs, habitat would be NSO without waiver or exception. A three percent disturbance cap would apply in PHMA to minimize harm to GRSG populations.

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Summary	<p>To varying degrees all action alternatives respond to the Conservation Objectives Team report objective for energy, which is that energy development should be designed to ensure that it will not impinge on stable or increasing GRSG population trends. Alternatives B, C, and F close areas to new leasing. The difference between these alternatives is the amount of GRSG habitat that would be closed. Alternative C closes all occupied GRSG habitat to new leasing and is the most restrictive. Alternatives B and F include the same restrictions as Alternative C; however, these restrictions would be applied to a smaller geographic area. Management under Alternative D and the Proposed Plan would be less restrictive than Alternatives B, C, and F. Stipulations such as NSO, CSU, and TL would restrict the amount, location, and timing of development. These restrictions would reduce habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation in seasonal habitats. Alternative E would provide the fewest restrictions on fluid mineral leasing and development.</p> <p>Under Alternatives B, C, F and the Proposed Plan RDFs would be attached to new and existing leases. Applying required design features to existing leases may eliminate habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation. However, the effectiveness of these measures would be limited in areas where there is already extensive development. Under Alternative D, design features would not be required, but would be discretionary. There would be no restrictions on existing leases under Alternative E.</p>						
Mining – Solid Minerals, Non-energy Leasables, Locatables, and Mineral Materials							
	<p>Various areas recommended for withdrawal/currently withdrawn and closed to mineral material disposal and non-energy mineral leasing.</p> <p>There is no surface disturbance limitation recommendation included in this alternative.</p>	<p>PPMA would be withdrawn from locatable mineral entry, closed to mineral material disposal, and closed to non-energy mineral leasing.</p> <p>Development of existing leases would result in habitat loss and fragmentation. A 3 percent surface disturbance threshold and RDFs would be applied.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B except decisions would be applied to a larger geographic area (all occupied habitat).</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A for locatable minerals.</p> <p>No new salable mineral authorizations would be approved within 3 km of an occupied lek in all GRSG habitat. Seasonal timing restrictions would be applied in all GRSG habitat. BMPs would be applied in PPMA and PMMA.</p> <p>Future leasing and prospecting of non-energy minerals in PPMA and PMMA is closed</p>	<p>Idaho - Same as Alternative A for locatable, salable, and non-energy leasable minerals.</p> <p>Utah - Same as Alternative A for locatable minerals.</p> <p>PPMA would be open to salable and non-energy leasable minerals; impacts would be reduced through the application of stipulations.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Similar to Alternative D but would require BMPs and RDFs on new leases. In SFAs, habitat would be recommended for withdrawal.</p>
Summary	<p>To varying degrees all action alternative respond to the COT report objectives, which is to maintain GRSG population and no net loss of GRSG habitat in in areas affected by mining. Alternatives B, C and F would be closed or withdrawn to other minerals. Therefore, future impacts on GRSG would not occur, which address the objectives in the COT report.</p> <p>Under Alternative D and the Proposed Plan, surface use restrictions would be placed on development to protect breeding, and some nesting and early brood-rearing habitat, which would provide opportunities for nest success and chick survival. Additional stipulations (CSU and TL) would restrict the type, amount, location, and timing of development. These restrictions would reduce habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation.</p> <p>Under Alternative E in Idaho, impacts would continue, as management would be the same as Alternative A. Some impacts would be reduced in Utah through the application of stipulations. As such, there is less assurance of protection for nesting GRSG.</p> <p>Alternatives B, C, F and the Proposed Plan would require RDEs along with other conservation measures to reduce habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation, and disturbance to the extent possible on valid rights. Under Alternative D, design features would not be required, but would be discretionary. There would be no restrictions on existing leases under Alternative E.</p>						
Renewable Energy Sources – Wind Energy							
	<p>Most GRSG habitat is open to wind development.</p> <p>There is no surface disturbance limitation recommendation included in this</p>	<p>Wind development would be excluded in PPMA under this alternative. There are no restrictions for PGMA under this alternative.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B; however, under this alternative, all GRSG habitat would be excluded from wind development.</p>	<p>PPMA would be excluded from wind development. Other GRSG habitat would be avoidance areas.</p>	<p>Idaho – CHZ would be avoidance areas for wind development.</p> <p>Utah – PPMA would be avoidance areas for wind development.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B</p>	<p>Similar to Alternative D, PHMA would be excluded from wind development while IHMA would be avoidance and GHMA open (avoidance in Montana).</p>

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	alternative.						
Summary	To varying degrees all alternatives respond to the conservation objective for energy, which is to ensure that development will not impinge upon stable or increasing population trends. Alternatives B, C, D, F and the Proposed Plan provide protection from wind development to GSRG and their habitat since all four stipulate that wind development is excluded from PPMA. Population declines could occur under Alternatives A and E, as wind development would be allowed. Stipulations on development would reduce habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation, and disturbance.						
Recreation/Travel Management							
	<p>Cross-country motorized travel is generally allowed on BLM-administered lands.</p> <p>Forest Service-administered lands are limited to designated routes.</p>	<p>In addition to current limited and closed designations in the No Action alternative, all PPMA would be designated as limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation.</p> <p>Provides guidance for restricting new road construction and mitigation where roads are allowed under prior existing rights.</p> <p>Provides for road closure and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Provides for seasonal road closures.</p> <p>Recreational permits would only be issued in GRSG priority habitats that have neutral or beneficial effects.</p>	<p>Alternative lacks specificity regarding travel management but states that all lands will be closed to cross-country travel and some roads that intrude into lek or winter habitats will be removed or seasonally closed.</p>	<p>All GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation.</p> <p>The emphasis of the comprehensive travel and transportation planning would be placed on having a neutral or positive effect on GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Would prioritize restoration of linear disturbances.</p> <p>Recreation would be managed to minimize impacts on GRSG or their habitat.</p>	<p>Idaho - All GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads pending travel management planning and roads designation.</p> <p>No guidance is provided regarding recreation management.</p> <p>Utah: PPMA with nesting and winter habitat that do not have designated routes in a Travel Management Plan would be managed at least as limited to existing routes.</p> <p>Stipulations would be used to reduce impacts from recreation.</p>	<p>Management would be similar to Alternative B except specifies in priority habitat camping and other non-motorized recreation would be prohibited during certain seasons within 4 miles of a lek. In addition, there would be no new route construction within 4 miles of a lek.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative D.</p>
Summary	To varying degrees, all action alternatives respond to the COT report objective, which is that areas subject to recreation activities should maintain healthy native sagebrush communities based on local ecological conditions and with consideration of drought conditions, and managed direct and indirect human disturbance (including noise) to avoid interruption of normal GRSG behavior. PPMA would be limited to existing roads under Alternatives B and F. Under Alternatives C, D, E, and the Proposed Plan all GRSG habitat would be limited to existing roads. Once travel management planning is completed, this would be changed to a limited to designated routes category. These alternatives would prevent proliferation of new routes, and would include direction for seasonal closures, route realignment, and provisions for valid existing rights. Recreation management under all action alternatives would aim to reduce impacts on GRSG and habitat.						
Agriculture/Urbanization							
	<p>Most LUPs include a management action that allows for acquisition of lands that have important</p>	<p>Retains public ownership of PPMA with exceptions for considering which improve ownership patterns in a manner</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Land tenure actions would be similar to Alternative B.</p>	<p>Idaho and Utah – Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative D.</p>

Table 2-12
Comparison of Alleviated Threats to GRSG in the Idaho and Southwest Montana Sub-Region

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E ¹	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
resource values including GRSG. Land tenure adjustments could result in consistent management across the landscape.	which enhances GRSG habitat management. Takes advantage of opportunities to remove or bury existing infrastructure associated with urban/ex-urban development and to collocate infrastructure to consolidate impacts. (See Infrastructure)					
Summary	To varying degrees, all action alternatives respond to the COT report objective to limit urban and exurban development in GRSG habitats and maintain intact native sagebrush communities by managing land tenure, consolidating and otherwise minimizing the impacts of infrastructure supporting adjacent development, and burial/removal of infrastructure. Alternatives B, C, D, F and the Proposed Plan favor land acquisition as a tool for conserving important habitat on private lands. All alternatives prescribe ROW exclusion or avoidance (see Infrastructure) and collocation of infrastructure to minimize footprint. Alternatives B, D, and F contain specific actions directed at burial or removal of existing infrastructure such as power lines. Alternatives B, C, D, F and the Proposed Plan call for retention of all GRSG habitats in public ownership. Impacts would continue to occur under Alternative E, which is the same as Alternative A.					

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Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
Vegetation (Including Noxious Weeds; Riparian and Wetlands)						
In general, Alternative A would rely on management guidance that would not reflect the most up-to-date science regarding GRSG, and older land use plans would be implemented that often would lack a landscape-level approach to land planning. However, several LUPs do contain guidance for specific areas that address GRSG (e.g., Dillon, Pocatello, and Beaverhead-Deerlodge). There is no consistently applied vegetation management across all land use plans, though many incorporate objectives for maintaining, improving, or restoring vegetation communities, particularly	The BLM and Forest Service would manage lands to conserve, enhance, and restore sagebrush ecosystems. Direct protection of sagebrush habitat to support GRSG would limit or modify uses in this habitat type, improving the acreage and condition of desired vegetation communities. Use restrictions would reduce damage to native vegetation communities and individual native plant species in areas that are important for regional vegetation diversity and quality. Likewise, use restrictions would minimize loss of connectivity and	The BLM and Forest Service would manage lands to conserve, enhance, and restore sagebrush ecosystems. Management actions would be applied to all occupied GRSG habitats, a larger area than covered by Alternative B. Management would focus on removing livestock grazing from occupied habitats, with most other management similar to Alternative B.	The BLM and Forest Service would manage lands to conserve, enhance and restore sagebrush ecosystems. Management and impacts would be similar to Alternative B, though Alternative D would incorporate more flexibility and adaptive management to account for sub-regional conditions. PHMA, IHMA, and GHMA would be designated and the BLM and Forest Service would require a no net unmitigated loss of PHMA and IHMA and would implement conservation measures to reduce impacts from human activities in PHMA, which would reduce the likelihood for vegetation removal,	The BLM and Forest Service would manage lands to protect, maintain, improve and enhance sagebrush ecosystems. CHZ, IHZ and GHZ would be designated. CHZ would restrict further infrastructure development with narrow exceptions to permit high value infrastructure. This alternative would designate fewer acres of CHZ as compared to Alternatives B, C, D & F designations of PHMA, resulting in fewer acres of sagebrush vegetation preserved from removal, degradation, or fragmentation.	Management under Alternative F would be largely similar to that described for Alternative B, though with more stringent guidance and restrictive management in sagebrush ecosystems. PHMA and GHMA would be the same as for Alternative B. Under Alternative F, RHMA would also be designated. Impacts from implementing the three percent disturbance cap would be similar to those described for Alternative B, but under Alternative F all surface disturbances would count towards the disturbance cap. This would further reduce the acreage of	Management under the Proposed Plan would be similar to that described for Alternative D. Under the Proposed Plan, SFAs would be managed where additional restrictions on resource uses would be applied. Additional measures, such as management to attain vegetation objectives; specified vegetation treatment acres; and a comprehensive mitigation strategy would be implemented and would reduce the likelihood for vegetation removal, degradation, or fragmentation.

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
sagebrush and riparian and wetland habitats. As a result, there is general direction to preserve and improve vegetation communities; however, discrete anthropogenic disturbances to vegetation, such as road construction, mineral development, and development of ROWs, would continue.	would be more likely to retain existing age class distribution within these specific areas. Use restrictions could also minimize the spread of invasive species by limiting human activities that cause soil disturbance or seed introductions. PHMA and GHMA would be designated and the BLM and Forest Service would apply a three percent anthropogenic disturbance cap on discrete activities in PHMA and would implement numerous conservation measures to reduce impacts from human activities, which would reduce the likelihood for vegetation removal, degradation, or fragmentation, and maintain the acreage and condition of sagebrush vegetation.		degradation, or fragmentation.		vegetation that would be removed or fragmented within all occupied habitat over the long term.	
Wild Horse and Burro Management						
All HMAs would continue to be managed for AML and all adjustments would be based on site-specific conditions as reported in monitoring data. Wild horse management would not be based on GRSG habitat needs. Levels of resource conflict with wild horse would depend on management under individual RMPs. Restrictions on energy and mineral development would be least restrictive under Alternative A, which would result in the greatest impact to horses from	Under Alternative B vegetation restoration projects to benefit GRSG would likely improve forage conditions and water quality for wild horses in the long term. Restrictions placed on mineral development could also benefit wild horses and burros by reducing disturbance. GRSG management requiring increased fences or prohibiting new water development could limit wild horse access to water.	Vegetation restoration impacts would be similar under Alternative C to those under Alternative B, but would also remove water developments, which could reduce water availability and result in the need to reduce AML within HMAs in occupied habitat. Livestock grazing would be eliminated under this alternative, resulting in additional forage for wild horses. However, this could also result in reduced water availability through the	Vegetation management under this alternative would likely improve wild horse forage in the long term. AMLs in some HMAs would be reduced if wild horse management was found to conflict with GRSG objectives. HMA expansion would be prohibited in PHMA, potentially limiting the ability to sustainably manage for increasing horse populations and increasing the need for gathers and cost of the program. Eliminating livestock watering	Impacts from vegetation management, wild horse management, and mineral and energy development would be the same as those under Alternative A. Livestock grazing management changes would be applied on a site-specific level and would result in limited impacts to wild horse management. Limitations on new water development could result in a need to reduce AMLs in HMAs where alternative	Under this alternative, AMLs would be directly reduced by 25 percent for all HMAs within PHMA and GHMA, resulting in increased costs for wild horse management due to a need for additional horse gathers and population growth suppression treatments. Under Alternative F, 25 percent of the areas in PHMA and GHMA open to livestock grazing would be rested each year as well, which could reduce the availability of water to wild horses and impact the ability to manage	Under the Proposed Plan restrictions on disturbance would be greatest in SFAs, followed by PHMAs, and IHMAs. This would result in reduced disturbance and additional protections of wild horse forage and water supplies in SFAs, and could result in increased disturbance to wild horses in HMAs within GHMA. Vegetation management would likely improve forage conditions in the long term. Wildland fire management would also be expected to benefit wild horses, though fencing to protect post-

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
energy and mineral development under this alternative.	Restrictions on transportation would be greater under this alternative than under Alternative A, which could increase the time and costs required to conduct gathers for population control. AMLs and wild horse management could be impacted if found to not align with GRSG management objectives. However, in general, efforts to improve GRSG habitat would also improve wild horse rangeland conditions.	elimination of livestock watering sites. Restrictions on travel management and energy development would result in impacts similar to those described under Alternative B. Lands and realty management under this alternative would reduce disturbance to wild horses. In general, efforts to improve GRSG habitat would also improve wild horse rangeland conditions.	sites could reduce water availability for wild horses and could result in the need to reduce wild horse numbers. Restrictions on transportation, lands and realty, and minerals would result in reduced disturbance to wild horses as compared to Alternative A, but greater disturbance than would be experienced under some of the other action alternatives.	water sources are not available. Restrictions on recreation and lands and realty management could limit disturbance to wild horses.	for AML, particularly for HMAs with no alternative water source. Vegetation, wildland fire, and recreation management would have impacts similar to those under Alternative B. Impacts from energy and minerals management would be the same as those under Alternative A.	burn areas could impact the ability of horses to roam freely and access water. Changes to livestock watering could impact water availability for wild horses and result in the need to reduce wild horse numbers or develop alternative water sources within HMAs. AMLs may be required to change to meet GRSG habitat objectives. The number of gathers needed may need to be increased along with other intensive management actions to maintain AML, potentially increasing disturbance to populations and the cost of the program.
Wildland Fire Ecology and Management						
Current impacts would continue and there would continue to be a high risk of human-caused ignitions associated with human uses. Vegetation management and weed treatments would continue to decrease fuels across the planning area, which would decrease the intensity of wildland fires and allow fires to be more easily controlled. Similarly, treatments for habitat improvement and forage would reduce fuels and reduce the likelihood for stand-replacing fire. The wildland fire management program would continue to be impacted by the spread of invasive annuals, which results in a longer fire season and the need for more resources to respond to wildfire. There would	Long-term frequency and intensity of wildland fire would be similar to historic conditions because post fuel and restoration management would be designed to ensure long-term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. GRSG management in PHMA would focus on fire suppression and limitations on fuels treatments, resulting in higher level of protection from wildland fire, but reduced wildland fire and fuels management options. Managing PHMA so that discrete anthropogenic disturbances cover less than 3 percent of the total PHMA regardless of ownership would decrease	Under Alternative C, no livestock grazing would be permitted within occupied GRSG habitat. As a result, fine fuels would increase throughout occupied habitat and size, intensity, and occurrence of fire would potentially increase. However, because the prohibition on grazing could reduce weed spread, some areas may experience a shorter fire season and less frequent and/or intense wildfires.	Alternative D contains a defined set of tools for wildland fire management. Alternative D would allow for management flexibility in designing fuels treatments and response to wildland fire. Strategic wildfire suppression planning would help return PHMA to natural fire intensities and intervals. Impacts from limiting motorized travel to existing roads would be the same as those described for Alternative B.	Developing a fuels break strategy, response time analysis and water availability analysis would help focus suppression activities in areas with the greatest likelihood of reducing wildfire spread. Use of native vegetation for restoration and controlling invasive species for three years after wildfire treatments would reduce the likelihood for weed invasion in burned or treated areas, thus reducing the frequency and intensity of wildland fires. This alternative promotes active and aggressive control of invasive species, which would likely result in a reduced likelihood of large-scale wildland fires.	Impacts from fire management would be the same as those described under Alternative B.	Impacts from fire management would be similar to those under Alternatives B and D. Because anthropogenic disturbance excludes habitat disturbance from wildfire and fuels management activities, the wildland fire and fuels program will retain management flexibility and a greater chance to meet goals and objectives over the life of the plan. The 3 percent anthropogenic disturbance cap should limit human-caused ignitions in GRSG habitat over the long-term and decrease the probability of wildfire occurrence and the need for fire-suppression activities. Coordination with other land management agencies and landowners may promote improved habitat conditions across land management boundaries, thus improving the efficiency and effectiveness of fire

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
also be a continued decrease in the capability of the proactive hazardous fuels reduction program to maintain reactive suppression and rehabilitation efforts in the wildland-urban interface (WUI).	the chance of human-caused ignition in PHMA. In addition, managing or restoring PHMA so that at least 70 percent of the land cover provides adequate sagebrush habitat to meet GRSG needs would promote a shift towards historic fire regimes in sagebrush ecosystems. Limiting motorized travel in PHMA to existing roads and trails until travel management planning is complete, as well as limiting road upgrades or new roads in this area, would reduce the risk of human-caused ignition in PHMA on BLM-administered and Forest Service-administered lands.			Targeted grazing would be allowed to reduce fine fuels, resulting less need for mechanical or chemical fuels treatments.		and fuels treatments across the landscape. Additionally, implementation of the Wildfire, Invasive Annual Grasses and Conifer Expansion Assessment will improve wildland fire management across the landscape via improved coordination across agencies.
Wilderness Characteristics						
Management actions to protect other resources and special designation areas offer some protection of wilderness characteristics. Alternative A includes the fewest GRSG protections and is least restrictive of surface-disturbing activities that have the potential to alter the natural setting, as well as reduce opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, of lands with wilderness characteristics. Therefore, degradation of wilderness characteristics is most likely under this alternative.	Under Alternative B, restrictions on resource uses, such as ROW exclusion and closure to mineral exploration and development, would offer more protection of lands with wilderness characteristics compared to Alternative A.	Impacts from Alternative C would be similar those described for Alternative B, but would be applied across a larger geographic area. As such, Alternative C would provide greater protection from surface-disturbing activities on lands with wilderness characteristics. In addition, livestock grazing would be prohibited in PHMA (i.e., all occupied habitat). This would eliminate the need for livestock developments (e.g., fences, cattle guards, guzzlers, stock ponds, and access roads) and would enhance wilderness characteristics.	Under Alternative D, the BLM and Forest Service would apply restrictions on resource uses similar to, though less than, Alternative B. Restrictions would include ROW avoidance areas and stipulations on mineral leasing. Such restrictions would provide more protection to lands with wilderness characteristics compared to Alternative A.	Under Alternative E, impacts from restrictions on resource uses would be similar to Alternative B, though restrictions would apply to a smaller area of lands with wilderness characteristics.	Impacts would be the same as those described for Alternative B.	Under the Proposed Plan, wilderness characteristics would receive indirect, incidental protections from the restrictions placed on management actions. Areas in PHMA and IHMA would remain open to fluid mineral leasing, with fewer acres closed leasing than any other alternative, including Alternative A. Any indirect protections wilderness characteristics might experience from closing acres to fluid mineral leasing would be experienced the least under the Proposed Plan.
Livestock Grazing/Range Management						
In general, Alternative A would be the least restrictive on	Acres open to grazing and permitted AUMs would be	Under Alternative C, grazing would be eliminated from all	Acres open to grazing and permitted AUMs would be the	Under Alternative E, allotment renewal in CHZ	In areas where grazing is permitted, management would	Acres open to grazing and permitted AUMs would be the

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
<p>livestock grazing.</p> <p>Under Alternative A, livestock grazing would continue to be managed under current guidance, with AUMs and acres open to grazing remaining at current levels. Grazing allotments would continue to be subject to permit renewals and assessments of rangeland health.</p>	<p>the same as for Alternative A.</p> <p>PHMA would be managed so that at least 70 percent of the land cover provides adequate sagebrush habitat to meet GRSG needs. Where cover requirements do not meet forage objectives for livestock grazing, this would result in the need to modify grazing practices with increased costs for permittees.</p> <p>Consideration of GRSG habitat objectives and management would be required in grazing management in PHMA and incorporated into grazing allotments through BLM AMPs or permit renewals or BLM and Forest Service NEPA processes. As a result, impacts would occur over time at a site-specific level as measures are incorporated into individual allotments.</p> <p>Land Health assessment and permit renewals would be prioritized in PHMA, but there is potential for further degradation of lands outside of PHMA that are not meeting land health standards or desired conditions.</p>	<p>allotments completely or partially within occupied habitat. Closures would impact permittees' current seasonal rotations or other management strategies that utilize both federal and private lands. The elimination of permitted grazing in PHMA under Alternative C may result in permittees' going out of business, with impacts on both individual permittees as well as local communities as a whole. Additional details of the economic impacts are discussed in Section 4.14, Social and Economic Conditions.</p> <p>Beneficial or adverse impacts on range management from other resource uses (e.g., ROW or fluid mineral development) would be diminished in scale and intensity because of the elimination of grazing in all allotments intersecting occupied habitat.</p>	<p>same as for Alternative A. Impacts from management actions would be similar to those described under Alternative B.</p> <p>A moderate decline in permitted grazing would be anticipated over time as grazing permits are modified to incorporate GRSG objectives at renewal or allotment analysis. Coordination with the state should decrease conflicts in standards and provide a location appropriate framework, assisting permittees' ability to adopt these standards and reducing impacts.</p> <p>Reconnection and expansion of native plant communities would be an objective across all GRSG habitat types and restoration of seasonal habitats would be emphasized in both priority and medial habitats. Should treatments in this habitat not match with vegetation objectives for livestock grazing, forage quality would decrease. However, in most cases, treatment (e.g., conifer removal) would improve forage conditions in the long term.</p>	<p>and IHZ would be prioritized where populations are declining.</p> <p>Alternative E would allow for greater flexibility in management options, limiting impacts on range management.</p> <p>Changes could be required to grazing timing and intensity to meet GRSG habitat requirements, with the potential for some increased time and costs to permittees as compared to Alternative A. However, due to the increased flexibility in management actions under this alternative, permittees would have more options to address GRSG habitat requirements, and impacts on range management would be limited.</p>	<p>be similar to that described in Alternative B but increased in intensity due to increased restrictions on prohibitions to grazing after fire and the prohibition on all new range improvements. These actions are likely to further limit the abilities of permittees/lessees to fully utilize permitted AUMs and result in increased time and cost for management.</p>	<p>same as for Alternative A.</p> <p>Grazing management actions and impacts are similar to those described in Alternatives B and D. GRSG habitat objectives would be incorporated into grazing allotments through allotment management plans or permit renewals, or Forest Service NEPA processes, a moderate decline in permitted grazing is anticipated over time as permits are modified to meet objectives. In the proposed plan, specific guideline for GRSG seasonal habitat with impacts determined at implementation level for BLM lands.</p> <p>Priority for land health assessment and permit renewal would include SFAs first followed by PHMAs outside the SFAs. Changes in management would follow this priority order.</p> <p>The Proposed Plan would also include additional vegetation treatment measures such as conifer removal, and annual grass treatment, with specific vegetation objectives in PHMA. FIAT assessments will also be used at implementation to determine site specific fire management measures. Where vegetation and fire management objectives do not meet forage objectives for livestock grazing, this would result in the need to modify grazing practices. However, in most cases, treatments (e.g., conifer removal) would improve forage conditions in the long term.</p> <p>Disturbance of livestock grazing</p>

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Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
						and livestock forage from development activities would be minimized in the Proposed Plan due to the inclusion of a cap on anthropogenic disturbance, mitigation for conservation gain to GRSG, and conservation measures such as adaptive management and defined monitoring, RDFs, and lek buffers.
Travel Management						
<p>Areas currently designated as open to cross-country OHV use would continue to be managed as such. There would be no new restrictions related to GRSG habitat management and no change in current levels of access under Alternative A.</p> <p>All Forest Service-administered lands would be limited to designated routes.</p>	<p>The BLM and Forest Service would limit motorized travel to existing roads and trails in PHMA. This would reduce cross-country access in those portions of PHMA that were previously managed as open for cross-country travel. Applications for the upgrading or realignment of existing routes would be required to meet certain design, location, and mitigation criteria intended to protect GRSG habitat. These requirements may preclude the construction of some new routes, but would be unlikely to reduce access across the decision area.</p> <p>Impacts on Forest Service-administered lands would be the same as for Alternative A.</p>	<p>The BLM and Forest Service would limit motorized travel to existing roads and trails in PHMA. Additionally, in PHMA, new road construction within 4 miles of active leks would be prohibited. Upgrading of existing routes in occupied habitat where such action would damage GRSG habitat would also be precluded. Together, these actions would result in site-specific losses of opportunity for motorized travel and future route construction and improved access.</p> <p>Impacts on Forest Service-administered lands would be the same as for Alternative A.</p>	<p>All BLM lands in Field Offices containing GRSG habitat would be limited to existing routes and off-road motorized travel prohibited with the exception of specific areas managed as open for recreation purposes.</p> <p>Impacts on Forest Service-administered lands would be the same as for Alternative A.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative E would be similar to Alternative D, with fewer acres identified as limited to existing routes in GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative F on BLM-administered lands would be the same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Impacts on Forest Service-administered lands would be the same as for Alternative A.</p>	<p>Impacts under the Proposed Plan would be the same as Alternative D</p>
Lands and Realty						
<p>ROW avoidance and exclusion restrictions would not be applied in GRSG habitat, thus, not preventing the BLM or Forest Service from accommodating future demand for ROW</p>	<p>Managing PHMA as ROW exclusion would prevent the BLM and Forest Service from accommodating new ROW development in those areas. With a continuing</p>	<p>The BLM would not authorize new ROWs in exclusion areas unless the infrastructure could be located in an existing ROW authorization footprint. Impacts under Alternative C would be</p>	<p>Lands and Realty management under Alternative D would establish avoidance areas in GRSG habitat, impacting the BLM- and Forest Service-administered lands and realty</p>	<p>Stipulations associated with ROW avoidance areas under Alternative E would limit the BLM's ability to accommodate the demand for new infrastructure</p>	<p>With establishment of ROW exclusion areas, neither the BLM nor Forest Service would authorize new ROW development in occupied habitat. Therefore, Alternative</p>	<p>Similar to Alternative D, the Proposed Plan would reduce the amount of land within GRSG habitat available to ROW/SUA development without restrictions, compared to Alternative A.</p>

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
<p>development within the planning area.</p> <p>Existing transportation routes would continue to provide motorized access to ROW infrastructure and communication sites for construction and maintenance with no additional impacts on lands and realty from travel and transportation management.</p> <p>GRSG habitat would remain available for withdrawal or disposal as needed to serve BLM or other agency objectives.</p>	<p>demand for new ROWs in the planning area, including major inter- and intra-state electrical transmission and pipeline ROW developments would be prevented or diverted to adjacent non-federal lands. Development on adjacent lands could result in more extensive direct and indirect impacts on GRSG populations and habitat (e.g., vehicle traffic on roads crossing public lands), especially if the development is within close proximity to GRSG habitat on BLM-administered or Forest Service-administered lands, or the ROW route is longer to avoid federal lands.</p> <p>Within exclusion areas, BLM and Forest Service would only consider new ROW authorizations where the proposed infrastructure could be co-located entirely within the footprint of an existing ROW. BLM and Forest Service would require co-location in GHMAs where possible. Impacts on the lands and realty program under Alternative B would include the need to locate proposed facilities outside exclusion areas or within existing ROWs, which limits the BLM's ability to accommodate the demand for new infrastructure development, including wind energy development.</p>	<p>similar to Alternative B, but over a greater area.</p> <p>Alternative C would further limit opportunities for communication facilities, pipelines, fiber optic cables, electrical transmission lines, and similar ROW development in response to ongoing needs.</p> <p>Impacts on land tenure would be the same as Alternative B but cover a wider area (all occupied habitat).</p>	<p>programs by reducing the BLM and Forest Service's ability to authorize above-ground linear ROWs, such as electrical transmission lines in PHMA.</p> <p>Within avoidance areas, additional stipulations for the development of electrical transmission lines could result in the denial of projects that cannot meet ROW grant requirements for the protection of GRSG habitat. Limitations on electrical transmission line development, renewable energy development, and new roadways under Alternative D would be less than Alternative C which creates exclusion areas.</p> <p>Impacts from travel management would be the same as those described above under Alternative B.</p> <p>Impacts on land tenure would be the same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>development in GRSG habitat, but less than establishing exclusion areas. With demand for new ROWs in the planning area, including major inter- and intra-state electrical transmission and pipeline ROW developments, expected to continue and increase over time, new ROW development would be diverted to adjacent non-federal lands or blocked. If new ROW development could not be feasibly developed, the result would be reduced energy and communication opportunities to meet growing needs.</p> <p>Impacts from travel management would be the same as those described under Alternative A.</p> <p>Impacts on land tenure would be the same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>F would further reduce opportunities for renewable energy, communication facilities, pipelines, fiber optic cables, electrical transmission lines, and similar ROW development from occurring in the planning area, to meet growing energy and communication needs, similar to Alternative B.</p> <p>Impacts from Travel and Transportation Management under Alternative F would be the same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Impacts on land tenure would be the same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Within avoidance areas, additional stipulations for the development of electrical transmission lines could result in the denial of projects that cannot meet ROW/SUA grant requirements for the protection of GRSG habitat. Limitations on electrical transmission line development, renewable energy development, and new roadways under the Proposed Plan would be less than other alternatives, such as Alternative C, which creates exclusion areas. GRSG conservation measures under the Proposed Plan, such as the requirement for activities to promote net conservation gain for GRSG, RDFs, buffers, and tall structure limitations, would likely discourage limit future development PHMA and IHMA. Projects that are proposed in PHMA or IHMA would incur added costs and more complex and lengthy review periods.</p> <p>Restrictions on surface activities for fluid minerals, closure of PHMA to mineral materials, and the proposed withdrawal of SFAs for locatable minerals would reduce the short- and long-term demand for ROWs/SUAs to support mineral development.</p> <p>By allowing land tenure actions that result in the net conservation gain of GRSG habitat, the BLM and Forest Service could carry out actions that consolidate land ownership or acquire lands with higher quality GRSG habitat.</p>

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	PHMA lands would not be available for disposal or withdrawal, limiting BLM's ability to accommodate other management objectives with land tenure changes.					
Minerals						
Fluid Minerals (Oil and Gas)						
<p>Under Alternative A, 289,500 unleased medium potential acres would continue to be closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p> <p>New leases in most BLM field offices and Forest Service districts within the decision area would continue to be subject to TLs, and NSO buffers would be applied for varying distances around leks.</p> <p>Acres closed have the greatest impact on the fluid minerals program by prohibiting oil and gas development on portions of federal mineral estate with high potential for such development.</p> <p>In areas closed to leasing, oil and gas operations would be restricted in their choice of project locations and may be forced to develop in areas that are challenging to access or have less economic resources because more ideal areas could be closed to leasing. This could raise the cost of fluid mineral development in the planning area and could result in operators moving to nearby private or state minerals that are open to leasing.</p>	<p>All federal mineral estate within PHMA, including 496,300 unleased medium potential acres, would be closed to oil and gas leasing. Closure of these acres would directly impact the fluid minerals program as described under Alternative A. However, because the acreage closed would increase under Alternative B, the magnitude of these impacts would also increase.</p> <p>Existing leases would remain valid through their term but could not be renewed, resulting in further long-term restrictions on the development of fluid mineral resources.</p> <p>Conservation measures in addition to RDFs would be applied as COAs to existing leases on PHMA overlying federal mineral estate. Application of these requirements would impact fluid mineral operations by increasing costs if it resulted in the application of additional requirements and/or use of more expensive technology. To avoid these costs, operators</p>	<p>All federal mineral estate in the decision area, including 601,000 unleased medium potential acres, would be closed to oil and gas leasing. Closure of these acres would directly impact the fluid minerals program as described under Alternative A; however, because Alternative C would close the most acres out of any alternative, the magnitude of these impacts would also increase.</p> <p>Management actions applicable to existing leases under Alternative C would be similar to those under Alternative B, but they would apply to all existing leases in the decision area. Alternative C would also call for COAs implementing seasonal restrictions on vehicle traffic and human presence associated with exploratory drilling. This alternative also would limit new surface disturbance on existing leases to 3 percent per section, with some exceptions. Impacts of these operating and siting restrictions would be the same type as those described under Alternative B, although the magnitude of the impacts would increase.</p>	<p>Fluid mineral allocations in PHMA and IHMA would vary depending on oil and gas development potential. 289,500 unleased medium potential acres would be closed to oil and gas leasing. An NSO stipulation would apply within 0.6 mile of leks to 176,900 acres.</p> <p>New leases within PHMA and IHMA would be subject to density limitations and a 3-percent disturbance cap for each section.</p> <p>Management of existing fluid mineral leases under Alternative D would be the same as that under Alternative B except that all management actions other than RDFs would apply to all 101 existing leases within GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>Within the planning area, 289,500 unleased medium potential acres would be closed to fluid mineral leasing under this alternative.</p> <p>Management existing leases in the decision area would be similar to that under Alternative A. Unleased areas in CHZ and IHZ would be open to leasing subject to an NSO stipulation.</p>	<p>Impacts of closures under Alternative F would be the same as under Alternative B.</p> <p>Management actions applicable to existing leases under Alternative F would be similar to those under Alternative C. However, under Alternative F, TLs would prohibit human presence as well as surface-disturbing activities during the nesting and brood-rearing season. This management would be the most restrictive management out of all the alternatives.</p>	<p>Within the planning area, 257,400 unleased medium potential acres would be closed to oil and gas leasing. Closure of these acres would directly impact the fluid minerals program as described under Alternative A; however, because more acres would be closed under the proposed plan, the magnitude of these impacts would increase.</p> <p>The same RDFs would be applied to the same acreage as under Alternative B. However, the only conservation measures applied would relate to master development plans and unitization.</p> <p>Application of the three percent disturbance cap in PHMA and IHMA and lek buffers in GHMA could impact both new and existing fluid mineral activities by preventing or restricting new surface development.</p> <p>Management of existing fluid mineral leases under the Proposed Plan would be the same as that under Alternative B with the same impacts.</p>

**Table 2-6
Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
	may move to nearby state or private minerals, resulting in lost royalties for the BLM and Forest Service.					
Fluid Minerals (Geothermal)						
<p>Under Alternative A, 12,513,900 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 2,939,400 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 9,574,600 acres of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>New leases in most BLM field offices and Forest Service districts within the decision area would continue to be subject to TLs, CSUs, and NSO buffers would be applied for varying distances around leks.</p>	<p>Under Alternative B, 19,598,800 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 5,287,800 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 14,311,000 of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>Existing leases would remain valid through their term but could not be renewed, resulting in further long-term restrictions on the development of fluid mineral resources.</p> <p>Conservation measures in addition to RDFs would be applied as COAs to existing leases on PHMA overlying federal mineral estate. Application of these requirements would impact fluid mineral operations by increasing costs if it resulted in the application of additional requirements and/or use of more expensive technology. To avoid these costs, operators may move to nearby state or private minerals, resulting in lost royalties for the BLM and Forest Service.</p>	<p>Under Alternative C, 21,901,100 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 6,137,200 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 15,763,900 acres of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>Management actions applicable to existing leases under Alternative C would be similar to those under Alternative B, but they would apply to all existing leases in the decision area. Alternative C would also call for COAs implementing seasonal restrictions on vehicle traffic and human presence associated with exploratory drilling. This alternative also would limit new surface disturbance on existing leases to 3 percent per section, with some exceptions. Impacts of these operating and siting restrictions would be the same type as those described under Alternative B, although the magnitude of the impacts would increase.</p>	<p>Under Alternative D, 17,526,500 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 3,215,600 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 14,311,000 acres of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>New leases within PHMA and IHMA would be subject to density limitations and a 3-percent disturbance cap for each section.</p> <p>Management of existing fluid mineral leases under Alternative D would be the same as that under Alternative B except that all management actions other than RDFs would apply to all 101 existing leases within GRSG habitat.</p>	<p>Acres of moderate to high and low to no potential areas closed to geothermal leasing would be the same as Alternative A. Acres subject to types of stipulations would differ; more acres would be open subject to NSO stipulations, less acres would be open subject to CSU/TL stipulations, and less acres would be open subject to standard terms and conditions.</p> <p>Unleased areas in CHZ and IHZ would be open to leasing subject to an NSO stipulation.</p>	<p>Under Alternative F, 12,513,900 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 2,939,400 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 9,574,600 acres of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>Management actions applicable to existing leases under Alternative F would be similar to those under Alternative C. However, under Alternative F, TLs would prohibit human presence as well as surface-disturbing activities during the nesting and brood-rearing season.</p>	<p>Under the Proposed Plan 11,296,800 acres of the planning area would be closed to geothermal leasing. This includes 2,832,800 acres of available moderate to high potential areas and 8,464,000 acres of available low to no potential areas.</p> <p>Under the proposed plan, RDFs and BMPs would be applied as COAs when a geothermal drilling permit or other post-lease activity is approved. In addition to affecting new leases, the COAs would be applied to the 25,571 acres of existing leases within GRSG habitat, consistent with existing lease terms and special stipulations. These RDFs and conservation measures would include such requirements as noise restrictions, structure height limitations, design requirements, water development standards, remote monitoring requirements, and reclamation standards as described in Appendix A. This alternative also would limit new surface disturbance on existing leases to 3 percent per section, with some exceptions.</p>
Nonenergy Leasables						
Under Alternative A, no changes	Under Alternative B, PHMA	Impacts under Alternative C	Under Alternative D, PHMA	Non-energy leasable mineral	Impacts under Alternative F	Impacts under the Proposed Plan

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Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
<p>would be made to the acres open and closed to leasing consideration. Currently, 11,799,500 acres are closed to non-energy mineral leasing.</p> <p>Existing federal non-energy leasable mineral leases in the decision area would continue to be subject to any stipulations or BMPs contained in those leases. Application of BMPs could alter how mineral resources are accessed and extracted and result in the use of different technology than would otherwise have been used.</p> <p>Non-energy leasable mineral development operations may also move to nearby private or state minerals containing non-energy leasable mineral resources within GRSG habitat. This change would result in lost royalties for the BLM and Forest Service.</p>	<p>would be closed to prospecting and leasing (19,167,400 acres). Management under this alternative would close more federal mineral estate to non-energy leasable mineral prospecting and leasing than management under Alternative A. Closing areas to non-energy mineral prospecting and leasing would result in the same type of impacts as under Alternative A, but over a larger area.</p> <p>However, the majority of acres in unleased KPLAs, where interest in non-energy leasable mineral development is most likely, would remain open to leasing. Therefore, impacts would be mitigated.</p> <p>Existing federal non-energy leasable mineral leases in PHMA would be subject to RDFs. Application of RDFs would increase costs of non-energy leasable development if it delayed resource development or resulted in the use of more expensive technology or less efficient development than would otherwise have been used.</p>	<p>would be the same as those described under Alternative B except that more acres would be closed (21,629,700 acres). As a result, the magnitude of impacts under this alternative would increase.</p> <p>However, similar to Alternative B, the majority of unleased acres in KPLAs would remain open to leasing. Therefore, impacts would be mitigated.</p>	<p>and IHMA would be closed to prospecting and leasing. Management under this alternative would close more federal mineral estate (8,308,600 acres) to non-energy leasable mineral prospecting and leasing than management under Alternative A.</p> <p>Impacts in unleased KPLAs would be similar to those under Alternative A except that CSUs and seasonal and daily TLs would be applied to all lands available for leasing in GHMA. Additionally, TLs would be applied to the ten federal phosphate leases within GRSG habitat.</p> <p>Applying BMPs as Conditions of Approval on any new mine plan and requiring restoration of habitat or off-site mitigation could alter how mineral resources are accessed and extracted and result in the use of different (potentially more expensive) technology than would otherwise have been used.</p>	<p>allocations under Alternative E would be the same as those under Alternative A and would result in the same impacts.</p> <p>Impacts in unleased KPLAs would be similar to those under Alternative A except that lands open to leasing would be subject to several stipulations that include prohibiting permanent structures within occupied leks, prohibiting tall structures within one mile of leks, restrictions on noise disturbances, and various TLs specific to protecting leks. Stipulations would restrict the ability of mineral resources to be developed or extracted.</p>	<p>would be the same as those described under Alternative C, but would impact a smaller area (19,167,400 acres).</p> <p>However, similar to Alternative B, the majority of unleased acres in KPLAs would remain open to leasing. Therefore, impacts would be mitigated.</p>	<p>would be similar to those described under Alternative B except that fewer acres would be closed (16,270,500 acres) and the disturbance cap and lek buffers would apply. Because more acres would be closed compared to Alternative A and additional restrictions would be added, impacts would increase under the Proposed Plan.</p> <p>Because KPLAs would remain open to nonenergy solid mineral leasing, impacts on federal nonenergy solid leasable mineral development would be mitigated.</p> <p>Application of RDFs and TLs to existing phosphate leases in GRSG habitat would result in the same impacts described under Alternative D.</p>
Locatable Minerals						
<p>Under Alternative A, no change would be made to the acres of federal mineral estate with high potential that are withdrawn or petitioned for withdrawal (currently 5,380,200 acres). Withdrawal or closure of an area</p>	<p>Under Alternative B, PHMA (7,928,700 acres) would be recommended for withdrawal in addition to the 5,380,200 acres currently withdrawn. The large increase in areas petitioned</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative C would be the same as those described under Alternative B except that more acres (11,555,000 acres) would be recommended for withdrawal. The magnitude of impacts</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative D would be the same as those described under Alternative A, except that additional measures to avoid or minimize adverse effects on GRSG and their habitat would be required for</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative E would be the same as those described under Alternative A.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternative F would be the same as those described under Alternative B.</p>	<p>Under the Proposed Plan 2,968,200 acres would be recommended for withdrawal. The increase in areas petitioned for withdrawal compared with Alternative A would result in the types of impacts described under</p>

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Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
<p>to mining development eliminates the ability to access and extract the mineral resources in that area under new claims. This represents an impact on the potential discovery, development, and use of those resources by decreasing the availability of mineral resources. In addition, validity exams must be completed on all existing claims in withdrawn areas. The need for these exams adds costs and delays for the BLM, Forest Service, and claimant.</p> <p>This alternative would be the least restrictive to locatable minerals because a larger percentage of the decision area would be open to locatable mineral entry and no additional restrictions would be applied to mining operations.</p>	<p>for withdrawal under this alternative compared with Alternative A would increase the development delays and costs of validity exams on the BLM, Forest Service, or claimant. Accessing and extracting locatable minerals of federal mineral estate would not be impacted by applying BMPs; however, mining operations and practices could be affected and costs increased if an operator agrees to apply any of the BMPs on a project-specific basis.</p>	<p>under this alternative would increase since more acreage would be affected.</p> <p>Impacts from applying BMPs would be the same as those described under Alternative B.</p>	<p>3809 notices and plans of operations in all habitat types. A total of 11,555,000 acres would be recommended for withdrawal under this alternative. Impacts from these additional measures would be highly variable depending on the extent of the additional requirements. If these measures resulted in the mineral resource not being able to be accessed or extracted, an impact on the potential discovery, development, and use of those resources would occur because the availability of mineral resource would decrease.</p> <p>Impacts from applying BMPs would be the same as those described under Alternative B.</p>			<p>Alternative B.</p> <p>Impacts from applying BMPs would be the same as those described under Alternative B.</p>
Salable Minerals (Mineral Materials)						
<p>Under Alternative A, no change would be made to the acres that would open or closed (currently 10,707,600 acres closed) to mineral material disposal.</p>	<p>Under Alternative B, all PHMA would be closed to mineral material disposal (18,589,300 acres). Closing these acres would prevent access to the mineral resources underlying them and reduce mineral material development in the decision area.</p> <p>Management of mineral materials on federal mineral estate outside of PHMA would be the same as that under Alternative A.</p>	<p>Under Alternative C, all GRSG habitat would be closed to mineral material disposal (21,174,000 acres). This alternative would close the most acres to mineral material disposal of all the alternatives. Therefore, impacts on mineral materials would be the highest under Alternative C.</p>	<p>Under Alternative D, areas within 3 km of occupied leks would be closed to mineral materials disposal (13,211,100 acres).</p> <p>All other areas in GRSG habitat would be subject to TLs.</p>	<p>Alternative E would close the same acres as under Alternative A (10,707,600 acres).</p> <p>Under Alternative E, mineral materials management would differ between portions of the decision area in Idaho and Montana and portions in Utah.</p> <p>Within Idaho and southwest Montana, CHZ would be closed to mineral material disposal. Closure of the 114 existing community pits in CHZ (23 percent of existing community pits in GRSG</p>	<p>Under Alternative F, 18,589,300 acres would be closed to mineral materials disposal. Impacts of these closures would be the same type as those described under Alternative B. Because more acres would be closed under Alternative F than under Alternative A, impacts on the mineral materials programs would increase.</p>	<p>Under the Proposed Plan, all PHMA would be closed to mineral material disposal (15,529,000 acres). The impacts described under Alternative B would be mitigated in the Montana portion of the decision area because new free use permits would still be allowed and existing pits would be able to expand. Because 45 percent more acres of federal mineral estate would be closed under the Proposed Plan compared with Alternative A, the magnitude of these impacts would increase.</p> <p>Application of the disturbance threshold in IHMA and RDFs, buffers, and timing restrictions in</p>

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Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Proposed Plan
				habitat) would also be recommended. Within Utah, mineral material operations within PHMA would be subject to TLs and other restrictions.		IHMA and GHMA would increase restrictions on mineral material activities compared with Alternative A, thereby increasing impacts.
Special Designations						
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern						
The BLM would continue managing the 53 existing ACECs containing 325,000 acres of occupied GRSG habitat to protect the identified relevant and important values. Sagebrush habitat is not identified as a relevant and important value in any of these existing ACECs.	No new ACECs would be designated. Impacts would be similar to those described under Alternative A, however existing ACECs and the identified relevant and important values for which they were designated could experience indirect, beneficial impacts from restrictions placed on GRSG habitat within or adjacent to ACECs.	Under Alternative C, 39 new BLM ACECs encompassing approximately 4,200,000 acres of occupied GRSG habitat would be designated as sagebrush reserves, for the relevant and important value of conserving GRSG.	No new ACECs would be designated. Impacts would be the same as those described under Alternative B.	No new ACECs would be designated. Impacts would be the same as those described under Alternative B.	Under Alternative F, up to 18 new BLM ACECs and Forest Service GRSG Zoological Areas encompassing up to 8.3 million acres of occupied GRSG habitat would be designated as sagebrush reserves for the relevant and important value of conserving GRSG.	No new ACECs would be designated. Impacts would be the same as those described under Alternative B.
Socioeconomic Impacts						
Under Alternative A, current management would continue for grazing, mineral leasing and development, and other activities in GRSG habitat areas. The economic benefits of these activities would be maintained, and communities would not suffer losses in income or jobs associated with GRSG conservation efforts.	Under Alternative B, grazing would not be restricted on GRSG habitat, so permittees would not suffer economic losses. Under Alternative B, mineral leasing for fluid minerals, salable minerals and mineral materials would be closed or restricted in PHMA. These restrictions would reduce the opportunity to develop minerals on federal land and reduce the revenue and jobs to local communities.	Alternative C would eliminate grazing from all allotments in occupied habitat. The elimination of permitted grazing in PHMA under Alternative C may result in permittees' going out of business, with impacts on both individual permittees as well as local communities as a whole. Socioeconomic impacts from reduced mineral leasing and development would be similar to Alternative B but would cover a wider area, all occupied habitat.	Under Alternative D, grazing would be maintained at current levels, maintaining the economic benefits of grazing to permittees and communities. Mineral leasing acreage would not be reduced under Alternative D, but would be subject to stipulations regarding timing and proximity to GRSG lek sites. Maintaining current acreage open to leasing would minimize economic harm to workers and communities from GRSG conservation measures.	Under Alternative E, grazing would be maintained at current levels, maintaining the economic benefits of grazing to permittees and communities. Mineral leasing acreage would not be reduced under Alternative E, but limited areas would be subject to stipulations regarding timing and proximity to GRSG lek sites. Maintaining current acreage open to leasing would minimize economic harm to workers and communities from GRSG conservation measures.	Alternative F restrictions on grazing could also harm permittees' economic well-being and may drive some out of business, causing harm to individuals and communities in GRSG habitat areas. Socioeconomic impacts from reduced mineral leasing and development would be similar to Alternative B.	Under the Proposed Plan, grazing would be maintained at current levels, maintaining the economic benefits of grazing to permittees and communities. Mineral leasing acreage would not be reduced under the Proposed Plan, but would be subject to stipulations regarding timing and proximity to GRSG lek sites. Maintaining current acreage open to leasing would minimize economic harm to workers and communities from GRSG conservation measures.

Section 2.6: Proposed Plan **Amendment**/ Proposed Management of GRSG Habitat

Section 2.6.1: Development of the Proposed Plan **Amendment** for Greater Sage-Grouse Management

In developing the Proposed Plan **Amendment**, the BLM/FS made modifications to the Preferred Alternative identified in the Draft LUPA/EIS. The modifications are based on public comments received on the Draft LUPA/EIS, internal BLM review, new information and best available science, the need for clarification in the plans, and ongoing coordination with stakeholders across the range of the GRSG. As a result, the Proposed Plan **Amendment** provides consistent GRSG habitat management across the range, prioritizes development outside of GRSG habitat, and focuses on a landscape-scale approach to conserving GRSG habitat.

The BLM/FS . . .

[Note: select one of the following two options depending on how the sub-region's proposed plan was developed. Also, remove references to "Forest Service," "SFAs," and "LUPAs" if not applicable to your sub-region]

Option 1: did not carry forward Alternative **X** (the Preferred Alternative) from the Draft LUPA/EIS. Rather the LUPA/proposed plan consists of a combination of all the alternatives and is now considered the Proposed LUPA for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the **X** *[NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]*.

Option 2: modified the Preferred Alternative, identified as Alternative X as presented in the Draft LUPA/EIS, which is now considered the LUPA/proposed plan for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the **X** *[NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]*.

Since release of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM/FS have continued to work closely with a broad range of governmental partners, including Governors, State Fish and Game agencies, the USFWS, Indian tribes, county commissioners and many others. Through this coordination, the BLM/FS have developed a Proposed Plan **Amendment** that is consistent with state, Tribal, and local strategies to the maximum extent possible and ensures the long-term conservation of the GRSG. The BLM/FS also received many substantive public comments on the Draft LUPA (see **Appendix X**), which greatly informed the BLM/FS's development of the Proposed Plan **Amendment**.

The BLM/FS's Proposed Plan **Amendment** incorporates documents related to the conservation of GRSG that have been released since the publication of the draft LUPA/EIS. For example, this Proposed Plan **Amendment** considers the USFWS' October 27th, 2014 memorandum "*Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendations to Refine Land Use Allocations in Highly Important Landscapes*" (see X) and the USGS' November 21st, 2014 report "*Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse—A Review*" (USGS 2014). Based on these documents, the

BLM is proposing to designate Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) to further protect highly valuable habitat and is proposing to include lek-buffer distances when authorizing activities near leks. The BLM/FS also updated the Proposed Plan **Amendment** to reflect new GRSG state conservation strategies, including **recent State Executive Orders**.

The BLM/FS has refined the Proposed Plan **Amendment** to provide a layered management approach that offers the highest level of protection for GRSG in the most valuable habitat. Land use allocations in the Proposed Plan would limit or eliminate new surface disturbance in PHMA, while minimizing disturbance in GHMA. In addition to establishing protective land use allocations, the Proposed Plan **Amendment** would implement a suite of management tools such as disturbance limits (see **X**), GRSG habitat objectives and monitoring (see **X**), mitigation approaches (see **X**), adaptive management triggers and responses (see **X**), and lek buffer-distances (see **X**) throughout the range. These overlapping and reinforcing conservation measures will work in concert to improve GRSG habitat condition and provide clarity and consistency on how the BLM/FS will manage activities in GRSG habitat.

For the sake of clarity, BLM and FS decisions have been separated into two sections (described in Section **X** and **Y**, respectively) in the Proposed Plan **Amendment**.

**Table 2-X
USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Areas
Addressing these Threats**

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2010 warranted but precluded finding)	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat (2013)	Applicable BLM/Forest Service Proposed Plan Resource Program Addressing Threat
Wildland Fire	Fire	<p><u>BLM</u>: Wildland Fire Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Fire Management (see section X)</p>
Invasive Species	Nonnative, Invasive Plants Species	<p><u>BLM</u>: Vegetation Management(see section X), Range Management (see section X), Wildland Fire Management (see section X), and Recreation (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: GRSG Habitat (see section X), Fire Management (see section X), and Roads and Transportation (see section X)</p>
Oil and Gas For wind energy development, see <i>Infrastructure – power lines/pipelines, roads (below)</i>	Energy Development	<p><u>BLM</u>: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Fluid Minerals (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Fluid Minerals (see sections X)</p>
Prescribed Fire	Sagebrush Removal	<p><u>BLM</u>: Vegetation Management (see section X) and Wildland Fire Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: GRSG Habitat (see section X) and Fire Management (see section X)</p>

Grazing	Grazing	<p><u>BLM</u>: Range Management (see section X), Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X), Special Status Species (see section X), and Vegetation Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Livestock Grazing (see section X) and Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X),</p>
See <i>Grazing Management (above)</i>	Range Management Structures	<p><u>BLM</u>: Range Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Livestock Grazing (see section X)</p>
<i>No similar threat identified</i>	Free-Roaming Equid Management	<p><u>BLM</u>: Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X)</p>
Conifer Encroachment	Pinyon and/or Juniper Expansion	<p><u>BLM</u>: Wildland Fire Management (see section X) and Vegetation Management (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Fire Management (see section X) and GRS Habitat (see section X)</p>
Agriculture & Urbanization	Agricultural Conversion and Ex-Urban Development	<p><u>BLM</u>: Lands and Realty (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Lands and Realty/Land Ownership Adjustments (see section X)</p>
Hard Rock Mining	Mining	<p><u>BLM</u>: Lands and Realty (see section X), Locatable Minerals (see section X), Salable Minerals (see section X), and Non-energy Leasable Minerals (see section X)</p> <p><u>Forest Service</u>: Coal Mines (see section X), Locatable Minerals (see section X), Non-energy Leasable Minerals (see sections X), and Mineral</p>

		Materials (see section X)
<i>See Infrastructure, Roads</i>	Recreation	BLM: Recreation (see section X) and Trails and Travel Management (see section X) Forest Service: Recreation (see section X) and Roads/ Transportation (see section X)
Infrastructure - Power lines/ pipelines - Roads - Communication sites - Railroads Range improvements (see below)	Infrastructure	BLM: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Trails and Travel Management (see section X) Forest Service: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Roads/ Transportation (see section X)
Infrastructure – Range Improvements	Range Management Structures	BLM: Range Management (see section X) Forest Service: Livestock Grazing (see section X)
Water Developments	No similar threat identified	All applicable programs
Climate Change	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.</i>
Weather	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan</i>

		<i>addressing this threat.</i>
Predation	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : All applicable programs <u>Forest Service</u> : GRSG Habitat (see section X), Land and Realty (see section X), and Minerals (see section X)
Disease	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : All applicable programs <u>Forest Service</u> : Minerals/Fluid Mineral Operations
Hunting	No similar threat identified	<i>There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.</i>
Contaminants	No similar threat identified	<u>BLM</u> : Public Health and Safety (see section X) <u>Forest Service</u> : Mineral (see section X)

Source: USFWS 2010, 2013



Lepak, Dominika <dlepak@blm.gov>

Response to comments on ADPP

1 message

Lepak, Dominika <dlepak@blm.gov>

Fri, Nov 7, 2014 at 1:39 PM

To: Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>, Jonathan Beck <jmbeck@blm.gov>

Cc: Christopher Robbins <clrobbins@blm.gov>, Paul Makela <pmakela@blm.gov>, Steven Jirik <sjirik@blm.gov>, Ethan Ellsworth <eellsworth@blm.gov>, Jason Wright <jswright@blm.gov>

Jon and Brent,

Since I'm out next week, I thought I would just send back my responses to the comments I was assigned. Jon and I will discuss use of the REA when I'm back in the office on 11/17.

62 - I am not sure what the conflict is. What was previously 10.12 bullet 3, it says targeted grazing can be accomplished in the confines of existing permits where feasible. 10.11 says targeted grazing can be within existing permits, or other mechanisms, which are listed, so I think these are compatible unless I'm missing something.

63 - We had extensive discussion about this, and by definition, targeted grazing is limited in scope, and may be appropriate in both annual and perennial grasslands (particularly crested seedings). If targeted grazing was used in a sagebrush area, which I think is unlikely because fuels models will show very little effect from modifying the herbaceous component, the spatial extent would be similar to other sorts of fuel-break treatments. This is addressed by the first bullet of 10.12 "directly involve the minimum footprint..."

64 - Taking the idea that targeted grazing has a small footprint, the idea of "allowing conformance with S&Gs at the assessment scale" means that the targeted fuel break area may not meet S&Gs, but the larger landscape still would. However, I don't think that the targeted grazing can ensure that broader S&Gs are met at the pasture or allotment scale, because the targeted grazing should not be occurring at that scale. This action was put in there to remind proponents of targeted grazing again that it is done using the minimum footprint, and that we are not exempted from Fundamentals of Range Health nor S&Gs. The targeted grazing approach should not impede the pasture or allotment-scale attainment of the S&Gs.

65- I will defer to Steve Jirik on this one.. Maybe a case could be made for grazing vigorous crested 1 year after fire to open up niches for flow-on sagebrush seed? I'd be hesitant to turn livestock out onto new seedling plantings, due to the cost of investment and risk of damage to the new plants, but that's just my gut level reaction, not anything I have info to back up with.

66 - I agree that Paul's language would be appropriate to add to 11.4.

68 - I think the new language addressed Paul's concern. Paul, please let me know if it doesn't.

69 - Agree with Paul - maybe this could be reworded to something along the lines of "retain old-growth trees in old-growth stands" Kind of redundant, but clarifies that we might want to remove the odd lone tree in a sagebrush community, but on the other hand, might want to take younger trees out of old-growth stands in the fire safe sites.

84 - I would argue that it is inappropriate to set one-size-fits-all utilization levels or seasons of use at this planning scale. It seems arbitrary and capricious to me to apply these use levels without site-specific analysis. I would also argue that for many lower-productivity sites, these herbaceous utilization values are too high. For instance, I believe use levels closer to 20% were deemed appropriate on the Garat allotment to allow for improvement. Without BLM capability to monitor, it is more effective to build mandatory T&Cs into the permit (livestock number, kind, season of use, pasture rotations) that make progress towards our desired conditions. We still have the habitat objectives that will apply under Standard 8, and require grazing changes if not met.

85 - we had a management action for adjustments during drought - I don't know when or why it was deleted.

However, I would not recommend including it under MA 16.5 because that action is specific to making changes to the term grazing permit as a result of RLH determinations. Drought would be on a more temporary, as-needed basis.

86 - That can be added if needed. At least within Idaho, we are analyzing a No Grazing alternative in all permit renewal NEPA.

87 - a forage reserve is an area that is set aside for use as needed by various permittees who might be displaced by wildfire, ESR, restoration efforts, etc. rather than having a term permit issued for grazing like a regular allotment. These would likely be lower-quality areas - most likely crested seedings.

88 - I think Jim's suggested addition is fine for RM-12

—

Nika Lepak
Rangeland Monitoring and Ecology
BLM, Idaho State Office
(208)373-3810
dlepak@blm.gov

Great Basin Region Greater Sage-grouse Federal Family Meeting



August 19-21, 2014

BLM Oregon State Office, Portland, Oregon



1 - Informational Packet Navigation Tool

Each Informational Packet contains the following materials:

Ref #	Document Title	Packet Page Number
1	Informational Packet Navigation Tool	Pages 1-2
2	Great Basin Federal Family Meeting Agenda	Pages 3-9
3	Great Basin ADPP Map Packet (30 11X17 Total)	<i>Separate 11”X17” Packet</i>
4	Population Summary Tables (7 total)	Pages 11-32
5	Acronyms and Abbreviations List	Page 32
6	Land Use Plan Allocations Cheat Sheet	Pages 33-34

Great Basin Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP) Map Packet

- ✓ Map 1 in the separate Great Basin ADPP Map Packet is a reference map that depicts GRSG populations, sub-regional boundaries, and surface management.
- ✓ Map 2 is also a reference map depicting where the Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs), Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH), and Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) (or other management area/habitat classifications) are located in the Great Basin Region.
- ✓ The following 28 maps display two sets of 14 ADPP land use plan allocations being applied to PPH and PGH in the Great Basin Region. The sets include one map highlighting the allocation decisions being applied in the PACs (maps on the left), and the other displaying the specific allocation being proposed for all PPH and PGH (maps on the right).

Population Summary Tables

- ✓ There are a total of seven population summary tables that are part of this informational packet. The tables are organized in two different ways: 1) by populations fully within a sub-region (a total of five tables), and 2) by populations that span across more than one sub-region (such as the Western Great Basin and Northern Great Basin Populations).
- ✓ Population Statistics: At the top of each table, there is a list of statistics relative to the population (or multiple populations that are solely within a sub-region). In order to provide context as to how the PACs correlate with the populations, this table provides the land status acre figures split by PPMA, PGMA, and Non-habitat for lands within the PACs and lands not within the PAC.
- ✓ Threats: The threats posed to each population are presented in the left-hand column of each table. The threats identified in this column are those threats cited as “present and widespread” in Table 2 of the USFWS’s 2013 Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. Although not identified as “present and widespread”, additional threats were addressed as they relate to the National Policy Team (NPT) allocation guidance.



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- ✓ **Red text:** The red text indicates areas where the sub-regional ADPP allocation deviates from the NPT guidance provided to the sub-regional teams in April 2014. Rational as to why there is a deviation from the NPT guidance is also provided in red text in the right hand column of the table.
- ✓ **Green text:** The green text indicates areas where the Forest Service is deviating from the BLM's allocation or management direction to address that threat.
- ✓ **Purple text:** The purple text is only displayed in the Montana population for the Idaho/SW Montana ADDP and depicts where the BLM has different management decisions in Idaho and Montana.

Acronyms and Abbreviations List & BLM Land Use Plan (LUP) Allocations Cheat Sheet

Throughout the population summary tables, many sub-regional titles, allocation types, agency names, and other terms have been abbreviated. This list provides a description for all acronyms and abbreviations presented in the population summary tables. The BLM LUP Allocation Cheat Sheet lists all of the BLM LUP allocations specific to BLM program areas and provides a brief definition for each of these allocations (per BLM's Lands Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1).



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Great Basin Region Federal Family Meeting Agenda

August 19-21, 2014 – BLM Oregon State Office, Portland, OR

Objectives of this Meeting

- Identify threats to Greater Sage-grouse (GRSG) for each PAC/population within the BLM/FS planning area as identified in the COT Report
- Determine how each BLM and FS plan addresses these threats through land use allocations and other conservation actions
- Discuss the adequacy of the land use allocation decisions and other conservation measures to address these threats and any changes in plans required to address inadequacies and/or inconsistencies in response
- Provide clear and specific guidance to develop draft final administrative plans that are adequate to address the threats to each GRSG population identified in the COT Report

DAY ONE – TUESDAY AUGUST 19, 2014

- 8:00 am **Welcome**
Jerry Perez, BLM Oregon State Director
- 8:05 am **Introductions**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 8:10 am **Opening Remarks**
Neil Kornze, BLM Director
Noreen Walsh, USFWS Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region
Chris Iverson, USFS Deputy Regional Forester
Amy Lueders, BLM Nevada State Director
- 8:30 am **Process, Expectations, and Outcomes**
Jim Lyons, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, DOI
Michael Bean, Counselor for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, DOI
- 9:00 am **Agenda Review (Logistics)**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 9:15 am **BLM Approach to Developing ADPP's**
Ed Roberson, BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning
- 9:25 am **Forest Service Approach to Developing their DPPA's**
Chris Iverson, USFS
- 9:40 am **Major Changes between BLM/FS DEIS' and ADPPs in Great Basin**
Lauren Mermejo, Great Basin Regional Project Manager
- 10:00 am 15 Minute Break**



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10:15 am **5-Minute ADDP Overview by BLM State Directors**
NV - Amy Lueders, BLM NV State Director
CA - Jim Kenna, BLM CA State Director
OR - Jerry Perez, BLM OR State Director
UT - Juan Palma, BLM UT State Director
ID - Tim Murphy, BLM Acting ID State Director
MT - Jamie Connell, BLM MT State Director

11:00 am **Information Packet Orientation**
Frank Quamen, BLM-NOC Wildlife Biologist
Matt Mageletti, BLM- WO Planning

WAFWA Management Zone V

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within OR

11:15 am

- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Mageletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Mageletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00 pm 1 Hour Lunch

Review of Conservation Strategies for the Western Great Basin Population (NV/NE CA and OR)

1: 00 pm

- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
- ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Mageletti
- ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Mageletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
- ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each**



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PAC/population and remaining issues in question

- ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

3:00 pm **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

3:30 pm 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Utah

- 3:45 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone**
Jim Lyons - ASLM
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

5:45 pm **Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator



DAY TWO – WEDNSDAY AUGUST 20, 2014

8:00 am **Recap from day 1**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

Continuation of WAFWA Management Zone III

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Nevada

- 8:15 am
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

9:15 **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie

9:45 am 15 Minute Break

WAFWA Management Zone IV

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Idaho

- 10:00 am
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

12:00pm 1 Hour Lunch



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Review of Conservation Strategies for Northern Great Basin Population (ID, NV/CA, and OR)

- 1:00 pm
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- 2:30 pm** **15 Minute Break**
- 2:45 pm
- ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
- 4:00 pm
- Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone**
Penny Mabie
- 5:00 pm
- Close-out**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator



DAY THREE – THURSDAY AUGUST 21, 2014

8:00 am **Recap from day 2**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

Continuation of WAFWA Management Zone IV

Review of Conservation Strategies for Populations solely within Southwest Montana

- 8:15 am
- ✓ **Review of Threats to GRSG and Identified Treats to Populations in the Zone** *Jim Lyons - ASLM*
 - ✓ **Review of present threats to this population**
Frank Quamen/Matt Magaletti
 - ✓ **Discuss proposed responses to each threat and rationale**
Matt Magaletti, State Directors, and Project Leads
 - ✓ **Discuss adequacy of conservation actions to address threats, inconsistencies and/or other concerns**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)
 - ✓ **Finalize changes (if any) in plans to address identified threats to each PAC/population and remaining issues in question**
 - ✓ **Identify and record specific change to relevant plans**
Meeting Principals (Facilitated by Penny Mabie)

9:15 am **Validate outcomes for the entire WAFWA Management Zone IV**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator

9:45 am 15 Minute Break

10:00 am **Adaptive Management, Mitigation and Monitoring**
Status by BLM State Directors Facilitated by Penny Mabie

11:00 am **Update on Coordination with States**
Status by BLM State Directors Facilitated by Penny Mabie

12:00 pm 1 Hour Lunch

1:00 pm **Next Steps with the States**
Jim Lyons, ASLM

1:45 pm **NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative Update with the States/Private Landowners**
Tim Griffiths, NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative Coordinator

2:15 pm **Schedule Discussion**
Ed Roberson, BLM
Noreen Walsh, USFWS



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- 2:45 pm** **15 Minute Break**
- 3:00 pm **Outcome Summary and Follow-up Actions**
Penny Mabie, Meeting Facilitator
- 4:00 pm **Closing Remarks**
Jim Lyons, DOI
Ed Roberson, BLM
Noreen Walsh, USFWS
Chris Iverson, USFS

Great Basin Region Roll-Up Attendees:

- BLM States (12): State Directors: **Amy Lueders, Jerry Perez, Juan Palma, Jim Kenna, Tim Murphy and Jamie Connell**
Project Managers: Joe Tague, Joan Suther, Mike Haske, Quincy Bahr, Brent Ralston, John Carlson
 - BLM Regional (2): Lauren Mermejo and Johanna Munson
 - BLM WO/NOC (8): **Neil Kornze, Steve Ellis, Ed Roberson, Kathy Stangl, Frank Quamen, Joe Stout, Steve Small, and Matt Magaletti**
 - DOI (3) **Jim Lyons, Michael Bean, and Sarah Greenberger**
 - SOL (3): **Bret Birdsong, Ted Boling, and Sarah Shattuck**
 - USFS National (5): **Chris Iverson, Glen Stein and Madelyn Dillon**
Project Managers: Ron Rodriguez, Rob Mickelson
 - OGC (1): Kathryn Guillou Bergenholtz
 - FWS (11): **Noreen Walsh, Pat Deibert, Nicole Alt, Paul Henson, Dennis Mackey, Ted Koch, Mary Grim, Michael Fris, Terry Rabot, Larry Crist and Jesse Delia**
 - NRCS National (1): Tim Griffiths
 - Facilitator (1): Penny Mabie
 - EMPSI Rep (1): David Batts
- TOTAL: 48 (16 Principals at the table)**



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3 - Great Basin ADPP Map Packet (30 11" X 17" Maps)



4 – Population Summary Tables

- 4a – Oregon Sub-region (Populations 17 and 18)
- 4b – Population 31: Western Great Basin (Sub-regions NV/NE CA & OR)
- 4c – Utah Sub-region (Populations 9b 9c 10a 10b 11 12 13a 13b 13c 15a 15b and 26b)
- 4d – Nevada/Northeast California Sub-region (Populations 14, 15c, and 30)
- 4e – Idaho Portion of the Idaho/Southwestern Montana Sub-region (Populations 18, 23, 25, and 27)
- 4f – Population 26a: Northern Great Basin (Sub-regions Nevada/NE California, Idaho, and Oregon)
- 4g – Southwest Montana Portion of the Idaho/Southwestern Montana Sub-region (Populations 19-22)



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4a - Oregon Sub-region

Populations (fully within Oregon sub-region): 17 and 28

Population Statistics (17 and 28)				
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	472,596 (11%)	BLM:	0 (0%)
	FS:	19,312 (0%)	FS:	116 (0%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)
	Other Federal:	19 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)
	Private:	491,640 (11%)	Private:	8,464 (0%)
	State:	28,279 (1%)	State:	0 (0%)
	Other:	578 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	0 (0%)	BLM:	438,555 (10%)
	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	597,892 (14%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	280 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	2,172 (0%)
	Private:	0 (0%)	Private:	455,066 (10%)
	State:	0 (0%)	State:	16,427 (0%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	9,366 (0%)
TOTAL	1,012,424 (23%)	1,887,679 (43%)	1,528,338 (34%)	

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 17)	<u>PPMA</u> : Retention <u>PGMA</u> : Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat.
Sagebrush Elimination (Applicable to: 17)	<u>PPMA</u> : Retention <u>PGMA</u> : Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat, See other management actions for applicable threats.
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 17)	<u>PPMA</u> : Retention <u>PGMA</u> : Varies (no action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA in federal ownership.
Fire (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects.



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances around leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
	<u>PPMA</u> : Exclusion <u>PGMA</u> : Avoidance <u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u> <u>PPMA</u> : NSO <u>PGMA</u> : Open with moderate constraints (CSU with TLs) with NSO for 1 mile around leks	
Mining (Applicable to: 17 and 28)	<u>Mineral Materials</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
	<u>PPMA</u> : Closed <u>PGMA</u> : Open <u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u> <u>PPMA</u> : Closed <u>PGMA</u> : Open	
Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u> <u>PPMA</u> : Avoidance <u>PGMA</u> : Avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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	<p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p>PPMA: Avoidance PGMA: Open</p>	
Disturbance	<p>3% disturbance threshold. BSU: PPMA within 21 Oregon PACs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss applied to PPMA and PGMA (with benefit to GRSG habitat).



4b - Population: 31 – Western Great Basin
Sub-regions: Nevada/NE California and Oregon*

Population 31 Statistics						
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat			
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4,809,659 (34%)	BLM:	222,377 (2%)	BLM:	200,199 (1%)
	FS:	22,662 (0%)	FS:	1 (0%)	FS:	0 (0%)
	BIA:	9,600 (0%)	BIA:	345 (0%)	BIA:	568 (0%)
	Other Federal:	703,402 (5%)	Other Federal:	23,825 (0%)	Other Federal:	11,264 (0%)
	Private:	315,140 (2%)	Private:	12,126 (0%)	Private:	9,435 (0%)
	State:	36,176 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)
	Other:	415,230 (3%)	Other:	15,811 (0%)	Other:	63,776 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	60,052 (0%)	BLM:	2,294,184 (16%)	BLM:	2,299,840 (16%)
	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	31,840 (0%)	FS:	622,779 (4%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	21,982 (0%)
	Other Federal:	2,428 (0%)	Other Federal:	43,713 (0%)	Other Federal:	233,636 (2%)
	Private:	2,232 (0%)	Private:	484,492 (3%)	Private:	452,878 (3%)
	State:	5 (0%)	State:	43,492 (0%)	State:	49,429 (0%)
	Other:	179 (0%)	Other:	75,885 (1%)	Other:	640,922 (5%)
TOTAL	6,376,765 (45%)	3,248,341 (23%)	4,606,708 (32%)			

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated – unless noted, these apply to NV/CA, OR, and ID. <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Fire	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. • Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year (except Oregon). • Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. • Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.



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Weeds/Annual Grasses	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. • Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Mining (NOT A PRESENT OR WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p>NV/CA-PPMA: Closed OR-PPMA: Closed</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Closed OR-PGMA: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT OR WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p>NV/CA-PPMA: Avoidance OR-PPMA: Avoidance</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Avoidance OR-PGMA: Avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p>NV/CA-PPMA: Avoidance OR-PPMA: Avoidance</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Avoidance OR-PGMA: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • Worked across sub-regional boundaries to develop consistent ROW avoidance criteria.
Grazing	<p>NV/CA-PPMA: Available <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Available (some RNAs will be unavailable to grazing)</p> <p>NV/CA-PGMA: Available <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Available (some</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly/Coates quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Using HAF indicators for monitoring. • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG.



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	RNAs unavailable to grazing)	
Free-roaming Equids	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing WHB gathers to stay within AMLs. • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Modify AML if not meeting objectives.
Energy (NOT A PRESENT & WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u> <u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Exclusion</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Exclusion <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Avoidance</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resource Allocation</u> <u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: NSO <u>OR-PPMA</u>: NSO</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: NSO <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Open with moderate constraints (CSU/TLs) with 1 miles NSO around leks</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u> <u>NV/CA-PPMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PPMA</u>: Closed</p> <p><u>NV/CA-PGMA</u>: Closed <u>OR-PGMA</u>: Open</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
Disturbance	<p><u>NV/CA</u>: 3%** within BSU (18 population management units)</p> <p><u>OR</u>:3% within BSU (21 Oregon PACs encompassing all PPMA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • No Net Unmitigated Loss will be applied to PPMA and PGMA for Oregon, Nevada and California. • 3% disturbance threshold being discussed.
*No FS Lands within this population		



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4c – Utah Sub-region

Populations fully within Utah Sub-region: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b

Population Statistics (9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)						
	PPMA		PGMA		Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	1,992,834 (27%)	BLM:	13,350 (0%)	BLM:	816,406 (11%)
	FS:	745,919 (10%)	FS:	3,184 (0%)	FS:	526,041 (7%)
	BIA:	27,990 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	3,853 (0%)
	Other Federal:	13,394 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	44,048 (1%)
	Private:	2,062,374 (28%)	Private:	13,120 (0%)	Private:	508,498 (7%)
	State:	556,422 (7%)	State:	2,064 (0%)	State:	157,482 (2%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4 (0%)	BLM:	0 (%)	BLM:	2,725 (0%)
	FS:	0 (0%)	FS:	0 (%)	FS:	0 (%)
	BIA:	19 (0%)	BIA:	0 (%)	BIA:	138 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (%)	Other Federal:	0 (%)
	Private:	1 (0%)	Private:	0 (%)	Private:	274 (0%)
	State:	0 (0%)	State:	0 (%)	State:	404 (0%)
	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	0 (%)	Other:	0 (0%)
TOTAL	5,398,957 (72%)		31,718 (0%)		2,059,869 (28%)	

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13c, 15a, 15b)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat.
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 13b and 13c)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Varies FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA in federal ownership.
Fire (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire



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		<p>intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 9b, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13b, 13c, and 15a)	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u> PPMA: Exclusion (Solar), Exclusion (Wind) PGMA: Exclusion (Solar), Open (Wind) FS: Same as BLM, except Avoidance in PGMA for wind</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u> PPMA: NSO PGMA: Same as no action (Open, CSU, TL) FS: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM: The rationale for not avoiding wind development in PGMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are only 32 breeding males in PGMA. PGMA is already largely disturbed by anthropogenic disturbances. Subject to No Net Unmitigated Loss.
Mining (Applicable to: 9c, 10b, 13b, 13c, 15a, and 26b)	<p><u>Mineral Materials</u> PPMA: Closed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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	<p>PGMA: Open FS: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p>PPMA: Closed PGMA: Open FS: Same as BLM</p>	
<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)</p>	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p>PPMA: Avoidance PGMA: Open FS – Same as BLM, except General is avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p>PPMA: Avoidance PGMA: Open FS: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale for not avoiding HV transmission ROWs in PGMA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are only 32 breeding males in PGMA. ○ PGMA is already largely disturbed by anthropogenic disturbances. ○ Subject to No Net Unmitigated Loss. • In PPMA – Utah will be identifying new corridors. • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 11, 13c, 15a, and 15b)</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>BLM (none on FS lands):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize gathers in PPMAs. • Manage to AML. • Apply RLH Standards.
<p>Recreation (Trails and Travel Management) (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c, 15a, 15b, and 26b)</p>	<p>PPMA: Limited to Existing and Designated Roads and Trails PGMA: Limited to Existing and Designated Roads and Trails FS: Same as BLM, except all limited to designated Roads and Trails</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing management decisions that have limited roads/trails to designated routes in populations 9c, 10a, 10b, 12, and 13a of the states will be carried forward in the ADPP in PPMA. • Making a commitment to complete travel management plans for the other populations in the state. • Currently completing travel management inventories for GRSG habitat areas identified by the USFWS.
<p>Urbanization (Applicable to: 9b, 9c, and 13c)</p>	<p>PPMA: Retention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain PPMA in federal ownership.



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	<u>PGMA</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	
Disturbance:	3% disturbance threshold. BSU: PPMA within the 11 population areas (Parker Mtn. Emery Population = 12 and 13a) <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss in all habitats.



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4d – Nevada/NE California Sub-region

Populations (fully within Nevada/NE California sub-region): : 14, 15c, and 30

Population Statistics (14, 15c, and 30)						
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat			
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	4,075,403 (17%)	BLM:	1,193,253 (5%)	BLM:	1,995,940 (8%)
	FS:	548,796 (2%)	FS:	125,898 (1%)	FS:	866,949 (4%)
	BIA:	11,448 (0%)	BIA:	9,119 (0%)	BIA:	14,451 (0%)
	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	0 (0%)	Other Federal:	6 (0%)
	Private:	375,412 (2%)	Private:	190,959 (1%)	Private:	207,587 (1%)
	State:	51 (0%)	State:	0 (0%)	State:	158 (0%)
	Other:	300 (0%)	Other:	0 (0%)	Other:	648 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	808,526 (3%)	BLM:	1,718,784 (7%)	BLM:	8,575,055 (35%)
	FS:	103,312 (1%)	FS:	168,247 (1%)	FS:	1,373,050 (6%)
	BIA:	34,960 (0%)	BIA:	3,350 (0%)	BIA:	43,023 (0%)
	Other Federal:	11,532 (0%)	Other Federal:	5,880 (0%)	Other Federal:	183,561 (1%)
	Private:	153,184 (1%)	Private:	187,889 (1%)	Private:	1,653,278 (7%)
	State:	5,347 (0%)	State:	221 (0%)	State:	17,008 (0%)
	Other:	3,461 (0%)	Other:	812 (0%)	Other:	12,968 (0%)
TOTAL	6,131,732 (25%)	3,604,413 (14%)	14,943,682 (61%)			
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>				
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 14 and 30)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Retention FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat. 				
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 30)	PPMA: Retention PGMA: Retention FS: Same as BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain PPMA and PGMA in federal ownership. 				
Fire (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects. 				



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites’ resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance.
Conifers (Applicable to: 15c and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)	N/A	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRS habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
Energy (Applicable to: 30)	<p><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: Exclusion <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: NSO <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
Mining (Applicable to: 14)	<p><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Closed <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.



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<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing WHB gathers to stay within HMLs. • Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs. • Apply Rangeland Health Standards.
<p>Recreation (Trails and Travel Management) (Applicable to: 14, 15c, and 30)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>PGMA</u>: Limited to existing roads and trails <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM except limit to designated roads and trails</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a commitment to complete travel management plans. • Currently completing travel management inventories for GRSG habitat areas identified by the USFWS.
<p>Urbanization (Applicable to: 30)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Retention <u>PGMA</u>: Retention <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain PPMA and PGMA in Federal ownership.
<p>Disturbance</p>	<p>3%* disturbance threshold BSU: 18 Population Management Units from State Conservation Plan</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance, at this point. • No Net Unmitigated Loss applied to PPMA and PGMA.



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4e – Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region

Populations (fully within Idaho portion of Idaho/SW Montana sub-region): 18, 23, 25, and 27

Population Statistics (18, 23, 25, and 27)						
	Core (Includes Important)		General		Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	2,941,568 (22%)	BLM:	86,279 (1%)	BLM:	64,802 (0%)
	FS:	313,417 (2%)	FS:	5,100 (0%)	FS:	102,363 (1%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	0 (0%)
	Other Federal:	402,626 (3%)	Other Federal:	5,104 (0%)	Other Federal:	98,493 (1%)
	Private:	817,310 (6%)	Private:	27,191 (0%)	Private:	62,875 (0%)
	State:	302,901 (2%)	State:	4,113 (0%)	State:	26,288 (0%)
	Other:	240 (0%)	Other:	1,114 (0%)	Other:	383 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM:	467,106 (3%)	BLM:	855,232 (6%)	BLM:	550,225 (4%)
	FS:	81,821 (1%)	FS:	100,714 (1%)	FS:	2,100,542 (15%)
	BIA:	0 (0%)	BIA:	37,083 (0%)	BIA:	29,523 (0%)
	Other Federal:	39,377 (0%)	Other Federal:	126,059 (1%)	Other Federal:	397,648 (3%)
	Private:	97,876 (1%)	Private:	673,236 (5%)	Private:	2,392,700 (18%)
	State:	28,984 (0%)	State:	195,543 (1%)	State:	216,321 (2%)
	Other:	28 (0%)	Other:	1,196 (0%)	Other:	19,079 (0%)
TOTAL	5,493,353 (40%)		2,177,962 (16%)		6,061,242 (44%)	

Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>
Isolated/Small Size (Applicable to: 18, 25, and 27)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain Core and important, unless exchange provides additional benefits to GRSG habitat.
Agriculture Conversion (Applicable to: 18)	<u>Core</u> : Retention <u>Important</u> : Retention <u>General</u> : Varies <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain Core and Important habitat in federal ownership.
Fire (Applicable to: 23)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to strengthening wildfire prevention and suppression activities. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas.



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		<p>Specifically, applying fuel treatments at a landscape level to modify fire behavior characteristics, fire intensity, fire complexity, fire size, and fire effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fuels treatments over the landscape to restore, maintain, and conserve ecological function and increase or maintain the ecological sites' resistance to invasive species and resilience to disturbance. <p>FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No prescribed fire in Wyoming big sage habitat or in less than 12" precipitation zones.
<p>Conifers (Applicable to: 18)</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using VDTT modeling to establish LUP objectives for treatments by year. Commit to use the FIAT Report to complete assessments in prioritized areas. Commit to remove conifers from specified distances from leks.
<p>Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to: 23 and 25)</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>BLM and FS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.
<p>Energy (Applicable to: 18, 23, and 25)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p>Core: Exclusion <i>Important: Avoidance</i> <i>General: Open</i></p> <p>FS: Same as BLM in Core, <i>Important is Exclusion and</i> <i>General is Avoidance</i></p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p>Core: Closed & NSO <i>Important: NSO</i> <i>General: Open with moderate constraints (CSU & TL)</i> FS: All NSO in Core, otherwise, same as BLM</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The rationale for not excluding Important areas to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria.</i> <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to solar/wind ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Presence of development resources within general zones is sparse to non-existent.</i> <p><i>Important Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The project cannot reasonably be achieved, technically or economically, outside of this management zone; and</i> <i>The project is co-located within the footprint for existing infrastructure, to the extent practicable. If not practicable, the siting should best reduce cumulative impacts and/or impacts on other high value natural, cultural, or societal resources;</i> <i>The project does not result in a net loss of GRSG habitat or habitat fragmentation or other impacts causing a decline in the population of the species within the relevant</i>



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		<p>Conservation Area; and</p> <p>d. The project design mitigates unavoidable impacts through appropriate compensatory mitigation; and</p> <p>e. The project complies with the applicable RDFs and BMPs;</p> <p>f. The project should not exceed the disturbance threshold.</p>
<p>Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM, except Important is Closed.</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Closed <u>Important</u>: Open <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not closing important areas to mineral materials in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Any proposed development within Important management zones would be required to meet a set of anthropogenic disturbance development criteria (see above under the threat: "Energy").</i>
<p>Infrastructure (Applicable to: 18 and 27)</p>	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Avoidance <u>Important</u>: Avoidance <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Core is Exclusion, otherwise, same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>Core</u>: Avoidance <u>Important</u>: Avoidance <u>General</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p>BLM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Idaho:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>Grazing (Applicable to: 18, 23, 25, and 27)</p>	<p><u>Core</u>: Available <u>Important</u>: Available</p>	<p>BLM and FS (with variation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly.



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	<u>General</u> : Available <u>FS</u> : Available	quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using HAF indicators for monitoring.• Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG.
Free-roaming Equids (Applicable to: 23)	N/A	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Herd Management Plans will incorporate habitat objectives for all HMAs.• Manage to AML in all HMAs.• Prioritize gathers in Core habitat.
Disturbance	ID BLM: 3% within BSU (Nesting and wintering habitat within CMZs/IMZs in four Conservation Areas in Idaho) <u>FS</u> : Same as BLM	BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent with NPT guidance.• No Net Unmitigated Loss will be applied to all Core, Important, and General management zones.



Southwest Montana Portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region
Populations (fully within SW Montana portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region): 19-22

Population Statistics (19-22)				
	PPMA	PGMA	Non-Habitat	
PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 458,924 (15%)	BLM: 0 (0%)	BLM: 0 (0%)	BLM: 0 (0%)
	FS: 147,667 (5%)	FS: 0 (0%)	FS: 163 (0%)	FS: 163 (0%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)
	Other Federal: 41,410 (1%)	Other Federal: 0 (0%)	Other Federal: 0 (0%)	Other Federal: 0 (0%)
	Private: 450,756 (15%)	Private: 0 (0%)	Private: 321 (0%)	Private: 321 (0%)
	State: 222,405 (8%)	State: 0 (0%)	State: 0 (0%)	State: 0 (0%)
	Other: 8,088 (0%)	Other: 0 (0%)	Other: 0 (0%)	Other: 0 (0%)
Non-PAC acres (% of total pop.)	BLM: 2,392 (0%)	BLM: 162,044 (6%)	BLM: 117,513 (4%)	BLM: 117,513 (4%)
	FS: 11,705 (0%)	FS: 139,030 (5%)	FS: 395,626 (13%)	FS: 395,626 (13%)
	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)	BIA: 0 (0%)
	Other Federal: 0 (0%)	Other Federal: 1,102 (0%)	Other Federal: 15,786 (1%)	Other Federal: 15,786 (1%)
	Private: 625 (0%)	Private: 291,792 (10%)	Private: 322,445 (11%)	Private: 322,445 (11%)
	State: 393 (0%)	State: 103,007 (3%)	State: 69,483 (2%)	State: 69,483 (2%)
	Other: 0 (0%)	Other: 150 (0%)	Other: 934 (0%)	Other: 934 (0%)
TOTAL	1,344,365 (45%)	697,125 (24%)	922,270 (31%)	
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>Allocation that deviates from NPT Guidance</i>	Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>		
A. Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to:19-22)	N/A	FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. (Montana BLM still questioning the need to rely on FIAT Report and conduct assessments). BLM and FS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives. 		



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<p>B. Grazing (Applicable to:19-22)</p>	<p><u>PPMA</u>: Available <u>PGMA</u>: Available <u>FS</u>: Available</p>	<p>BLM and FS (with variation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards. • Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Use HAF methodology for monitoring. • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG. <p>FS: Manage livestock grazing according to Connelly quantitative vegetation objectives. <i>(BLM Montana not committed to quantitative vegetation objectives table.)</i></p>
<p>C. Energy (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Solar/Wind ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Exclusion <u>PGMA</u>: Avoidance <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: NSO <u>PGMA</u>: Open with Major and Moderate Constraints (CSU with TLs) <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All consistent with NPT guidance. • Purple differs from portion of planning area in Idaho for General Habitat.
<p>D. Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Closed <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Consistent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance.
<p>E. Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)</p>	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open</p>	<p><i>BLM:</i> <i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Montana (from Idaho rationale):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in</i>



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	<p><u>FS</u>: Same as BLM except PGMA is Avoidance</p> <p><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p><u>PPMA</u>: Avoidance <u>PGMA</u>: Open <u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<p><i>general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Montana is still working thru discussions on whether or not to make High Voltage Transmissions and Major Pipeline ROWs an “avoidance” area for General Habitat.</i>
Disturbance	<p>3% within 1 BSU – All PPMA</p> <p><u>FS</u>: Same as BLM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with NPT guidance. • Purple differs from the BSUs in Idaho. • Using DDCT for disturbance calculation. • Ongoing discussions concerning No Net Unmitigated Loss in all PPMA and PGMA.



5 -Acronyms/Abbreviations List

Planning Units/Sub-regions			
NV	Nevada/NE California Sub-region	ID	Idaho/Southwest Montana Sub-region
OR	Oregon Sub-region	UT	Utah Sub-region
Sage-grouse Habitat/Management Areas			
PPMA	Preliminary Priority Management Area	PGMA	Preliminary General Management Area
PH	Priority Habitat	GH	General Habitat
Core	Core Sage-grouse Habitat <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>	Non-core	Non-core Sage-grouse Habitat <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>
CMZ	Core Management Zone <i>Idaho/SW MT Only</i>	IMZ	Important Management Zones <i>Idaho portion of the Idaho/SW MT Only</i>
PAC	Priority Area for Conservation	BSU	Biologically Significant Unit
Agencies / Groups			
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	FS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NPT	National Policy Team	NTT	National Technical Team
FIAT	Fire and Invasives Team		
Others			
BSU	Biologically Significant Unit	RDF	Required Design Feature
ROW	Right-of-Way	RLH	Rangeland Health
R&T	Routes and Trails	LUP	Land Use Plan
GRSG	Greater Sage-grouse	VDDT	Vegetative Dynamic Data Tool
PMU	Population Management Unit	NSO	No Surface Occupancy
CSU	Controlled Surface Use	TL	Timing Limitations
HMA	Herd Management Area	WHB	Wild Horse and Burros
AML	Appropriate Management Levels (Grazing)	HAF	Habitat Assessment Framework
HV	High-Voltage Transmission Line	DPPA	Forest Service Draft Proposed Plan Amendment
ADPP	BLM Administrative Proposed Plan		



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6 - BLM LAND USE PLANNING PROGRAM AREA

ALLOCATIONS/DESIGNATIONS CHEAT SHEET

(Per H-1601-1 BLM Land Use Planning Handbook)

Livestock Grazing

- **Available:** areas where livestock grazing would be permitted under the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 4130.2(a).
- **Not Available:** areas where livestock grazing would not be permitted due (but not limited to) conflicts with other land uses, terrain/soil/vegetation/watershed characteristics, the presence of undesirable vegetation, and the presence of resources that require special management.

Recreation and Visitor Services

- **Recreation Management Areas (RMAs):** areas where Recreation and Visitor Services (R&VS) objectives are recognized as a primary resource management consideration and specific management is required to protect the recreation opportunities.
- **Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs):** RMAs managed to protect and enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences, benefits, and desired recreation setting characteristics. The SRMAs may be subdivided into recreation management zones (RMZ) to further delineate specific recreation opportunities.
- **Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs):** areas managed to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and the associated qualities and conditions of the ERMA. Management of ERMA areas is commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses.
- **Public Lands Not Designated as RMAs:** area not designated as RMAs are managed to meet basic R&VS and resource stewardship needs. Recreation is not emphasized however recreation activities may occur. The R&VS are managed to allow recreation uses that are not in conflict with the primary uses of these lands.

Travel and Transportation

- **Open areas:** intensive OHV use areas where there are no special restrictions or where there are no compelling resource protection needs, user conflicts, or public safety issues to warrant limiting cross-country travel (see 43 CFR 8340.05).
- **Limited areas:** areas where OHV use must be restricted to meet specific resource management objectives. Examples of limitations include: number or type of vehicles; time or season of use; permitted or licensed use only; use limited to designated roads and trails; or other limitations if restrictions are necessary to meet resource management objectives, including certain competitive or intensive use areas that have special limitations (see 43 CFR 8340.05).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to all vehicular use to protect resources, promote visitor safety, or reduce use conflicts (see 43 CFR 8340.05).

Lands and Realty (Land Tenure, ROWs, Solar and Wind)

- **Lands identified for disposal:** land or interest in lands that are available for disposal under a variety of disposal authorities, provided they meet the criteria outlined in FLPMA (Sales, Section 203, 43 U.S.C. 1713(a); Exchanges, Section 206, 43 U.S.C. 1716(a); and Reservation and Conveyance of Minerals, Section 209, 43 U.S.C. 1719(a)) or other statutes and regulations.
- **Lands identified for retention:** lands or interest in lands that will be retained under Federal ownership.
- **Lands identified for acquisition:** land or interest in lands that are suitable for acquisition under Federal ownership, based on acquisition criteria identified in the land use plan; FLPMA Section 205(b)).
- **Withdrawals (non-discretionary):** areas that have been transferred in total or partial jurisdiction to another Federal agency and/or areas closed (segregated) to operation of all or some of the public land laws and/or mineral laws. Withdrawals are only made by the President, the Secretary of the Interior, or other authorized officer of the Executive branch of the Federal government. BLM land use plans can only “recommend” areas for the Secretary of Interior to consider pursuing for withdrawal.
- **Utility corridors:** linear areas with the potential for at least one additional facility and thus can be considered a corridor (if not already designated) to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate right-of-ways.
- **ROW Avoidance areas:** areas to be avoided but may be available for location of right-of-ways with special stipulations.
- **ROW Exclusion areas:** areas which are not available for location of right-of-ways under any conditions.

Coal

- **Unsuitable areas:** areas where coal leasing would not be permitted under the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 3461.5
- **Suitable areas:** areas found to be suitable for development by all mining methods or by only certain stipulated mining methods, such as surface or underground mining (see 43 CFR 3461).

Fluids (oil and gas, tar sands, and geothermal resources)

- **Open:** areas open to leasing with minor to no constraints, subject to existing laws, regulations, and formal orders; and the terms and conditions of the standard lease form.
- **Open with moderate constraints:** areas open to leasing, subject to moderate constraints. These are areas where it has been determined that moderately restrictive lease stipulations may be required to mitigate impacts. These stipulation include:
 - **Timing limitations (TL):** areas open to leasing but would be closed to surface disturbing activities during identified time frames. This stipulation

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would not apply to operation and maintenance activities, including associated vehicle travel, unless otherwise specified.

- **Controlled Surface Use (CSU):** areas that are open to leasing but would require proposals for surface disturbing activities to be authorized only according to the controls or constraints specified.
- **Open with major constraints:** areas open to leasing, subject to major constraints. These are areas where it has been determined that highly restrictive lease stipulations are required to mitigate impacts.
 - **No Surface Occupancy (NSO):** areas open to leasing but surface disturbing activities cannot be conducted on the surface of the land. Access to oil and gas deposits would require horizontal drilling from outside the boundaries of the NSO areas. The NSO areas are avoidance areas for rights-of-way; no rights-of-ways would be granted in NSO areas unless there are no feasible alternatives.
- **Closed:** areas where it has been determined that other land uses or resource values cannot be adequately protected with even the most restrictive lease stipulations; appropriate protection can be ensured only by closing the lands to leasing.

Locatable Minerals

RMPs can only recommend areas for closure related to locatable exploration or development. Withdrawals are managed under the Lands and Realty program.

Mineral Materials

- **Open areas:** areas open to mineral material disposal (these areas are still subject to mitigation and RMP objectives).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to mineral material disposal due to protection of natural resources within the planning area.

Non-energy Leasables

- **Open areas:** areas open to non-energy leasables (these areas are still subject to mitigation and RMP objectives).
- **Closed areas:** areas closed to non-energy leasables due to protection of natural resources within the planning area.

Wild Horse and Burro Management

- **Herd Areas (HAs) (non-discretionary):** areas of the public lands identified as being habitat used by wild horses and burros at the time of the passage of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, as amended (16 USC 1331).
- **Herd Management Areas (HMAs):** established only in HAs, within which wild horses and/or burros can be managed for the long term.
- **Herd Areas Not Designated as Herd Management Areas:** areas where horses/burros will be removed from all or part of a HA due to intermingled and unfenced lands within HAs where private landowners do not want to make them

available for wild horse or burro use; or essential habitat components are not available for wild horse or burro use within a HA.

- **Wild Horse and Burro Ranges:** all or portions of an HMA where there is a significant public value present, such as unique characteristics in a herd or an opportunity for public viewing.

Wilderness Characteristics

- **Lands with Wilderness Characteristics:** areas to be managed to protect or preserve wilderness characteristics (naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation).

Special Designations

- **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs):** areas that require special management to prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems. To qualify, the resources at risk must have substantial significance or values beyond local concerns.
- **Wilderness Study Areas (non-discretionary):** roadless areas of five thousand acres, identified during the inventory required by section 201(a) of the Wilderness Act as having wilderness characteristics. These areas are required to be managed to maintain their wilderness characteristics until Congress decides whether it should either be designated as wilderness or should be released for other purposes.
- **Eligible wild and scenic river segments:** river segments that are free flowing and, with its adjacent land area, possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values.
- **Scenic and Back Country Byways (non-discretionary):** byways that traverse remote country, providing solitude and spectacular scenery in landscape settings.
- **National Scenic, Historic, and Recreation Trails (non-discretionary):** trail segments established and designated by either the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, subject to the consent of the Federal agency, State, political subdivision, or other appropriate administering agency having jurisdiction over the lands involved.

Visual Resource Management (VRM)

- **VRM Class I:** areas that preserve the existing character of the landscape.
- **VRM Class II:** areas that retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be low.
- **VRM Class III:** areas that partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate
- **VRM Class IV:** areas that provide for management activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high.



United States Department of the Interior



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In Reply Refer To:
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OCT 10 2014

EMS TRANSMISSION
Information Bulletin No. ID-2014-⁵

To: Idaho Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Leadership Team, ~~Western Montana District Manager and Dillon Field Office Manager~~ *cc's Nav*

From: Idaho State Director

Subject: Idaho Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP)

DD: 10/24/2014

Since December 2011, the BLM has been leading an effort to incorporate conservation measures as regulatory mechanisms into existing BLM and United States Forest Service (USFS) land use plans in response to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) March 2010 finding on GRSG. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana sub region amendments are an integral component of the BLM National GRSG Planning Strategy and encompass the relevant BLM district and field offices and the National Forests which manage GRSG habitat within the sub region. Each BLM district has provided technical and specialist support to the Sub Regional Interdisciplinary Team (Team). This Team is composed of staff from the BLM, USFS, USFWS, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the Idaho Office of Species Conservation. Together this Team has worked collaboratively to develop a Draft Environmental Impact Statement with five (5) alternatives analyzed in detail, which identified two (2) alternatives as co-preferred – one developed by the Team and one developed by the State of Idaho for lands within the State of Idaho.

This Team has continued on to develop the attached Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP). The ADPP is the result of significant collaboration between the Federal, state and local partners, augmentation and refinement to respond to the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team Report (March 2013), coordination and direction with the BLM, Forest Service and USFWS National Policy Team, regional coordination involving the Department of the Interior, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the Western Association of Governors. The ADPP represents the culmination of this coordination. It contains direction that is consistent with the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team Report and the National Policy Team Guidance. Many of the management actions reflect direction that is national or regional in scope with

limited or no flexibility for local or sub regional adjustment; other management actions are more specific to the Idaho and Southwestern Montana effort with a greater flexibility for refinement. Representatives of your staff have been involved throughout the development of this ADPP and their input has served to identify issues and concerns, as well as provide suggestions and solutions to resolve many of those concerns.

The ADPP reflects a shift of management in GRSG habitats and will lead to changes in the way the BLM does business in those areas. As the amendment effort moves closer to conclusion the Team is focusing more energy on implementation consideration and direction. A preliminary Implementation Guide is being developed, a draft of which will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and is intended to be finalized after release of the final amendment decision(s). To help develop this guide a series of BLM and USFS staff workshops are contemplated and will likely occur early in calendar year 2015 for each BLM district office area. These workshops will step through the potential planning decisions and discuss approaches and processes for implementation that will be used to develop the final guide. We encourage your review and understanding of the ADPP, in preparation for those meetings. If you, or your staff, have questions or substantive comments on the ADPP, please contact Brent Ralston, Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead, prior to October 24, 2014.

The participation and involvement of your staff has been a significant factor in success of this effort thus far. Revision of 29 land use plans across 11 million Federal acres within the sub region has been a massive undertaking, and the contributions of your staff have come at the expense of other work on the district. The amendment effort is nearing completion and the even more important job of implementation is looming. Your continued support and attention to helping develop the Implementation Guide will be instrumental to ensure the success of on-the-ground actions to conserve GRSG into the future.



Timothy M. Murphy

3 Attachments

- 1 - Idaho and Southwestern Montana Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (52 pp)
- 2 - Administrative Draft Propose Plan Supporting Appendices (194 pp)

cc: Montana State Director



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Idaho State Office
1387 South Vinnell Way
Boise, Idaho 83709-1657

In Reply Refer To:
1110 (931) I

October 14, 2014

EMS TRANSMISSION 10/14/2014
Information Bulletin No. ID-2015-001

To: Idaho Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Leadership Team

From: Idaho State Director

Subject: Idaho Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Administrative Draft
Proposed Plan (ADPP)

DD: 10/24/2014

Since December 2011, the BLM has been leading an effort to incorporate conservation measures as regulatory mechanisms into existing BLM and United States Forest Service (USFS) land use plans in response to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) March 2010 finding on GRSG. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana sub region amendments are an integral component of the BLM National GRSG Planning Strategy and encompass the relevant BLM district and field offices and the National Forests which manage GRSG habitat within the sub region. Each BLM district has provided technical and specialist support to the Sub Regional Interdisciplinary Team (Team). This Team is composed of staff from the BLM, USFS, USFWS, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the Idaho Office of Species Conservation. Together this Team has worked collaboratively to develop a Draft Environmental Impact Statement with five (5) alternatives analyzed in detail, which identified two (2) alternatives as co-preferred – one developed by the Team and one developed by the State of Idaho for lands within the State of Idaho.

This Team has continued on to develop the attached Administrative Draft Proposed Plan (ADPP). The ADPP is the result of significant collaboration between the Federal, state and local partners, augmentation and refinement to respond to the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team Report (March 2013), coordination and direction with the BLM, Forest Service and USFWS National Policy Team, regional coordination involving the Department of the Interior, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the Western Association of Governors. The ADPP represents the culmination of this coordination. It contains direction that is consistent with the USFWS Conservation Objectives Team Report and the National Policy Team Guidance. Many of the management actions reflect direction that is national or regional in scope with limited or no flexibility for local or sub regional adjustment; other management actions are more specific to the Idaho and Southwestern Montana effort with a greater flexibility for refinement.

Representatives of your staff have been involved throughout the development of this ADPP and their input has served to identify issues and concerns, as well as provide suggestions and solutions to resolve many of those concerns.

The ADPP reflects a shift of management in GRSG habitats and will lead to changes in the way the BLM does business in those areas. As the amendment effort moves closer to conclusion the Team is focusing more energy on implementation consideration and direction. A preliminary Implementation Guide is being developed, a draft of which will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and is intended to be finalized after release of the final amendment decision(s). To help develop this guide a series of BLM and USFS staff workshops are contemplated and will likely occur early in calendar year 2015 for each BLM district office area. These workshops will step through the potential planning decisions and discuss approaches and processes for implementation that will be used to develop the final guide. We encourage your review and understanding of the ADPP, in preparation for those meetings. If you, or your staff, have questions or substantive comments on the ADPP, please contact Brent Ralston, Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead, prior to October 24, 2014.

The participation and involvement of your staff has been a significant factor in success of this effort thus far. Revision of 29 land use plans across 11 million Federal acres within the sub region has been a massive undertaking, and the contributions of your staff have come at the expense of other work on the district. The amendment effort is nearing completion and the even more important job of implementation is looming. Your continued support and attention to helping develop the Implementation Guide will be instrumental to ensure the success of on-the-ground actions to conserve GRSG into the future.

Signed by:
Timothy M. Murphy

Authenticated by:
Terrian Wells
Program Analyst - Litigation

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cc: Montana State Director
Western Montana District Manager
Dillon Field Office Manager

Idaho/sw Montana FEIS Maps: Rationale for Differences between Alternative D (BLM/FS), E (State of Idaho) and G (Proposed Plan) Maps

Overview: The preparation of the Alternative D (BLM/FS Alternative) GRSG map involved modeling of Preliminary Priority and Preliminary General Habitat (PPH/PGH) by Idaho BLM using available GRSG lek data, Breeding Bird Density and Lek Connectivity Models, available winter habitat and additional refinements using available land use or vegetation data (e.g., agriculture, timber), and as well as expert opinion and additional local data. The Southwest Montana GRSG areas were refined by Montana BLM based on modeling and map refinements previously completed by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, based on their Core area designations. For the Utah portion of the Sawtooth National Forest, BLM/FS adopted Utah BLM's designation for that area.

For Alternative E, the Idaho Governor's Sage-Grouse Task Force re-configured the initial BLM PPH/PGH data to create three categories of Management Zones (Core, Important, General), using additional information, in order to provide a map with greater management flexibility and decision space both for GRSG conservation and land use opportunities.

During review of the DEIS, concerns were expressed by agency personnel and others that due to the broad scale nature of the initial analysis, certain portions of the Alt D and/or E maps still encompassed some areas of non-habitat, such as timber or farm lands; or they were missing some areas of potential restoration or other locally definable areas or habitat; or were designated inappropriately as Core and/or Important.

In preparation for the Proposed Plan, BLM and FS adopted the State of Idaho's suggestion to incorporate the three GRSG Management Zone concept for Idaho. To resolve map disparities between Alternatives D and E, and to provide more recognizable boundaries of Management Zones on the ground, BLM and FS worked closely with field personnel in December 2013, using the State's Alternative E map as a starting point, but informed with Alt D as well as local expertise. This process had not occurred during preparation of either the Alt D or E maps for the DEIS, due to time limitations. During the winter and spring of 2014 BLM and FS also worked closely with the State of Idaho and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office, Boise) in re-evaluating the Core, Important or General Management Zone designations of Alt E, in order to move forward with a mutually agreeable map for the Proposed Plan (Alternative G). The final Proposed Plan map product, arose from a number of adjustments to Alt E, summarized as follows:

- Some additional areas in south-central Idaho, Mountain Home and the Weiser area were added as General Management Zones, that were not reflected in the Alt D or E maps in the DEIS. These generally were annual grassland areas, from the Idaho "Key Habitat Map" that had been previously excluded from the initial PPH/PGH model; or were based on additional imagery. These areas have restoration potential to GRSG habitat, or involve past or ongoing restoration efforts therefore were incorporated into the Alt G map, based on recommendations from the field.
- "Donut holes" of habitat inside of a larger matrix were classified the same as the surrounding matrix.

- Snapping of Core, Important, or General Management Zones to meaningful edges or features (canyons, allotment/pasture boundaries, roads etc.) was completed at the field level to facilitate use of the map designations at the field level.
- Changes in Management Zone designations for portions of certain Core, Important or General zones from Alternative E. This led to some minor changes from the original GRSG Priority Areas for Conservation (PAC) boundaries.

Specific Details by Geographic Area:

Conservation Area	Geographic Area	Initial Recommendation (BLM/FS field)	Final Decision and Rationale	Location and Acres
WEST OWYHEE				
	Mountain tops in the Owyhee Mtns.	Field recommended including the top of mountains, previously mapped as non-habitat, as General. Some local records of bird use; likely some summer use	Left mountain tops as <u>non-habitat</u> . Difficult to justify as General based on nominal bird use and limited other information. No known lek or winter habitat.	A = 127,468 acres Is the total of non-habitat mountain tops
	Juniper encroachment surrounding Owyhee mountains	Field recommended classifying as Important due to potential for juniper control efforts and habitat improvement. No leks or winter habitat in vicinity.	Kept as <u>General</u> . Difficult to justify as "Important" due to general lack of leks/nest habitat or winter habitat in that zone. Juniper work should probably focus on juniper encroachment in adjacent Core areas. General designation does not preclude restoration work, if otherwise justified.	B = 228,840 acres Is the total number of General Habitat in this area
	Owyhee front	This was a large oblong area recommended by the field to be changed from Important (as in Alt E) to Core, along the Owyhee Front. The majority of the area is overlain by recently modeled winter habitat and also encompasses a	Multiple discussions with the State and US FWS led to a delineation where much of the Owyhee Front remained as Important, with an additional area of Core (~25,000 ac) identified that	C = 550,109 acres Area of Important in the Owyhee Front

Conservation Area	Geographic Area	Initial Recommendation (BLM/FS field)	Final Decision and Rationale	Location and Acres
		number of occupied and undetermined status leks and nesting habitat. BLM also had concerns with protecting connectivity.	overlaid a cluster of leks and nesting/winter habitat. Area maintained as Important has fewer and smaller leks.	
SOUTHERN				
	Jarbidge FO	Field recommended removal of General habitat at north end of FO that burns repeatedly and modification of some Core to Important in southern 1/3 of the area.	Adopted recommendation for final map.	D = 232,331 acres Habitat Removed
	Burley FO-South Hills	Field recommended changing Core in west half or so of the South Hills to Important, based on existing infrastructure, recreation activity. Also included and important area of winter habitat west of Oakley as Core and added some General to Middle Mountain area.	Adopted recommendations a noted. Also retained Goose Creek area as <u>Important</u> as in Alt E.	E1 = 39,260 acres SouthHills E2 = 5,283 acres Core E3 = 26,174 acres Goose Creek Area as General
	Burley FO-Jim Sage	Field recommended making part of Jim Sage Core; additional edits to Important and General.	Majority of Jim Sage mapped as Important. Proposed Core was small area not readily implementable.	F = 47,629 acres Important in Jim Sage
	Burley FO-	Field added some	Adopted	G = 14,279

Conservation Area	Geographic Area	Initial Recommendation (BLM/FS field)	Final Decision and Rationale	Location and Acres
	Cotterel	Important patches to top of Cotterels.	recommendation.	acres Important on Cotterel Mountains
	Burley FO-No Mans/Basalt; North of Interstate area.	Field recommended removing the General habitat that extends from the north end of the Cotterels to Lake Walcott. There has been no known GRSG use for many years.	Adopted recommendation.	H = 137,827 acres Total of non-habitat
	Pocatello FO-Bear Lake	Field cleaned up slivers and added some Core. Recommended dropping the larger "U" shaped area of General. Recommended two smaller polygons of I and G north of Bear Lake be Core.	Retained the U shaped area as General habitat as there are two leks just to south. The polygons north of Bear Lake were designated "Important".	I1 = 23,448 acres I2 = 39,249 acres Important N of bear lake
	Pocatello FO-Curlew area	Some additions/revisions to I and G.	Adopted recommendations.	J = 74,820 Habitat change from G to I
MOUNTAIN VALLEY				
	Weiser	Field recommended adding substantial areas of Core and Important as well as additional, previously unmapped General based on additional scrutiny of imagery and lek information.	Keep <u>entire</u> area as <u>General</u> as shown in Alt E. Added in some additional General in SW portion based on imagery and adjacency to existing habitat. Size and number of leks did not justify proposed	K = 176,838 acres General added in the South

Conservation Area	Geographic Area	Initial Recommendation (BLM/FS field)	Final Decision and Rationale	Location and Acres
			designation.	
	Challis	Field did extensive, detailed work edge snapping. Added some new General; changed a large area from Important (Alt E) to Core, per leks, uniqueness/isolated nature of area and connectivity with Moyer Basin to north.	Adopted the edge snapping and addition of General. Uniqueness and isolated nature is not a characteristic considered in the classification.	L = 163,012 acres General habitat
DESERT				
	Mountain Home	Field recommended certain "Restoration Type 2" (cheatgrass) areas shown on the "Key Habitat Map" be classified as Important. No leks. Adjacent to Interstate. Nesting habitat and winter habitat (in north half).	Adopted the addition of the R2 but classified as <u>General</u> . Since it is R2 (cheatgrass), it was difficult to justify as Important without more compelling information.	M = 40,485 acres General added
	Wild Horse	Large area not on Alt D or E maps, but currently mapped as R2 (annual grassland) per the Key habitat map has ongoing restoration focus by Shoshone Field Office. Field recommended this area be added as Important. No significant lek presence (only one, small to south); majority is in between mapped winter areas.	Adopted addition of the R2 areas, but classified as <u>General</u> . Could be upgraded in future if restoration efforts show progress and GRSG use, but not justified as Important at this time.	N = 39,000 acres General Added
	Core area in Shoshone FO	Some additional Core added by edge snapping exercise.	Adopted recommendation.	O = 78,604 acres
	Southern Big Desert area	Field recommended adding southern Big Desert area as Core due to leks, connectivity with Craters Nat. Monument core to the	Adopted S. Big Desert area as Important, adding to the overall area of PACs. Number and size of leks did not	P1 = 328,796 acres Important South Desert

Conservation Area	Geographic Area	Initial Recommendation (BLM/FS field)	Final Decision and Rationale	Location and Acres
		west and northern Big Desert Core. Also cut out some edge habitat that interfaced with agricultural land, lava.	<p>warrant Core designation.</p> <p>Also designated <u>Important</u> for the areas generally adjacent to southern end of the Craters of the Moon National Monument lava in the Brigham Point Area etc. This added a small acreage to the overall are of initial PACs.</p> <p>Areas to the south of Power lines and east/south side of the Wapi flow were designated <u>General</u>.</p>	<p>P2 = 175,846 acres</p> <p>Added General</p>
	Idaho Falls/Roberts	<p>Field recommended adding some areas of Core per snapping efforts around the edges.</p> <p>Added two small patches of Core near the Interstate; Added moderate sized Core area near Howe (but low lek density, no wintering habitat mapped).</p>	Retained as Important. Changing the small patches near the Interstate to Core would create doughnut holes of different classification not implementable on the ground.	<p>Q = 50,223 acres</p> <p>Stayed Important habitat</p>

Brent Ralston

From: Collins, Rodney
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2014 2:51 PM
To: Brent Ralston
Subject: Fwd: First step in Alt G Edits
Attachments: AltG_edits_10082014_2.pdf

FYI

Rod Collins
State GIS Manager
DOI - Bureau of Land Management - Idaho
Office: 208.373.3998
Mobile: 208.371.5831
rcollins@blm.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cooper, Travis <tcooper@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Oct 8, 2014 at 2:45 PM
Subject: Re: First step in Alt G Edits
To: Jason Wright <jswright@blm.gov>, Donald Major <dmajor@blm.gov>, Rodney Collins <rcollins@blm.gov>, Paul Makela <pmakela@blm.gov>, "Mickelsen, Robert -FS" <rmickelsen@fs.fed.us>

Round #2
Made the changes JWight recommended.

Does any of the "removed" habitat in the Salmon-Challis NF need to be re-designated?

Let me know if anyone notices anything that needs to be changed

On Wed, Oct 8, 2014 at 1:10 PM, Cooper, Travis <tcooper@blm.gov> wrote:
Take a look at the PDF. I changed all "removed" habitat in Upper Snake to General, weather it was priority, Medial, or general in Alternative D.
Using the mark up tools on the PDF, circle areas that need to be changed, edited or re-designated on the PDF. Indicate which areas in Salmon and Challis also, if any.

Also per DMajor, make sure areas that were designated as Non-Habitat in Alt G stay Non-Habitat in Alt G.

We can do this 2 or 3 time and hopefully get to where we think it needs to be

--
Travis Cooper
GIS Specialist
BLM Idaho State Office

1387 Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709
(208) 373-3973
tcooper@blm.gov

--

Travis Cooper

GIS Specialist

BLM Idaho State Office

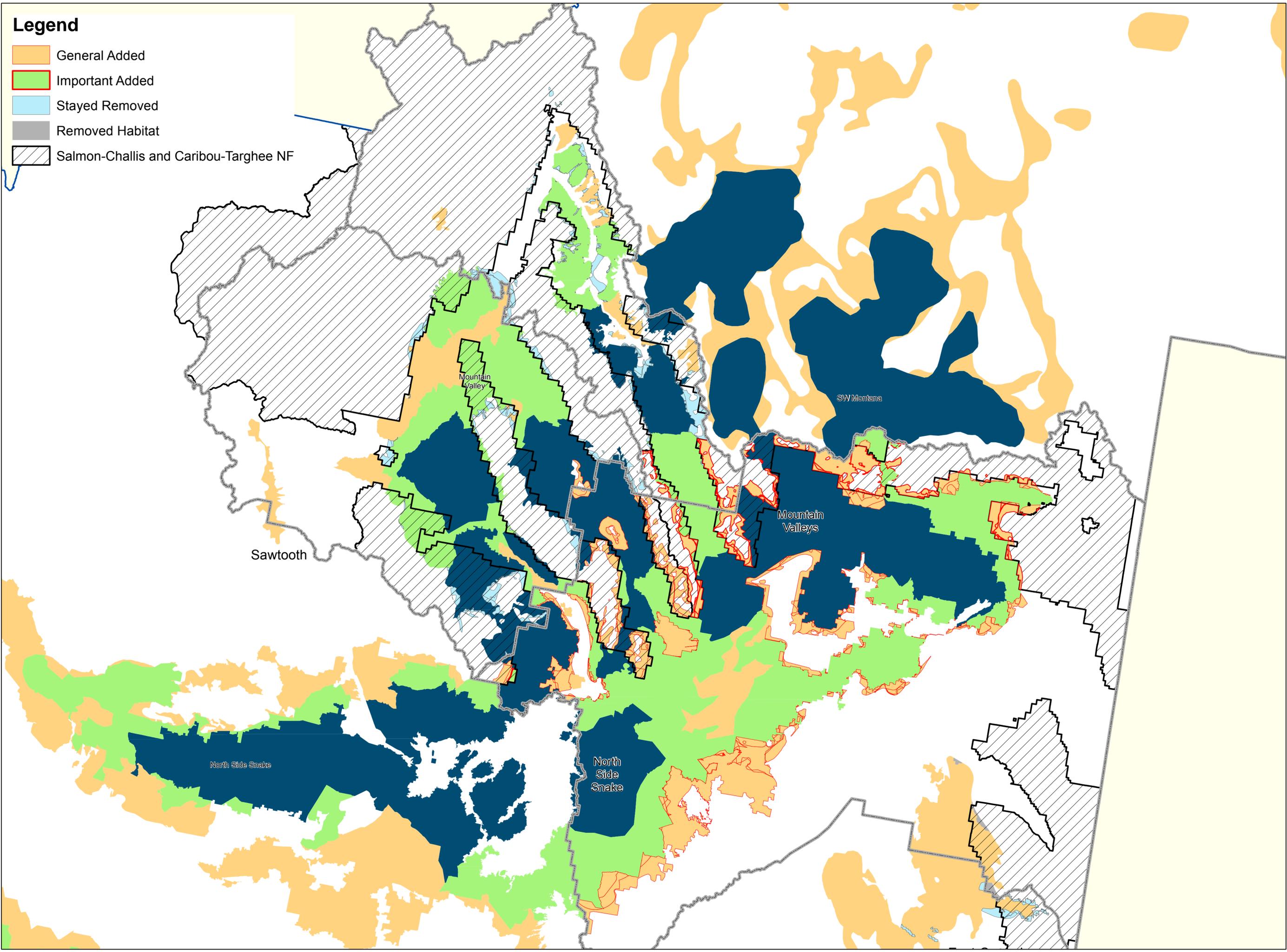
1387 Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709

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tcooper@blm.gov

Legend

- General Added
- Important Added
- Stayed Removed
- Removed Habitat
- Salmon-Challis and Caribou-Targhee NF



Brent Ralston

From: Brent Ralston
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 1:26 PM
To: 'Meredith Zaccherio (meredith.zaccherio@empsi.com)'
Subject: FW: Updated GRSG Proposed Plan Amendment Ch. 2 Template & Responses to Questions
Attachments: 0_PROPOSED_CH2_TEMPLATE_FINAL_10_21_14.docx; Responses on Ch 2 Template_10_21_14.docx

FYI

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

From: Magaletti, Matthew [<mailto:mmagalet@blm.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2014 4:27 PM
To: Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado; Quincy Bahr; Brent Ralston; Jonathan Beck; Randall Sharp; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Pamela Murdock; Bridget Clayton; Erin Jones; John Carlson; Sandra Leach
Cc: Dillon, Madelyn -FS; Joseph Stout; Kathryn Stangl; David Batts <david.batts@empsi.com>; Munson, Johanna; Lauren Mermejo; Stein, Glen -FS
Subject: Updated GRSG Proposed Plan Amendment Ch. 2 Template & Responses to Questions

Hello Everyone,

Attached are the responses to the questions we received on the original GRSG Proposed Plan Amendment Ch. 2 Template, as well as the updated Ch. 2 Template (reflecting changes based on the questions we received). Please use this version of the template.

Thank you all for your questions. If you have any further questions, please let me know.

Thanks,

--

Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

CHAPTER 2

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

NOTE: This template includes all applicable references to Forest Service. Any reference to Forest Service will need to be removed from sub-regional plans that do not have a Forest Service component. This template is also written under the direction of having two (2) Proposed Plans (one for BLM and one for Forest Service). The template will need to be revised accordingly if including only one Proposed Plan (BLM).

This template also includes placeholders and notes highlighted in yellow for sub-regions to complete/address.

2.1 SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES BETWEEN THE DRAFT EIS AND FINAL EIS

[NOTE: select one of the following two options depending on how sub-region proposed plan was developed]

[OPTION 1: Proposed Plan = new alternative] As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM and Forest Service have developed the Proposed Plan/LUPA for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the XX [NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]. Alternative X (the Preferred Alternative) from the Draft LUPA/EIS has not been selected. Rather the Proposed Plan/LUPA consists of a combination of various management actions from all the alternatives and is now considered the Proposed LUPA for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the X [NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]. The Proposed Plan/LUPA focuses on addressing public comments, while continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's legal and regulatory mandates.

[OPTION 2: Proposed Plan = modified Preferred Alternative] As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM's and Forest Service's Preferred Alternative, identified as Alternative X in the Draft LUPA/EIS, has been modified and is now the Proposed Plan/LUPA for managing BLM-administered and National Forest

System lands within the **XX** [NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]. The Proposed Plan/LUPA focuses on addressing public comments, while continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's legal and regulatory mandates.

[BOTH OPTIONS include the following] Changes to the alternatives between the Draft EIS and Final EIS are [NOTE: include bulleted summary list of substantial changes to Chapter 2 between DEIS and FEIS]:

- **Chapter 2** has been reorganized for consistency between all sub-regional GRSG LUPAs/EISs.
- The GRSG adaptive management plan has been further defined in **Section 2.6.1**, Adaptive Management.
- The GRSG monitoring strategy has been further defined in **Section 2.6.2**, Monitoring for the Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy, and **Appendix X** of the Final EIS.
- The GRSG mitigation strategy has been further defined in **Section 2.6.3**, Regional Mitigation, and **Appendix X** of the Final EIS.
- Disturbance [NOTE: describe changes related to disturbance]
- The Forest Service Proposed Plan is now a stand-alone Proposed Plan in the FEIS.
- [NOTE: provide a summary of the difference in PPMA, PGMA, PHMA and GHMA nomenclature between draft and final and compare to your state plan nomenclature. i.e. Core]
- Others? [NOTE: include other major changes]

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The LUPA/EIS complies with NEPA, which directs the BLM and Forest Service to “study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal that involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources...” (NEPA Section 102[2][e]). At the heart of the alternative development process is the required development of a reasonable range of alternatives. Public and internal (within BLM and Forest Service) scoping (see **Section I.X**, Scoping and Identification of Issues for Development of the Proposed Plan and Draft Alternatives) identified issues that present opportunities for alternative courses of action, while the purpose and need for action described in **Section I.X**, Purpose and Need, provides sideboards for determining “reasonableness.”

This chapter introduces and details the Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan is a mix of management actions selected from the range of alternatives in the Draft LUPA/EIS and is based on best science, public scoping comments, public comments on the Draft LUPA/EIS and internal agency discussion. The alternatives that were in the Draft LUPA/EIS are also included in this chapter. These include the No Action Alternative, which would continue the existing

policies of the BLM and Forest Service; X [NOTE: insert # of alternatives accordingly] action alternatives; and the alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.

The identification of the Preferred Alternative in the Draft LUPA/EIS did not constitute a commitment or decision in principle, and there is no requirement to select the Preferred Alternative or any of the separate alternatives presented in the Draft LUPA/EIS in the Final LUPA/EIS as the Proposed Plan. The BLM and Forest Service have the discretion to select any of the alternatives as their Preferred Alternative in the Draft LUPA/EIS. The agencies also have the discretion to modify the Preferred Alternative between the Draft EIS and the Final EIS into the Proposed Plan. The modifications are allowable as long as the actions presented in the Proposed Plan within the Proposed LUPA/Final EIS were analyzed somewhere in the Draft EIS. The various parts of the separate alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft EIS can be “mixed and matched” to develop an alternative – known as the Proposed Plan - in the Final EIS, as long as the reasons for doing so are explained (40 CFR 1506.2(b)).

2.3 INTRODUCTION TO DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

LUP decisions consist of identifying and clearly defining goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resources and resource uses, followed by developing allowable uses and management actions necessary for achieving the goals and objectives. These critical determinations guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation actions to meet multiple use and sustained yield mandates while sustaining land health.

2.3.1 Components of Alternatives

Goals are broad statements of desired (LUP-wide and resource- or resource-use-specific) outcomes and are not quantifiable or measurable. Objectives are specific measurable desired conditions or outcomes intended to meet goals. Goals and objectives can vary across alternatives, resulting in different allowable uses and management actions for some resources and resource uses. Forest Service objectives are also time specific.

Management actions and allowable uses are designed to achieve objectives. Management actions are measures that guide day-to-day and future activities. Allowable uses delineate which uses are permitted, restricted, or prohibited, and may include stipulations or restrictions. Allowable uses also identify lands where specific uses are excluded to protect resource values, or where certain lands are open or closed in response to legislative, regulatory, or policy requirements. Implementation decisions are site-specific on-the-ground actions and are typically not addressed in LUPs.

On National Forest System lands, forest plans guide management activities and contain desired conditions and objectives as well as standards and guidelines that provide direction for project planning and design. Desired conditions are descriptions of specific social, economic, and/or ecological characteristics of the

plan area, or a portion of the plan area, toward which management of the land and resources should be directed. Standards are mandatory constraints on project and activity decision making. Not meeting a standard would require a site-specific forest plan amendment. A guideline is a constraint on project and activity decision making that allows for departure from its terms, so long as the purpose of the guideline is met.

2.3.2 Purpose of Alternatives Development

Land use planning and NEPA regulations require the BLM and Forest Service to formulate a reasonable range of alternatives. Alternative development is guided by established planning criteria (as outlined for the BLM at 43 CFR 1610) (see **Chapter I**).

The NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 1501.2(c) state that Federal agencies shall: “Study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflict concerning alternatives uses of available resources....”

The basic goal of alternative development is to produce distinct potential management scenarios that:

- Address the identified major planning issues;
- Explore opportunities to enhance management of resources and resource uses;
- Resolve conflicts among resources and resource uses; and
- Meet the purpose of and need for the LUP or LUPA.

Pursuit of this goal provides the BLM, Forest Service, and the public with an appreciation for the diverse ways in which conflicts regarding resources and resource uses might be resolved, and offers the decision maker a reasonable range of alternatives from which to make an informed decision. The components and broad aim of each alternative considered for the X [NOTE: insert sub-regional plan name] are discussed below.

2.4 ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FOR THE X [NOTE: INSERT SUB-REGION NAME] GREATER SAGE-GROUSE LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT

The X [NOTE: insert sub-regional plan name] planning team employed the BLM planning process (outlined in **Section I.X**, Planning Process) to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for the LUPA/EIS. The BLM and Forest Service complied with NEPA and the CEQ implementing regulations at 40 CFR Part 1500 in the development of alternatives for this Proposed LUPA/EIS, including seeking public input and analyzing reasonable alternatives. Where necessary to meet the planning criteria, to address issues and comments from cooperating agencies and the public, or to provide a reasonable range of alternatives, the alternatives include management options for the planning area that would

modify or amend decisions made in the applicable LUP. Since this LUPA/EIS will specifically address GRSG conservation, many decisions within existing LUPs that do not impact GRSG are acceptable and reasonable; in these instances, there is no need to develop alternative management prescriptions.

Public input received during the scoping process was considered to identify significant issues deserving of detailed study to help identify alternatives. The planning team developed planning issues to be addressed in the LUPA/EIS, based on broad concerns or controversies related to conditions, trends, needs, and existing and potential uses of planning area lands and resources. All comments were reviewed to determine whether they identified significant issues or unresolved conflicts.

2.4.1 Develop a Reasonable Range of Alternatives

Based on scoping and collaboration efforts, the BLM and Forest Service finalized their planning criteria and identified X [NOTE: insert #] key planning issues to help frame the alternatives development process. Following the close of the public scoping period in X [NOTE: insert date], the BLM and the Forest Service began the alternatives development process. Between X and X 2012 [NOTE: insert date range], the planning team (BLM, Forest Service, and cooperating agencies) met to develop management goals and to identify objectives and actions to address the goals. The various groups met numerous times throughout this period to refine their work. As outcomes of this process, the planning team [NOTE: bullets below provide examples, revise bullets accordingly to match sub-regional alternatives]:

- Developed one No Action Alternative (Alternative A) and X [NOTE: insert #] preliminary action alternatives. The first action alternative (Alternative B) is based on *A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures* (NTT 2011).
- Two alternatives (Alternatives C and F) are based on a proposed alternatives submitted by conservation groups.
- Customized the goals, objectives, and actions from the NTT-based alternative (Alternative B) to develop a third action alternative (Alternative D) that strives for balance among competing interests.
- Incorporated proposed GRSG protection measures recommended by state governments as a fifth alternative (Alternative E).

Each of the preliminary action alternatives in the Draft LUPA/EIS was designed to:

- Address the X [NOTE: insert #] planning issues (identified in **Section I.X.X**);
- Fulfill the purpose and need for the LUPA (outlined in **Section I.X**, Purpose and Need); and

- Meet the multiple use mandates of the FLPMA (43 CFR 1716), MUSYA and NFMA.

2.4.2 Resulting Range of Alternatives in Draft LUPA/EIS

The X [NOTE: insert #] resulting action alternatives (Alternatives X, X, X, X, X, and X) [NOTE: insert alternative IDs] in the Draft LUPA/EIS offer a range of management approaches to maintain or increase GRSG abundance and distribution of GRSG by conserving, enhancing, or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which GRSG populations depend in collaboration with other conservation partners. While the goal is the same across all the alternatives, each alternative contains a discrete set of objectives and management actions constituting a separate LUPA. The goal is met in varying degrees, with the potential for different long-range outcomes and conditions.

The relative emphasis given to particular resources and resource uses differs as well, including allowable uses, restoration measures, and specific direction pertaining to individual resource programs. When resources or resource uses are mandated by law or are not tied to planning issues, there are typically few or no distinctions between alternatives.

The meaningful differences among the alternatives are described in **Section 2.8**, Comparison of Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives. **Section 2.9**, Detailed Description of Draft Alternatives, also provides a complete description of the proposed decisions for each alternative, including the project goal and objectives, management actions, and allowable uses for individual resource programs. Maps and figures in **Appendix X** provide a visual representation of differences between alternatives. In some instances, varying levels of management overlap a single area, or polygon, due to management prescriptions from different resource programs. In instances where varying levels of management prescriptions overlap a single polygon, the stricter of the management prescriptions would apply.

2.4.3 Selection of and Rationale for Identifying the Preferred Alternative

The BLM and Forest Service selected Alternative X as its preferred alternative, which was presented in the Draft RMP/EIS, released in X [NOTE: insert date]. The BLM and Forest Service selected the preferred alternative based on interdisciplinary team recommendations, environmental consequences analysis of the alternatives, cooperating agency input, and public input during scoping.

[NOTE: provide narrative discussion why specific alternatives **were not** selected as the preferred alternative]

[NOTE: provide narrative discussion why specific alternatives **were** selected as the preferred alternative]

See **Section 2.6.1**, Development of Proposed LUPA, for a discussion of the how the Proposed Plan Amendments were developed.

2.5 BLM/FOREST SERVICE RESOURCE PROGRAMS FOR ADDRESSING GRSG THREATS

The action alternatives are directed towards responding to USFWS-identified issues and threats to GRSG and its habitat. The USFWS threats do not necessarily align with BLM and Forest Service resource program areas, and are often integrated into several different agency resource program areas. **Table 2-X**, USFWS and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas, provides a cross-walk between each of the USFWS listing decision and COT identified threats and the BLM and the Forest Service resource program areas and shows how those threats were addressed in the BLM and the Forest Service land use plan.

2.6 PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

2.6.1 Development of Proposed LUPA

[NOTE: select one of the following two options depending on how sub-region proposed plan was developed]

[OPTION 1: Proposed Plan = new alternative] As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM and Forest Service have developed the Proposed Plans/LUPAs in the Proposed LUPA/Final EIS. The Proposed Plans/LUPAs do not carry forward Alternative **X** (the Preferred Alternative) from the Draft LUPA/EIS. Rather the Proposed Plans/LUPAs consist of a combination of all the alternatives and are now considered the Proposed LUPAs for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the **X** *[NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]*. The Proposed Plans/LUPAs focus on addressing public comments, while continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's legal and regulatory mandates.

[OPTION 2: Proposed Plan = modified Preferred Alternative] As a result of public comments, best science, cooperating agency coordination, and internal review of the Draft LUPA/EIS, the BLM's and Forest Service's Preferred Alternative, identified as Alternative **X** as presented in the Draft LUPA/EIS, has been modified and are now considered the Proposed Plans/LUPAs for managing BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the **XX** *[NOTE: insert sub-regional planning area]*. The Proposed Plans/LUPAs focus on addressing public comments, while

[NOTE: revise Table 2-X accordingly]

**Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas**

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
Wildland Fire	Fire	Wildland Fire Management	Changes to fire management strategies; identify areas suitable/unsuitable for wildland fire use; identify priority areas for suppression	Similar
Invasive Species	Nonnative, Invasive Plants Species	Vegetation	Weed control, suppression, or eradication via natural processes; restrictions on allowable uses; active management or treatment	Similar
		Range Management	Allowable use restrictions	Similar
		Fire Management	Active management treatment	See Wildland Fire
		Recreation	Restrictions and best management practices (BMPs) associated with Special Recreation	Similar

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
			Permits (SRPs)	
Oil and Gas For wind energy development, see <i>Infrastructure – power lines/pipelines, roads (below)</i>	Energy Development	Lands and Realty Management	Issue ROW grant; identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
		Fluid Minerals	Identify open and closed areas to fluid mineral leasing; Identify open areas with no surface occupancy (NSO), controlled surface use (CSU), and timing limitation (TL) stipulations	Identify Stipulations for Resource Protection
Prescribed Fire	Sagebrush Removal	Vegetation Management	Identify vegetation treatment areas, Conduct vegetation treatments	Establish Desired Future Condition as Objective for Treatment
		Wildland Fire Management	Establish fire management strategies; identify areas suitable and unsuitable for prescribed fire use	See Wildland Fire
Grazing	Grazing	Range Management	Identify acres closed to livestock grazing; establish animal unit-months (AUMs); manage	Identify Suitable and Nonsuitable acres Identify Use Rates

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
			grazing systems; conduct range improvements; identify season of use; identify stocking rates	Provide Standards and Guidelines for range Improvements
		Wild Horse and Burro Management	Identify herd management areas (HMAs) and wild horse and burro territories (WHBTs)	Manage Populations Levels
		Special Status Species	Identify habitat management	Similar
		Vegetation Management	Identify vegetation treatment areas, Conduct vegetation treatments	Establish Desired Future Condition as Objective for Treatment
See <i>Grazing Management (above)</i>	Range Management Structures	Range Management	See <i>Grazing</i> above	Same
<i>No similar threat identified</i>	Free-Roaming Equid Management	Wild Horse and Burro	Identify HMAs and WHBTs	See above
Conifer Encroachment	Pinyon and/or Juniper Expansion	Wildland Fire Management	Active management or treatment	See Wildland fire
		Vegetation Management	Identify vegetation treatment areas, conduct vegetation treatments	Establish Desired Future Condition as Objective for Treatment

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
Agriculture & Urbanization	Agricultural Conversion and Ex-Urban Development	Lands & Realty	Identify retention, disposal, and acquisition areas (specifically addressed in Alternative E and displayed in the amelioration threat table)	Similar
Hard Rock Mining	Mining	Lands and Realty	Petition to withdraw lands from locatable mineral development; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations	Recommend areas for withdrawal
		Lands and Realty	Identify open and closed areas to mineral materials disposal; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
		Lands and Realty	Identify open and closed areas to non-energy leasable minerals; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
<i>See Infrastructure, Roads</i>	Recreation	Recreation	See Infrastructure – roads (below); Issue SRPs	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
				Protection
Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power lines/ pipelines - Roads - Communication sites - Railroads Range improvements (see below)	Infrastructure	Lands and Realty - Utilities	Issue ROW grant; identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas; identify utility corridors	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
		Lands and Realty – Communication Sites	Issue ROW grant; Identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
		Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management – Roads	Identify motorized and nonmotorized travel routes and areas, including areas open, limited, or closed to OHVs	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
		Lands and Realty - Railroads	Issue ROW grant; Identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection
Infrastructure – Range Improvements	Range Management Structures	All applicable programs	Authorize installation or removal of structural range improvements. Installation or removal of structural range improvements.	Provide Standards and Guidelines for range Improvements
		Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management	Installation or removal of fences, culverts, or stream crossings	Identify Standards and Guidelines for Resource Protection

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
Water Developments	No similar threat identified	All applicable programs	Identify number, location, and type of range water developments	Provide Standards and Guidelines for range Improvements
Climate Change	No similar threat identified	There is no BLM resource planning program for addressing this threat to GRSG and its habitat. Proposed climate change management is incorporated in other resource programs throughout Chapter 2.	Not applicable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify Desired Future Condition for Vegetation to provide for a resilient vegetation community 2) Identify Standards and Guidelines for implementation of vegetation treatments 3) Development Adaptive Management Strategy
Weather	No similar threat identified	There is not a resource program in the BLM RMPs for addressing this USFWS-identified threat.	Not applicable	Same
Predation	No similar threat identified	All applicable programs	Establish design features and BMPs to reduce	Similar

Table 2-X
USFWS- and COT Report Identified Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat and Applicable BLM and Forest Service Resource Program Areas

USFWS-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	COT Report-Identified Threats to GRSG and Its Habitat	Applicable BLM/Forest Service LUP Resource Program	Decisions Made Under the BLM Resource Management Plans	Decisions Made Under Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans
			avian predator perching and nesting on structures	
Disease	No similar threat identified	All applicable programs	Establish design features and BMPs to reduce risk for West Nile virus	Similar
Hunting	No similar threat identified	There is no resource program in the BLM RMPs for addressing this USFWS-identified threat	Not applicable	Very Limited
Contaminants	No similar threat identified	Mineral Resources	Plan of Operation requirements	Similar
		Public Health and Safety	Remediate and resolve illegal dumping	Similar

Source: USFWS 2010, 2013

continuing to meet the BLM's and Forest Service's legal and regulatory mandates.

2.6.2 BLM Proposed Plan Amendment

The proposed plan incorporates the following GRSG goals:

- Conserve, enhance, and restore the sagebrush ecosystem upon which Greater Sage-Grouse populations depend in an effort to maintain and/or increase their abundance and distribution, in cooperation with other conservation partners.
- **ADD OTHERS FROM EACH SUBREGION**

[NOTE: Provide a full description or table of the BLM proposed plan. Use the following headings (can have subheadings). These headings meet GRSG3 and LUP Handbook, Appendix C.]

- **Special Status Species**
 - GRSG
 - Objectives
 - Actions (predation if applicable)
 - T&E and other SSS, if applicable
- **Vegetation**
 - Sagebrush-steppe
 - Conifer encroachment
 - Invasive Species (e.g., cheat grass)
 - Riparian and Wetlands
 - Climate Change
- **Wildland Fire Management**
 - Pre-suppression
 - Suppression
 - Fuels Management
 - Post Fire Management
- **Livestock Grazing**
 - Grazing actions
 - Facilities
- **Wild Horses and Burros**
- **Lands and Realty**

- Land Tenure
- Solar and Wind
- Major Transmission Line and Pipeline ROWs
- Other ROWs
- Withdrawals (*no withdrawals are being proposed – use standard language*)
- **Minerals** (*NOTE: address direction for fee lands and split estate as appropriate*)
 - Fluid Minerals (oil, gas, and geothermal)
 - Unleased fluid mineral estate
 - Leased fluid mineral estate
 - Locatable Minerals
 - Mineral Materials (Saleable Minerals)
 - Non-energy Leasable Minerals
- **Coal (if applicable to the Sub-region)**
- **Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management**
- **Recreation and Visitor Services**
- **Special Designations**
- **OTHER DIRECTIONS; e.g., Tribal Interests**

RDFs are means, measures, or practices intended to reduce or avoid adverse environmental impacts. This LUPA/EIS proposes a suite of design features that would establish the minimum specifications for water developments, certain mineral development, and fire and fuels management and would mitigate adverse impacts. These design features would be required to provide a greater level of regulatory certainty than through implementing BMPs.

In general, the design features are accepted practices that are known to be effective when implemented properly at the project level. However, their applicability and overall effectiveness cannot be fully assessed except at the project-specific level when the project location and design are known. Because of site-specific circumstances, some features may not apply to some projects (e.g., when a resource is not present on a given site) or may require slight variations from what is described in the LUPA/EIS (e.g., a larger or smaller protective area). All variations in design features would require appropriate analysis and disclosure as part of future project authorizations. Additional mitigation measures may be identified and required during individual project development and environmental review. The proposed RDFs are presented in

Appendix X, Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Required Design Features and Best Management Practices.

2.6.3 Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment

[NOTE: Provide a full description or table of the Forest Service proposed plan]

2.7 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND MITIGATION

[NOTE: provide description of what alternatives each of these apply towards]

2.7.1 Adaptive Management Plan

Adaptive management is a decision process that promotes flexible resource management decision making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood. Careful monitoring of these outcomes both advances scientific understanding and helps with adjusting resource management directions as part of an iterative learning process. Adaptive management also recognizes the importance of natural variability in contributing to ecological resilience and productivity. It is not a 'trial and error' process, but rather emphasizes learning while doing. Adaptive management does not represent an end in itself, but rather a means to more effective decisions and enhanced benefits.

In relation to the BLM/Forest Services' National Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy, adaptive management will help identify if sage grouse conservation measures presented in this EIS contain the needed level of certainty for effectiveness. Principles of adaptive management are incorporated into the conservation measures in the plan to ameliorate threats to a species, thereby increasing the likelihood that the conservation measure and plan will be effective in reducing threats to that species. The following provides the BLM/Forest Service's adaptive management strategy for the **X** [NOTE: insert name of sub-regional/amendment].

Adaptive Management and Monitoring

This EIS contains a monitoring framework plan (**Appendix X**) that includes an effectiveness monitoring component. The agencies intend to use the data collected from the effectiveness monitoring to identify any changes in habitat conditions related to the goals and objectives of the plan and other range-wide conservation strategies (US Department of the Interior 2004; Stiver et al. 2006; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2013). The information collected through the Monitoring Framework Plan outlined in **Appendix X** will be used by the BLM/Forest Service to determine when adaptive management hard and soft triggers (discussed below) are met.

[NOTE: If a state adaptive management strategy exists or is in the process of being developed, insert a summary here explaining this state (s) strategy and how it corresponds with what is proposed in this plan. If the strategy is complex, simply place the information into an appendix and reference that appendix here.]

If a state adaptive management strategy has not been established, describe this planning area's commitment to work with state partners to create a group that is responsible for recommending adaptive management trigger responses to the appropriate Federal agency and for identifying what the causal factors are that have led to hitting the hard trigger. This group should at a minimum, contain membership from BLM, USFWS, Forest Service, and state representatives. If necessary, this group can reach out to the USGS, NRCS, and other Federal/state/tribal agencies for added information.]

Adaptive Management Triggers

Soft Triggers

Soft triggers represent an intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are needed at the project/implementation level to address habitat and population losses. If a soft trigger is identified, the BLM/Forest Service will apply more conservative or restrictive implementation conservation measures to mitigate for the specific causal factor in the decline of populations and/or habitats, with consideration of local knowledge and conditions. For example, monitoring data within an already federally authorized project area within a given GRSG population area indicates that there has been a slight decrease in GRSG numbers in this area. Data also suggests the decline may be attributed to GRSG collisions with monitoring tower guy-wires from this federally authorized project. BLM then receives an application for a new tower within the same GRSG population area. The response would be to require the new authorization's tower guy-wires to be flagged. Monitoring data then shows the decline is curtailed. The adaptive management soft trigger response is to require future applications to flag for guy-wires. These types of adjustments will be made to preclude tripping a "hard" trigger (which signals more severe habitat loss or population declines). While there should be no expectation of hitting a hard trigger, if unforeseen circumstances occur that trip either a habitat or population hard trigger, more restrictive management will be required.

Hard Triggers

Hard triggers represent a threshold indicating that immediate action is necessary to stop a severe deviation from GRSG conservation objectives as set forth in the BLM and Forest Service plans. The hard trigger and the proposed management response to this trigger are presented in [NOTE: reference the appropriate management action here].

2.7.2 Monitoring for the Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy

The BLM's planning regulations, specifically 43 CFR 1610.4-9, require that land use plans establish intervals and standards for monitoring based on the sensitivity of the resource decisions. Land use plan monitoring is the process of tracking the implementation of land use plan decisions (implementation monitoring) and collecting data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of land use plan decisions (effectiveness monitoring). For GRSG, these types of monitoring are also described in the criteria found in the Policy

for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (50 CFR Vol. 68, No. 60). One of the Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions criteria evaluates whether provisions for monitoring and reporting progress on implementation (based on compliance with the implementation schedule) and effectiveness (based on evaluation of quantifiable parameters) of the conservation effort are provided.

A guiding principle in the BLM National Sage-grouse Conservation Strategy (US Department of the Interior 2004) is that “the Bureau is committed to sage-grouse and sagebrush conservation and will continue to adjust and adapt our National Sage-grouse Strategy as new information, science, and monitoring results evaluate effectiveness over time.” In keeping with the WAFWA Sage-grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy (Stiver et al. 2006) and the Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Objectives: Final Report (USFWS 2013), the BLM and Forest Service will monitor implementation and effectiveness of conservation measures in GRSG habitats.

On March 5, 2010, USFWS’ 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered were posted as a Federal Register notice (75 Federal Register 13910-14014, March 23, 2010). This notice stated:

“...the information collected by BLM could not be used to make broad generalizations about the status of rangelands and management actions. There was a lack of consistency across the range in how questions were interpreted and answered for the data call, which limited our ability to use the results to understand habitat conditions for sage-grouse on BLM lands.”

Standardization of monitoring methods and implementation of a defensible monitoring approach (within and across jurisdictions) will resolve this situation. The BLM, Forest Service, and other conservation partners use the resulting information to guide implementation of conservation activities.

Monitoring strategies for GRSG habitat and populations must be collaborative, as habitat occurs across jurisdictional boundaries (52 percent on BLM-administered lands, 31 percent on private lands, 8 percent on National Forest System lands, 5 percent on state lands, 4 percent on tribal and other federal lands) (75 *Federal Register* 13910, March 23, 2010), and state fish and wildlife agencies have primary responsibility for population level wildlife management, including population monitoring. Therefore, population efforts will continue to be conducted in partnership with state fish and wildlife agencies. The BLM and Forest Service have finalized a monitoring framework, which can be found in **Appendix X**. This framework describes the process that the BLM and Forest Service will use to monitor implementation and effectiveness of RMP/LUP decisions. The monitoring framework includes methods, data standards, and intervals of monitoring at broad and mid scales; consistent indicators to measure and metric descriptions for each of the scales; analysis and reporting

methods; and the incorporation of monitoring results into adaptive management. The need for fine-scale and site-specific habitat monitoring may vary by area depending on existing conditions, habitat variability, threats, and land health. Indicators at the fine and site scales will be consistent with the Habitat Assessment Framework; however, the values for the indicators could be adjusted for regional conditions.

More specifically, the framework discusses how the BLM and Forest Service will monitor and track implementation and effectiveness of planning decisions (e.g., tracking of waivers, modifications, site-level actions). The two agencies will monitor the effectiveness of RMP/LUP decisions in meeting management and conservation objectives. Effectiveness monitoring will include monitoring disturbance in habitats, as well as landscape habitat attributes. To monitor habitats, the BLM and Forest Service will measure and track attributes of occupied habitat, priority habitat, and general habitat at the broad scale, and attributes of habitat availability, patch size, connectivity, linkage/connectivity habitat, edge effect, and anthropogenic disturbances at the mid-scale. Disturbance monitoring will measure and track changes in the amount of sagebrush in the landscape and changes in the anthropogenic footprint, including change energy development density. The framework also includes methodology for analysis and reporting for field offices, states, ranger districts, BLM districts, National Forests, and Forest regions, including geospatial and tabular data for disturbance mapping (e.g., geospatial footprint of new permitted disturbances) and management actions effectiveness.

2.7.3 Regional Mitigation

Consistent with the proposed plan's goals outlined in X and X [NOTE: insert section numbers or table numbers that describes the BLM and Forest Service proposed plan goals], the intent of the Proposed Plan Amendment is to achieve a net conservation gain to the GRSG by implementing conservation actions (e.g. Federal restoration efforts), applying a no net unmitigated loss standard for authorized land uses in GRSG habitat, and, strategically siting compensatory mitigation actions, via a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy as part of a mitigation program in order to achieve cumulative benefits to the GRSG. This is also consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management, Section .02B, which states “to initiate protective conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to Bureau sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of the need for listing of these species under the ESA.

Mitigation Standards

The BLM/Forest Service will achieve no net unmitigated loss for authorized land uses within GRSG PHMA and GHMA. No net unmitigated loss means that impacts from authorized land uses will be fully offset to benefit the species. Mitigation will follow the regulations from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1508.20; e.g. avoid, minimize,

compensate), hereafter referred to as the mitigation hierarchy. If impacts to GRSG or its habitat from authorized land uses remain after applying avoidance and minimization measures (i.e. residual impacts), then compensatory mitigation projects will be used to fully offset those residual impacts in order to achieve the no net unmitigated loss standard. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to that which would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation (see the concepts of durability, timeliness, and additionally as described further in **Appendix X**).

Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team

The BLM/Forest Service will establish a WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team (hereafter, Team) to help guide the conservation of GRSG, within 90 days of the issuance of the ROD. This Team will develop a WAFWA Management Zone Regional Mitigation Strategy (hereafter, Regional Mitigation Strategy). The Team will also compile and report on monitoring data (including data on habitat condition, population trends, and mitigation effectiveness) from States across the WAFWA Management Zone (see Monitoring section). Subsequently, the Team will use these data to either modify the appropriate Regional Mitigation Strategy or recommend adaptive management actions (see Adaptive Management section).

The BLM/Forest Service will invite governmental and Tribal partners to participate in this Team, in compliance with the exemptions provided for committees defined in the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the regulations that implement that act. The BLM/Forest Service will strive for a collaborative and unified approach between Federal agencies (e.g. USFWS, BLM, Forest Service), Tribal governments, state and local government(s), and other stakeholders for GRSG conservation. The Team will provide advice, and will not make any decisions that impact federal lands. The BLM/Forest Service will remain responsible for making decisions that affect federal lands.

Developing a Regional Mitigation Strategy

The Team will develop a Regional Mitigation Strategy to inform the mitigation components of NEPA analyses for authorized land uses associated with impacts to GRSG and its habitat. The Strategy will be developed within one year of the issuance of the ROD. The BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual MS-1794 will serve as a framework for developing the Regional Mitigation Strategy. The Regional Mitigation Strategy will be applicable to the States/Field Offices/Forests within the WAFWA Management Zone's boundaries.

Regional mitigation is a landscape-scale approach to mitigating impacts to resources. This involves anticipating future mitigation needs and strategically identifying mitigation sites and measures that can help achieve the greatest conservation benefit for GRSG and its habitat. The Regional Mitigation Strategy developed by the Team will elaborate on the components identified above (i.e.

avoidance, minimization, compensation; additionally, timeliness, and durability) and further explained in **Appendix X**.

In the time period before the Strategy is developed, BLM will consider regional conditions, trends, and sites, to the greatest extent possible, when applying the mitigation hierarchy and will ensure that mitigation is consistent with the standards set forth in the first paragraph of this section.

Incorporating the Regional Mitigation Strategy into Land Use Authorization Analyses

The BLM/Forest Service will include the avoidance, minimization, and compensatory recommendations from the Regional Mitigation Strategy in one or more of the NEPA analysis' alternatives for authorized land uses that may impact GRSG or its habitat and the appropriate mitigation actions are carried forward into the decision.

Implementing a Compensatory Mitigation Program

The BLM/Forest Service need to ensure that compensatory mitigation is strategically implemented to achieve the greatest conservation benefit, as identified in the Regional Mitigation Strategy. In order to align with existing compensatory mitigation efforts, this compensatory mitigation program will be implemented at a State-level (as opposed to a WAFWA Management Zone, a Field Office, or a Forest), in collaboration with our partners (e.g. Federal, Tribal, and State agencies).

To ensure transparent and effective management of the compensatory mitigation funds, the BLM/Forest Service will enter into a contract or agreement with a third-party to help manage the State-level compensatory mitigation funds, within one year of the issuance of the ROD. The selection of the third-party compensatory mitigation administrator will conform to all relevant laws, regulations, and policies. The BLM/Forest Service will remain responsible for making decisions that affect federal lands.

2.8 DRAFT LUPA/EIS ALTERNATIVES

The following are alternatives to the Proposed Plan and were presented and analyzed in the Draft LUPA/EIS. Some alternatives have been refined based on public comment.

[NOTE: Generally describe any changes to alternatives based on public comments]

2.8.1 Alternative A (No Action)

[NOTE: provide a summary description of Alternative A]

2.8.2 Management Common to Action Alternatives [this section is optional]

[NOTE: if applicable, provide bulleted summary list of management actions common to all action alternatives (e.g., delineating PH and GH and RDFs)]

[NOTE: discuss process for habitat boundary adjustments]

2.8.3 Alternative B

[NOTE: provide a summary description of Alternative B]

2.8.4 Alternative C

[NOTE: provide a summary description of Alternative C]

2.8.5 Alternative D

[NOTE: provide a summary description of Alternative D]

2.9 SUMMARY COMPARISON OF PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT AND DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

This section summarizes and compares Alternatives A through X and the BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plans considered in the Final EIS. Combined with the appendices and maps, **Table 2-X**, Comparative Summary of Allocation Decisions of the Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives, provides the differences among the alternatives relative to what they establish and where they occur. The table compares the differences with the most potential to affect resources among the alternatives.

**Table 2-X
Comparative Summary of Allocation Decisions of the
Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives**

Resources/ Resource Uses	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	BLM Proposed Plan Amendment	Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment
[insert allocation]	PHMA: [insert acres or other quantitative value (e.g., AUMs)] GHMA: [insert acres or other quantitative value (e.g., AUMs)]	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:
Livestock Grazing [Example]						
AUMs	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:

Table 2-X
Comparative Summary of Allocation Decisions of the
Proposed Plan Amendment and Draft Alternatives

Resources/ Resource Uses	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	BLM Proposed Plan Amendment	Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment
Open for all classes of livestock grazing (acres)	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:
Not allocated to livestock grazing (acres)	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:

2.10 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

2.10.1 How to Read Table 2-X

The following describes how **Table 2-X**, Description of Draft Alternatives, below, is written and formatted to show the land use plan decisions proposed for each alternative.

In accordance with Appendix C of the BLM’s *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1), land use plan and plan amendment decisions are broad-scale decisions that guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions (BLM 2005). Land use plan decisions fall into two categories, which establish the base structure for desired outcomes (goals and objectives), and allowable uses and actions to achieve outcomes.

- Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes that usually are not quantifiable.
- Objectives identify specific desired outcomes for resources. They may be quantifiable and measurable and may have established timeframes for achievement, as appropriate.
- Allowable uses identify uses, or allocations, that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited on BLM-administered lands and mineral estate.
- Actions identify measures or criteria to achieve desired objectives, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health.

Stipulations (NSO and CSU, which fall under the allowable uses category) are also applied to surface-disturbing activities to achieve desired outcomes (i.e., objectives).

In general, only those resources and resource uses that have been identified as planning issues have notable differences between the alternatives.

Actions that are applicable to all alternatives are shown in one cell across a row. These particular objectives and actions would be implemented regardless of which alternative is ultimately selected.

Actions that are applicable to more than one but not all alternatives are indicated by either combining cells for the same alternatives, or by denoting those objectives or actions as the “same as Alternative A,” for example.

In some cells, “No Similar Action” is used to indicate that there is no similar goal, objective or action to the other alternatives, or that the similar goal, objective or action is reflected in another management action in the alternative.

Table 2-X
Description of Draft Alternatives A, B, C, and D

Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
LUPA Goal:			
Travel and Transportation Management			
Objectives:	Objectives:	Objective:	Objective:
ALTERNATIVES DIRECTION/MANAGEMENT ACTIONS			
Action:	Action:	Action:	Action:

2.11 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

The following alternatives were considered but were not carried forward for detailed analysis because (1) they would not fulfill the requirements of FLPMA, NFMA or other existing laws or regulations, (2) they did not meet the purpose and need, (3) they were already part of an existing plan, policy, or administrative function, or (4) they did not fall within the limits of the planning criteria. FLPMA requires the BLM and Forest Service to manage the public lands and resources in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

- 2.11.1 **[NOTE: insert dismissed alternative name]**
[NOTE: provide description of alternative and why dismissed]

2.12 SUMMARY COMPARISON OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table 2-X, Summary Comparison of Environmental Consequences, presents a comparison summary of impacts from management actions proposed for the management alternatives. **Chapter 4** provides a more detailed impact analysis.

[NOTE: order of resources in table follows order in Chapter 4]

Table 2_X
Summary Comparison of Environmental Consequences

Alternative A <i>(No Action)</i>	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	BLM Proposed Plan Amendment	Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE					
LANDS AND REALTY					

Questions on Ch. 2 Template

BLM Wyoming

1) Is the text not marked with yellow highlight suggested text that can be refined to match with the rest of the document, or must it be used verbatim?

The text not marked with yellow highlight should be used verbatim unless there is a compelling reason to modify the language to meet your sub-region's specific needs.

2) For the table beginning on page 8 (threats and COT report) do the BLM and Forest Service actions addressing each threat and COT analysis have to be listed verbatim and repeated for each threat or COT review, or can the actions be summarized in a generic way?

The decisions/actions can certainly be summarized in a generic way, especially if the populated information in the table is not an accurate depiction of the direction proposed in the sub-regional PRMPA. The contractors attempted to generically summarize the decisions here without getting into the weeds, so hopefully there will not be many changes.

3) The headings provided on page 15 will require the BLM and Forest Service actions be reordered from the draft. Does the analysis in Chapter 4, which mirrored the original Chapter 2 order, need to be reorganized (a significant workload) to follow the new order, or can Chapter 4 be left in the original order?

The order of chapter 4 can remain the same. The outline provided on page 15 is only for the narrative of the proposed plans. The table on page 25 of the template should reflect the order of your existing Chapter 4. The analysis for the proposed plan can also follow this order.

4) Is the text on page 20 referencing "no net unmitigated loss" required? This term was not used in the 9-Plan DEIS released to the public and may be a significant change requiring a Supplemental EIS.

At this point, the National Policy Team has agreed to apply the "no net unmitigated loss" concept to all sub-regions, so I would recommend keeping this language in.

5) The table on page 25 does not include columns for the BLM and Forest Service proposed plans as do the other tables in the template. Are the BLM and Forest Service proposed plans not to be included in this table, and will appear only as standalone versions in sections 2.6.2 and 2.6.3?

Correct. The table on page 25 would only include the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS.

6) Why is it necessary to provide rationale for the preferred alternative (section 2.4.3) when it is no longer under consideration and has been replaced with the proposed plan? This section does not appear in the planning handbook for a FEIS, and has not traditionally been a part of FEISs in Wyoming. It seems redundant with section 2.6.1, development of the proposed plan.

It is still important to note why we selected the preferred in the DEIS. Including this section here helps tell our story as to how we got to a proposed plan and that it is one of the draft alternatives that was used to pull actions from for the proposed plan.

7) Sections 2.8.1 and 2.8.3 are redundant with common actions depicted in the table on page 25. Can these sections be deleted and common actions just shown, in one place, in the table on page 25?

Yes. This is repetitive and I see no problem with removing section 2.8.1. Section 2.8.3 (now section 2.8.2) is optional. **CHANGE TO TEMPLATE**

8) In the table on page 25, how do we show actions that support more than one goal/objective? Are the goals/objectives to be repeated for supporting actions in the different resource areas (e.g., repeat the same goal/objective in the livestock, lands, minerals and travel management actions)?

Here you have flexibility to populate table 2-X in any fashion that corresponds to how the alternatives were depicted in your DEIS. For example, for the WY 9 Plan DEIS, you had goals and objectives pulled into a different section before Detailed Comparison of Alternatives Table in the DEIS. I'd suggest doing the same here and simply create a new section (2.10.2) that lists all of the goals and objectives by alternative.

BLM Nevada

1) Will the proposed plan be identified as an alternative (i.e. G) or will it be its own proposed plan (i.e. Proposed Plan)?

Please refer to it as the Proposed Plan, not Alternative G.

2) 2.6.2 second bullet: "ADD OTHERS FROM EACH SUBREGION" What does this mean? Will there be multiple goals for GRSG and goals for each resource area? Will each resource have identified Objective(s)

The only goals we will have in the amendments are those for GRSG. If other resources have measurable objectives for other programs, that is ok.

3) Forest Service reference- Since Forest Service is going to have its own plan amendment section, should we take out reference to forest service in the BLM plan amendment?

Yes. Remove reference to FS in the BLM Proposed Plan in Chapter 2.

4) 2.6.2. In the current NVCA plan amendment we have a "general" objective and action section that covers coordination and direction on application of RDF's. Can we add this before SSS?

No, because we need to make the ROD development an easy and consistent process. RDF's should go into an appendix.

5) 2.6.2. "OTHER DIRECTIONS; e.g., Tribal Interests" Can we add a predation section (NV/NECA has objectives and actions for coordination on predation)?

No – it is not a resource that BLM manages for. If they are relevant to BLM management, insert them into the SSS-GRSG section. Tribal Interests should be covered under Cultural Resources.

6) 2.7.1. Adaptive management- Where do we display objectives and actions? (NV/NECA has a suite of objectives and actions for adaptive management). Would these be added in the proposed plan section or this section? This would be the same question for the subregion specific mitigation actions (specifically incorporation of the NV conservation credit system)?

There should be no objectives for adaptive management in the Proposed Plan. If the objective is part of a statewide adaptive management strategy, you can reference the objective and strategy in the area provided for in section 2.7.1. If the adaptive strategy is complex, please consider incorporating the information as an appendix to the document. As articulated in the April 2014 NPT Adaptive Management Sideboards, please ensure the numeric hard trigger, hard trigger response, and the scale in which we will be implementing the responses are presented as a management action in the proposed plan. This management action can also reference the adaptive management appendix if one is present.

7) 2.9. Allocation table. The table appears to only display total acres? Are we not splitting it up by PPMA/PGMA (PHMA/GHMA)?

It is appropriate to display PHMA and GHMA in the table – **CHANGE TO TEMPLATE**

8) PHMA/PGMA- Will this language only be used in the proposed plan amendment or will the PPMA/PGMA throughout the document need to be revised?

Recommended throughout the entire document.

9) 2.10. Draft Alternative Table. This appears to be the matrix from the draft, however the matrix contained goals and objectives for each resource. Will these be removed or kept the same in this table?

If you have goals and objectives in the draft they should be displayed in the same fashion. It can be in the Draft Alternative Table or in a separate table/text as described for each alternative above.

BLM Montana

1) The Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS is still a NEPA document where all alternatives should be given 'equal treatment.' The planning handbook states that "The proposed RMP (amendment) and final EIS builds on the draft RMP and draft EIS to include appropriate responses to public comments... as well as description... of the comments received. The proposed RMP and final EIS may also contain modification to the alternatives and the accompanying impacts analysis... however, substantial changes... or significant new information would require supplements to the either the draft or final EIS. My concern is we've pulled the 'proposed plan' out from the alternatives in the final EIS... it certainly gives the appearance of 'substantial changes' or the creation of a new alternative. My preference in final EISs is that we modify the alternative itself to show that Alternative D, for instance, is identified as the proposed plan. This new Chapter 2 format has pages and pages of descriptions of the proposed plan - like what we normally do in the ROD/Approved RMP (Amendment) - where we do pull it out from the

alternatives and make it the plan that will be implemented vs. still an alternative for a final EIS and 'proposed' plan available for protest period.

Under Section 2.6 you would use the Option 2 text to describe how you modified Alt. D and made it into the Proposed Plan. Alternative D should be carried forward as a standalone alternative as presented in the DEIS in order to show how it was changed.

2) There also needs to be clarification on the Adaptive Management, Mitigation, and Monitoring sections in Chapter 2 on what they pertain to - i.e., just the proposed plan?

Below the heading of section 2.7, there is a highlighted yellow area where sub-regions are able to articulate which alternatives these standards apply.

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 9:21 AM
To: jmbeck@blm.gov; Brent Ralston
Subject: FS Plan
Attachments: ID Draft Proposed Planning Language V24.docx

IDMT_PUB_9771
6.3.b

Hi Jon –
Attached is the FS Proposed Plan for drop into Chapter 2.
Lauren

Idaho and SW Montana Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment

Forest Service Plan Components

Desired conditions - A description of specific social, economic, and/or ecological characteristics of the plan area, or a portion of the plan area, toward which management of the land and resources should be directed. Desired conditions must be described in terms that are specific enough to allow progress toward their achievement to be determined, but do not include completion dates. (36 CFR 219.7(e)(1)(i)) FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

Guideline – A constraint on project and activity decisionmaking that allows for departure from its terms, so long as the purpose of the guideline is met. (§ 219.15(d)(3)). Guidelines are established to help achieve or maintain a desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements. (36 CFR 219.7(e)(1)(iv); FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

Objective - A concise, measurable, and time-specific statement of a desired rate of progress toward a desired condition or conditions. Objectives should be based on reasonably foreseeable budgets. (36 CFR 219.9(e)(1)(ii)) FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

Standard - A mandatory constraint on project and activity decisionmaking, established to help achieve or maintain the desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements. (36 CFR 219.7(e)(1) (iii)) FSH 1909.12, Chapter 20)

General Greater Sage-grouse

GRSG-GEN-DC-001-Desired Condition – The landscape for greater sage-grouse encompasses large contiguous areas, approximately 6 to 62 square miles in area, to provide for multiple aspects of species life requirements. Within these landscapes, a variety of sagebrush-community compositions exist, with variations in subspecies composition, co-dominant vegetation, shrub cover, herbaceous cover, and stand structure, to meet seasonal requirements for food, cover, and nesting for greater sage-grouse.

GRSG-GEN-DC-002-Desired Condition – Anthropogenic disturbance is focused in non-habitat areas outside of priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas¹. Disturbances in general habitat management areas are limited, and there is little to no disturbances in priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas except for valid existing rights and existing authorize uses.

GRSG-GEN-DC-003-Desired Condition – In all seasonal habitats, 70% of lands capable of producing sagebrush have 10 to 30% sagebrush canopy cover and less than 10% conifer canopy cover. In addition, within breeding and nesting habitat, sufficient herbaceous vegetation structure and height provides overhead and lateral concealment for nesting and early brood rearing life stages. Within brood rearing habitat, wet meadows and riparian areas sustain a rich diversity of perennial forb species relative to site potential. Within winter habitat, sufficient sagebrush height

¹ Suitable greater sage-grouse habitat within polygons identified as priority or general habitat management areas. Areas of non-habitat within a polygon are not included as part of any priority or general habitat management areas. Sagebrush focal areas may include areas of non-habitat.

and density provides food and cover for greater sage-grouse during this seasonal period. Specific desired conditions for greater sage-grouse based on seasonal habitat requirements are in table 1.

Table 1. Seasonal Habitat Desired Conditions for Greater Sage-grouse.

ATTRIBUTE	INDICATORS	DESIRED CONDITON
BREEDING AND NESTING^{1,2,3} (Seasonal Use Period March 1-June 15) Apply 6.2 miles from active leks.⁴		
Lek Security	Proximity of trees ⁵	Trees or other tall structures are none to uncommon within 1.86 miles of leks ^{6,7}
	Proximity of sagebrush to leks ⁶	Adjacent protective sagebrush cover within 328 feet of lek ⁶
Cover	Seasonal habitat extent ⁷	>80% of the breeding and nesting habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{6,7,8}	15 to 25%
	Sagebrush height ⁷ Arid sites ^{6,7,9} Mesic sites ^{6,7,10}	12 to 32 inches 16 to 32 inches
	Predominant sagebrush shape ⁶	>50% in spreading ¹¹
	Perennial grass canopy cover ^{6,7} Arid sites ^{7,9} Mesic sites ^{7,10}	≥10% ≥15%
	Perennial grass height ^{6,7,8}	Provide overhead and lateral concealment from predators ⁷
	Perennial forb canopy cover ^{6,7,8} Arid sites ⁹ Mesic sites ¹⁰	≥5% ^{6,7} ≥10% ^{6,7}
BROOD-REARING/SUMMER¹ (Seasonal Use Period June 16-October 31)		
Cover	Seasonal habitat extent ⁷	>40% of the brood-rearing/summer habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover ^{6,7,8}	10 to 25%
	Sagebrush height ^{7,8}	16 to 32 inches
	Perennial grass canopy cover and forbs ^{7,8}	>15%
	Riparian areas/mesic meadows	Proper Functioning Condition ¹²
	Upland and riparian perennial forb availability ^{6,7}	Preferred forbs are common with several preferred species present ¹³
WINTER¹ (Seasonal Use Period November 1-February 28)		
Cover and Food	Seasonal habitat extent ^{6,7,8}	>80% of the winter habitat
	Sagebrush canopy cover above snow ^{6,7,8}	>10%
	Sagebrush height above snow ^{6,7,8}	>10 inches ¹⁴
<p>¹Seasonal dates can be adjusted; that is, start and end dates may be shifted either earlier or later, but the amount of days cannot be shortened or lengthened by the local unit.</p> <p>²Doherty, K. 2008. <i>Sage-grouse and Energy Development: Integrating Science with Conservation Planning to Reduce Impacts</i>. University of Montana. Missoula, MT.</p> <p>³Holloran and Anderson. 2005. <i>Spatial Distribution of Greater Sage-grouse nests in relatively contiguous sagebrush habitats</i>. Condor 107:742-752.</p> <p>⁴Buffer distance may be changed only if 3 out of 5 years of telemetry studies indicate the 4 miles is not appropriate.</p> <p>⁵Baruch-Mordo, S. J.S. Evans, J.P Severson, D.E. Naugle, J. D. Maestas, J.M. Kiesecker, M.J. Falkowski. C.A. Hagen, and K.P. Reese. . 2013. <i>Saving sage-grouse from trees: A proactive solution to reducing a key threat to a candidate species</i>. Biological Conservation 167: 233-241.</p> <p>⁶Stiver, S.J., E.T. Rinkes, D.E. Naugle, P.D. Makela, D.A. Nance, and J.W. Karl, eds. 2015. Sage-Grouse Habitat Assessment Framework: A Multiscale Assessment Tool. Technical Reference 6710-1. Bureau of Land Management and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Denver, Colorado.</p> <p>⁷Connelly, J. M. A. Schroweder, A.R. Sands, and C.E. Braun.2000. Guidelines to manage sage-grouse populations and their habitats. Wildlife Society Bulletin 28 (4): 967-985.</p> <p>⁸Connelly, J. K. Reese, and M. Schroder. 2003. <i>Monitoring of Greater sage-grouse habitats and populations</i>. Station Bulletin 80, Contribution 979. University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources Experiment Station. Moscow, ID.</p> <p>⁹10–12 inch precipitation zone; <i>Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis</i> is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).</p> <p>¹⁰≥12 inch precipitation zone; <i>Artemisia tridentata vaseyana</i> is a common big sagebrush sub-species for this type site (HAF 2014).</p> <p>¹¹Sagebrush plants with a spreading shape provide more protective cover than sagebrush plants that are more tree- or columnar shaped (HAF 2014).</p> <p>¹²Existing land management plan desired conditions for riparian areas/wet meadows (spring seeps) may be used in place of properly functioning conditions, if appropriate for meeting greater sage-grouse habitat requirements.</p> <p>¹³Preferred forbs are listed in HAF Table III-2 (HAF 2014). Overall total forb cover may be greater than that of preferred forb cover since not all forb species are listed as preferred in Table III-2.</p> <p>¹⁴The height of sagebrush remaining above the snow depends upon snow depth in a particular year. Intent is to manage for tall, healthy, sagebrush stands.</p>		

GRSG-GEN-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not permit new lands or recreation special use authorizations unless all existing discrete anthropogenic disturbances cover less than 3% of the total greater sage-grouse habitat within the Biologically Significant Unit and the proposed project analysis area, regardless of ownership (Appendix Z – Disturbance Cap Guidance).

GRSG-GEN-ST-002-Standard - In priority, sagebrush focal, and important management areas, only allow new authorized land uses if the residual impacts to greater sage-grouse or their habitats are fully offset by compensatory mitigation projects that provide a net conservation gain to the species, which will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions. Any compensatory mitigation will be durable, timely, and in addition to what would have resulted without the compensatory mitigation, as addressed in the Mitigation Framework (Appendix X).

GRSG-GEN-GL-001-Guideline - During lekking (March 1 to April 30) surface disturbing and disruptive activities, including noise at 10dB above ambient (not to exceed 20-24 dB) to lekking birds should be restricted from 6 pm to 9 am at a distance of 3.1 miles from the perimeter of an occupied lek.

GRSG-GEN-GL-002-Guideline – During breeding and nesting (March 1 to June 15), surface disturbing and disruptive activities to nesting birds should be restricted.

GRSG-GEN-GL-003-Guideline - When breeding and nesting habitat overlaps with other seasonal habitats, habitat should be managed for breeding and nesting desired habitat conditions displayed in table 1.

GRSG-GEN-GL-004-Guideline – Development of tall structures within 2.0 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks, as determined by local conditions (such as vegetation or topography), with the potential to disrupt breeding or nesting by creating new perching/nesting opportunities avian predators or by decreasing the use of an area, should be restricted in nesting habitat.

Adaptive Management

GRSG-AM-ST-001-Standard – If a hard trigger is identified, immediate action is necessary to stop a severe deviation from greater sage-grouse conservation objectives. The hard trigger response will be an entire restrictive alternative, or one or more appropriate components of a more restrictive alternative, such as the immediate cessation of authorizing land use authorizations. An interagency team will conduct an assessment to determine the causal factor(s) and recommend corrective strategies (Appendix Z - Adaptive Management Guidance and Sideboards).

GRSG-AM-ST-002-Standard – If a soft trigger is identified, apply more conservative or restrictive implementation measures (e.g., extending seasonal restrictions for seasonal surface disturbing activities, modifying seasons of use for livestock grazing, and applying additional restrictions on discretionary activities) for the specific causal factor in the decline of populations and/or habitats, with consideration of local knowledge and conditions (Appendix Z - Adaptive Management Guidance and Sideboards).

Lands and Realty

Special Use Authorizations (non recreation)

GRSG-LR-SUA-O-001-Objective - In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, retrofit existing tall structures (e.g., power poles, cellular towers) with perch deterrents or other anti-perching devices within 2 years of signing the Record of Decision.

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-001-Standard – In priority and sagebrush focal habitat management areas, restrict issuance of new lands special use authorizations for infrastructure, such as high-voltage transmission lines, major pipelines, hydropower, distribution lines, and cellular towers. Exceptions must be limited and based on rationale (e.g., monitoring, modeling, or best available science) that explicitly demonstrates that adverse impacts to greater sage-grouse will be avoided by the exception.

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-002-Standard – In general habitat management areas, new lands special use authorizations may be authorized for infrastructure, such as high-voltage transmission lines and major pipelines, if they can be located within existing designated corridors and the authorization includes stipulations to protect greater sage-grouse and their habitats.

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-003-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize temporary lands special uses (i.e., facilities or activities) that result in loss of habitat or would have long-term (greater than 5 years) negative impact on greater sage-grouse or their habitats.

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-004-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, require protective stipulations (e.g., noise, tall structure, guy wire removal, perch deterrent installation) when issuing new authorizations or during renewal, amendment, or reissuance of existing authorizations that authorize infrastructure (e.g., high-voltage transmission lines, major pipelines, roads, distribution lines, and cellular towers).

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-005-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, locate upgrades to existing transmission lines within the existing designated corridors unless an alternate route would benefit greater sage-grouse or their habitats.

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-006-Standard - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, when a lands special use authorization is revoked or terminated and no future use is contemplated the authorization holder must remove overhead lines and other infrastructure in compliance with 36 CFR 251.60(i).

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-007-Standard - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, if the potential long-term (greater than 5 years) impacts of mitigation (e.g., relocation or burying) to greater sage-grouse or their habitats are greater than the potential impacts from new lands special use authorizations, do not pursue the mitigation. If mitigation is not feasible or would result in short-term (less than 5 years) or long-term impacts, incorporate additional terms and conditions in the special use authorization for protection of greater sage-grouse or their habitats

GRSG-LR-SUA-ST-008-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, co-locate new infrastructure (e.g., high-voltage transmission lines, major pipelines, roads, distribution lines, and cellular towers) with existing infrastructure to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint, or where it best limits impacts to greater sage-grouse or their habitats. When co-location of new infrastructure is not accomplished,

locate it adjacent to existing infrastructure, roads, or already disturbed areas. Consider new communication tower sites where necessary for public safety.

GRSG-LR-SUA-GL-001-Guideline – In priority and sagebrush focal management areas, outside of existing designated corridors, new transmission lines and pipelines should be buried to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint unless explicit rationale is provided that the biological impacts to greater sage-grouse and its habitat are being avoided. When new transmission lines and pipelines are not buried, locate them adjacent to existing transmission lines.

Land Ownership Adjustments

GRSG-LR-LOA-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, do not approve land ownership adjustments unless the action results in a net conservation gain to greater sage-grouse or they will not directly or indirectly adversely impact greater sage-grouse conservation.

GRSG-LR-LOA-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas with minority federal ownership, consider land ownership adjustments to achieve a landownership pattern (e.g., consolidation, reducing fragmentation) that supports improved greater sage-grouse population trends and habitats.

Land Withdrawal

GRSG-LR-LW-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, utilize land withdrawals as a tool, where appropriate and subject to valid existing rights, to prevent activities that will be detrimental to greater sage-grouse or their habitats.

Wind and Solar

GRSG-WS-ST-001-Standard – In priority and sagebrush focal management areas, do not authorize new solar and wind utility-scale and/or commercial energy development except for on-site power generation associated with existing industrial infrastructure (e.g., mine site).

GRSG-WS-GL-001-Guideline – In important habitat management areas, new wind energy utility-scale and/or commercial development should be restricted. If development cannot be restricted due to existing authorized use, adjacent developments, or split estate issues, then ensure that stipulations are incorporated into the authorization to protect greater sage-grouse and their habitats.

Greater Sage-grouse Habitat

GRSG-GRSGH-O-001-Objective – Every 10 years for the next 50 years, improve greater sage-grouse habitat by removing invading conifers and other undesirable species in the number of acres shown in table 2.

Table 2. Treatment Acres per Decade.

FOREST	ACRES		
	MECHANICAL ¹	PRESCRIBED FIRE ²	GRASS RESTORATION ³
Boise	1000	2000	0
Caribou-Targhee-Curlew	3000	2000	3000
Salmon-Challis	5000	1000	0
Sawtooth	7000	1000	7000
Beaverhead-Deerlodge	0	0	0

¹Removal of conifers that have invaded sagebrush including phase one juniper that is 10% or less and reducing sagebrush cover in areas over 30% canopy cover

²Acres are those that are greater than 30% sagebrush canopy cover and/or invaded by 10% or greater conifer.

³Acres presently dominated by annual grasses that could be improved by herbicide application and seeding of perennial vegetation.

GRSG-GRSGH-ST-001-Standard – Design habitat restoration projects to move towards desired conditions (table 1) and incorporate the concepts outlined in Appendix X - *Using resistance and resilience concepts to reduce impacts of invasive annual grasses and altered fire regimes on the sagebrush ecosystem and greater sage-grouse: A strategic multi-scale approach.*

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-001-Guideline – Sagebrush removal in greater sage-grouse breeding and nesting and wintering habitats should be restricted unless necessary to support attainment of desired habitat conditions (table 1).

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-002-Guideline – When removing conifers that are encroaching into greater sage-grouse habitat, avoid persistent woodlands (old growth relative to the site or more than 100 years old).

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-003-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, actions and authorizations should be designed to limit the spread and effect of non-native plant species.

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-004-Guideline - To facilitate safe and effective fire management actions, in priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, fuels treatments should be designed to reduce the spread and intensity of wildfire in high-risk areas (i.e., areas of increased potential for ignition and in areas where there is a potential for wildfire that would be difficult for suppression resources to contain and control).

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-005-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, native plant species should be used, when possible, to restore, enhance, or maintain desired habitat conditions (table 1).

GRSG-GRSGH-GL-006-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, vegetation treatment projects should only be conducted if they restore, enhance, or maintain desired habitat conditions (table 1).

Livestock Grazing

GRSG-LG-DC-001-Desired Condition – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, livestock grazing is managed to ensure adequate nesting cover and does not conflict with the attainment of other vegetative attributes (table 1).

GRSG-LG-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize construction of water developments unless beneficial to greater sage-grouse habitat.

GRSG-LG-GL-001-Guideline - Grazing guidelines should be applied in each of the seasonal habitats in table 3. If values in table 3 guidelines cannot be achieved based upon a site-specific analysis using Ecological Site Descriptions, long-term ecological site capability analysis, or other similar analysis, adjust grazing management to move towards desired habitat conditions in table 1 consistent with the ecological site capability. Do not use drought and degraded habitat condition to adjust values. Grazing guidelines in table 3 would not apply to isolated parcels of National Forest System lands that have less than 200 acres of greater sage-grouse habitat.

Table 3. Grazing Guidelines for Greater Sage-grouse Seasonal Habitat.

Seasonal Habitat	Grazing Guidelines
Breeding and nesting ¹ within 6.2 miles of occupied leks	Perennial grass height: ² When grazing occurs during breeding and nesting season (March 1 to June 15) manage for upland perennial grass height of 7 inches ^{3,4,5} When grazing occurs post breeding and nesting season (June 16 to October 30) manage for 4 inches ^{4,5,6} of perennial grass height.
Brood rearing and summer ¹	Retain an average stubble height of 4 inches for herbaceous riparian/mesic meadow vegetation ^{7,8}
Winter ¹	≤35% use of sagebrush

¹ For descriptions of Seasonal Habitat and Seasonal Periods of greater sage-grouse see table 1.

² Grass heights only apply in breeding and nesting habitat with ≥10% sagebrush cover to support nesting.

³ Holloran et al. 2005. *Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat selection and success in Wyoming*.

⁴ Average droop height, assuming current vegetation composition has the capability to achieve these heights. Heights will be measured at the end of the nesting period (Connelly, 2000).

⁵ Hagen C., J.W. Connelly, and M.A. Schroeder. 2007. *A meta-analysis of greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* nesting and brood-rearing habitats*. *Wildlife Biology* 13(1): 42-50.

⁶ Stubble height to be measured at the end of the growing season.

⁷ Crawford et al. 2004. Ecology and Management of sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat. "In riparian brood-rearing habitat, sage-grouse prefer the lower vegetation (5-15 cm (2-6 in) vs. 30-50 cm (12-20 in); Oakleaf 1971, Neel 1980, Klebenow 1982, Evans 1986) and succulent forb growth stimulated by moderate livestock grazing (Neel 1980, Evans 1986). "Moderate use equates to a 10-cm residual stubble height for most grasses and sedges."

⁸ Stubble height to be measured in the meadow areas used by greater sage-grouse for brood-rearing (not on the hydric greenline).

GRSG-LG-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, consider closure of grazing allotments, pastures, or portions of pastures, or managing the allotment as a forage reserve as opportunities arise under applicable regulations, where removal of livestock grazing would enhance the ability to achieve desired habitat conditions (table 1).

GRSG-LG-GL-003-Guideline – Bedding sheep and placing camps within 1.2 miles from the perimeter of a lek during lekking (March 1 to April 30) should be restricted.

GRSG-LG-GL-004-Guideline – During breeding and nesting season (March 1 to June 15), trailing livestock through breeding and nesting habitat should be minimized. Specific routes should be identified, existing trails should be used, and stopovers on active leks should be restricted.

GRSG-LG-GL-005-Guideline – Fences should not be constructed or reconstructed within 1.2 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks, unless the collision risk can be mitigated through design features or markings (e.g., mark, laydown fences, and design).

GRSG-LG-GL-006-Guideline – New permanent livestock facilities (e.g., windmills, corrals) should not be constructed within 1.2 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks.

Fire Management

GRSG-FM-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, do not use prescribed fire, except for pile burning, in 12-inch or less precipitation zones unless necessary to facilitate site preparation for restoration of greater sage-grouse habitat consistent with desired conditions in table 1.

GRSG-FM-ST-002-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and general management areas, if it is necessary to use prescribed fire to facilitate site preparation for restoration of greater sage-grouse habitat consistent with desired conditions in table 1, the associated NEPA analysis must identify how greater sage-grouse desired conditions would

be met, why alternative techniques were not selected, and how potential threats to greater sage-grouse habitat would be minimized.

GRSG-FM-GL-001-Guideline – In wintering or breeding and nesting habitat, sagebrush removal or manipulation, including prescribed fire, should be restricted unless the removal strategically reduces the potential impacts from wildfire.

GRSG-FM-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, when reseeding in fuel breaks, fire resistant native plant species should be used if available, or consider using fire resistant non-native to meet resource objectives.

GRSG-FM-GL-003-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, treatments should be designed to restore, enhance, or maintain greater sage-grouse habitat.

GRSG-FM-GL-004-Guideline – Locating temporary wildfire suppression facilities (e.g., incident command posts, spike camps, helibases, mobile retardant plants) in priority, sagebrush focal, and general habitat management areas should be restricted.

GRSG-FM-GL-005-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, cross-country vehicle travel during fire operations should be restricted whenever safe and practical to do so, as determined by fireline leadership, incident commanders, etc.

GRSG-FM-GL-006-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, burnout operation areas should be avoided by constructing direct fire lines, whenever safe and practical to do so, to improve suppression effectiveness and minimize loss of existing sagebrush habitat as determined by fireline leadership, incident commanders, etc.

GRSG-FM-GL-007-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, prescribed fire prescriptions should minimize undesirable effects on vegetation and/or soils (e.g., minimize mortality of desirable perennial plant species and reduce risk of hydrophobicity).

GRSG-FM-GL-008-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, roads and natural fuel breaks should be incorporated into fuel break design to improve effectiveness and minimize loss of existing sagebrush habitat.

GRSG-FM-GL-009-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, all fire associated vehicles and equipment should be power-washed before entering and exiting the area to minimize the introduction of undesirable invasive plant species.

GRSG-FM-GL-010-Guideline - Unit-specific greater sage-grouse fire management toolboxes containing maps, lists, contact information for qualified resource advisors, local guidance, and relevant information should be developed.

GRSG-FM-GL-011-Guideline – Localized maps of priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas should be provided to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders to use when prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics.

GRSG-FM-GL-012-Guideline - In or near priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, a greater sage-grouse resource advisor should be assigned to all extended attack fires.

GRSG-FM-GL-013-Guideline – On critical fire weather days, available fire suppression resources should be pre-positioned to optimize a quick and efficient response into priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas.

GRSG-FM-GL-014-Guideline - During periods of multiple fires, line officers should be involved in setting priorities to help protect priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas.

GRSG-FM-GL-015-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, consider using fire retardant and mechanized equipment only if it is likely to result in minimizing burned acreage.

GRSG-FM-GL-016-Guideline – In priority, important and general habitat management areas, to minimize sagebrush loss, mop-up should be conducted where the burned areas adjoin unburned islands, doglegs, or other habitat features, as safety and available resources allows.

Wild Horse and Burro

GRSG-HB-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, wild horse and burro populations should be managed within established appropriate management levels to restore, enhance, or maintain greater sage-grouse desired habitat conditions (table 1).

GRSG-HB-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, appropriate management levels should be adjusted if greater sage-grouse management standards are not met due to degradation that can be at least partially attributed to wild horse or burro populations.

Recreation

GRSG-R-DC-001-Desired Condition – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, existing and new recreation special use authorizations and expansion of special use authorizations restrict effects to greater sage-grouse and their habitats.

GRSG-R-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize temporary recreation uses (i.e., facilities or activities) that result in loss of habitat or would have long-term (greater than 5 years) negative impacts on greater sage-grouse or their habitats.

GRSG-R-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, terms and conditions that protect and/or restore greater sage-grouse habitat within the permit area should be included in new recreation special use authorizations. During renewal, amendment, or reauthorization, terms and conditions in existing permits and operating plans should be modified to protect and/or restore greater sage-grouse habitat.

GRSG-R-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management area, new recreational facilities or expansion of existing recreational facilities (e.g., roads, trails, campgrounds), including special use authorizations for facilities and activities, should not be approved unless the development results in a net conservation gain to greater sage-grouse and/or their habitats or the development is required for visitor safety.

Roads/Transportation

GRSG-RT-DC-001-Desired Condition - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, within the travel management system, greater sage-grouse experience minimal disturbance during breeding and nesting (March 1 to June 15) and wintering periods (November 1 to February 28).

GRSG-RT-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, do not construct or allow new road or trail construction (does not apply to realignments for resource protection) except when necessary for administrative access, public safety, or to access valid existing rights. If necessary to construct new roads and trails for one of these purposes, construct them to the minimum standard, length, and number and avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts

GRSG-RT-ST-002-Standard – Do not conduct or allow road and trail maintenance activities within 2 miles from the perimeter of active leks during lekking (March 1 to April 30) from 6 pm to 9 am.

GRSG-RT-ST-003-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not grant public access on temporary energy development roads, unless consistent with all other terms and conditions included in the land use management plan.

GRSG-RT-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, new roads and road realignments should be designed and administered to reduce collisions with greater sage-grouse.

GRSG-RT-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, road construction within riparian areas and mesic meadows should be restricted. If not possible to restrict construction within riparian areas and mesic meadows, roads should be designed and constructed at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings, unless topography prevents doing so.

GRSG-RT-GL-003-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, when decommissioning roads and unauthorized routes, restoration activity should be designed to move habitat towards desired conditions (table 1).

GRSG-RT-GL-004-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, dust abatement terms and conditions should be included in road use permits when dust has the potential to impact greater sage-grouse.

GRSG-RT-GL-005-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, road and road-way maintenance activities should be designed and implemented to reduce the risk of vehicle or human-caused wildfires and the spread of invasive plants.

Minerals

Fluid Minerals – Unleased

GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-001-Standard - In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, any new oil and gas leases must include a no surface occupancy stipulation. There will be no waivers, exceptions, or modifications. An exception could be granted by the authorized officer with unanimous concurrence from a team of agency greater sage-grouse experts from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and State wildlife agency if:

- There would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to greater sage-grouse or their habitats or
- Granting the exception provides an alternative to a similar action occurring on a nearby parcel and
- The exception provides a clear net conservation gain to greater sage-grouse.

GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-002-Standard – In general habitat management areas, any new leases must include appropriate controlled surface use and timing limitation stipulations to protect greater sage-grouse and their habitat.

GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-003-Standard – In sagebrush focal habitat management areas, there will be no surface occupancy and no waivers, exceptions, or modifications for fluid mineral leasing.

GRSG-M-FMUL-ST-004-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and general management areas, when analyzing leasing of fluid mineral resources, prioritize development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for greater sage-grouse, subject to valid existing rights, law, and regulations.

Fluid Minerals – Leased

GRSG-M-FML-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, when approving the Surface Use Plan of Operation portion of the Application for Permit to Drill on existing leases that are not yet developed, require that leaseholders avoid and minimize surface disturbing and disruptive activities consistent with the rights and conditions granted in the lease.

GRSG-M-FML-ST-002-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, when facilities are no longer needed or leases are relinquished, require reclamation plans to include terms and conditions to restore habitat to desired conditions as described in table 1.

GRSG-M-FML-ST-003-Standard – In general habitat management areas, authorize new transmission line corridors, transmission line right-of-ways, transmission line construction, or transmission line-facility construction associated with fluid mineral leases with stipulations necessary to protect greater sage-grouse and their habitats, consistent with the terms and conditions of the permit.

GRSG-M-FML-ST-004-Standard – Locate compressor stations on portions of a lease that are non-habitat and are not used by greater sage-grouse, and if there would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on sage-grouse or their habitat. If this is not possible, work with the operator to use mufflers, sound insulation, or other features to reduce noise.

GRSG-M-FML-ST-005-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and general management areas, when authorizing development of fluid mineral resources, prioritize development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for greater sage-grouse, subject to valid existing rights, law, and regulations

GRSG-M-FML-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, operators should be encouraged to reduce disturbance to greater sage-grouse habitat. At the time of approval of the Surface Use Plan of Operation portion of the Application for Permit to Drill, terms and conditions should be included to reduce disturbance to greater sage-grouse habitat, where appropriate and feasible and consistent with the rights granted to the lessee.

GRSG-M-FML-GL-002-Guideline – On Federal leases in priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, when surface occupancy cannot be restricted due to valid existing rights or development requirements, disturbance and surface occupancy should be limited to areas least harmful to greater sage-grouse based on vegetation, topography, or other habitat features.

GRSG-M-FML-GL-003-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, and general management areas, where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership, coordinate with the mineral estate owner/lessee to apply appropriate stipulations, conditions of approval, conservation measures and required design features to the appropriate surface management instruments to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities.

Fluid Minerals – Operations

GRSG-M-FMO-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize employee camps.

GRSG-M-FMO-ST-002-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, when feasible, do not locate tanks or other structures that may be used as raptor perches. If this is not feasible, use perch deterrents.

GRSG-M-FMO-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, closed-loop systems should be used for drilling operations with no reserve pits, where feasible.

GRSG-M-FMO-GL-002-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, during drilling operations, soil compaction should be reduced and soil structure should be maintained using the best available techniques to improve vegetation reestablishment.

GRSG-M-FMO-GL-003-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, dams, impoundments and ponds for mineral development should be constructed to reduce potential for West Nile virus. Examples of methods to accomplish this include:

- Increase the depth of ponds to accommodate a greater volume of water than is discharged.
- Build steep shorelines (greater than 2 feet) to reduce shallow water and aquatic vegetation around the perimeter of impoundments to reduce breeding habitat for mosquitoes.
- Maintain the water level below that of rooted aquatic and upland vegetation. Restrict flooding terrestrial vegetation in flat terrain or low-lying areas.
- Construct dams or impoundments that restrict down-slope seepage or overflow by digging ponds in flat areas rather than damming natural draws for effluent water storage or lining constructed ponds in areas where seepage is anticipated.
- Line the channel where discharge water flows into the pond with crushed rock or use a horizontal pipe to discharge inflow directly into existing open water.

- Line the overflow spillway with crushed rock and construct the spillway with steep sides.
- Fence pond sites to restrict access by livestock and other wild ungulates.
- Remove or re-inject produced water.
- Treat waters with larvicides to reduce mosquito production where water occurs on the surface.

GRSG-M-FMO-GL-004-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas to keep habitat disturbance at a minimum, a phased development approach should be applied to fluid mineral operations, wherever possible, consistent with the rights granted under the lease. Disturbed areas should be reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed for mineral operations.

Coal Mines - Unleased

GRSG-M-CMUL-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize surface disturbances (e.g., appurtenant facilities) for new underground coalmines.

Coal Mines – Leased

GRSG-M-CML-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, do not authorize new appurtenant facilities for existing underground mines unless no technically feasible alternative exists. If new appurtenant facilities associated with existing mine leases cannot be located outside of priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, co-locate them with any existing disturbed areas, if possible. If co-location is not possible, then construct new facilities to minimize disturbed areas while meeting mine safety standards and requirements, as identified by MSHA mine-plan approval process, and locate the facilities in an area least harmful to greater sage-grouse habitats based on vegetation, topography, or other habitat features.

GRSG-M-CML-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, when coal leases are subject to readjustment, additional requirements should be included in the readjusted lease to protect and reduce threats to greater sage-grouse and their habitats to conserve, enhance, and restore habitat for long-term viability.

Locatable Minerals

GRSG-M-LM-ST-001-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, approve Plans of Operation with mitigation to protect greater sage-grouse and their habitats, consistent with the rights of the mining claimant as granted by the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended.

GRSG-M-LM-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas to keep habitat disturbance at a minimum, a phased development approach should be applied to operations consistent with the rights granted under the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended. Disturbed areas should be reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed for mineral operations.

GRSG-M-LM-GL-002-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, abandoned mine sites should be closed or mitigated, subject to valid or existing rights, to reduce predation of greater sage-grouse by eliminating tall structures that could provide nesting opportunities and perching sites for predators.

Non-energy Leasable Minerals

GRSG-M-NEL-GL-001-Guideline – In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, at the time of issuance of prospecting permits, exploration licenses and leases, or readjustment of leases, the Forest Service should provide recommendations to the Bureau of Land Management for the protection of greater sage-grouse and their habitats.

GRSG-M-NEL-GL-002-Guideline - In priority, sagebrush focal, and general habitat management areas, the Forest Service should recommend to the Bureau of Land Management that expansion or readjustment of existing leases avoid, minimize, or mitigate the effects to greater sage-grouse and their habitat

Mineral Materials

GRSG-M-MM-ST-001-Standard – In priority and sagebrush focal management areas, do not allow new mineral material disposal or development.

GRSG-M-MM-ST-002-Standard – In priority, sagebrush focal, and important habitat management areas, free-use mineral material collection permits may be issued and expansion of existing active pits may be allowed, except from March 1 to April 30 between 6 pm and 9 am within 2 miles from the perimeter of occupied leks, if doing so is within the Biologically Significant Unit and does not exceed the disturbance cap.

GRSG-M-MM-ST-003-Standard - In priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas, any permit for existing mineral material operations must include appropriate requirements for operation and reclamation of the site to restore or maintain desired habitat conditions (table 1).

Glossary of Terms as Used in this Plan

Active lek - Any lek that has been attended by male greater sage-grouse during the most recent strutting season.

Adjacent – Installation of new linear improvements parallel, near, or next to existing linear improvements.

Administrative access - Access for resource management and administrative purposes such as fire suppression, cadastral surveys, permit compliance, law enforcement, and military in the performance of their official duty, or other access needed to manage National Forest System lands or uses.

Allotment management plan - A written program of livestock grazing management, including supportive measures, if required, designed to attain specific, multiple-use management goals in a grazing allotment. The Plan is prepared in consultation with the permittee(s), lessee(s), and other affected interests. Livestock grazing is considered in relation to other uses of the range and to renewable resources, such as watershed, vegetation, and wildlife. The Plan establishes seasons of use, the number of livestock to be permitted, the range improvements needed, and the grazing system.

Ambient (noise level) - Sometimes called background noise level, reference sound level, or room noise level is the background sound pressure level at a given location, normally specified as a reference level to study a new intrusive sound source.

Anthropogenic disturbances – Human-created features include but are not limited to paved highways, graded gravel roads, transmission lines, substations, wind turbines, oil and gas wells, geothermal wells and associated facilities, pipelines, landfills, agricultural conversion, homes, and mines.

Appurtenant (minerals) - A piece of equipment (e.g., pump jack, separator, storage tank, compressor station, metering equipment) necessary for production.

Authorized uses - An activity (i.e., resource use) occurring on the public lands that is either explicitly or implicitly recognized and legalized by law or regulation. The term may refer to activities occurring on the public lands for which the Forest Service has issued a formal authorization document (e.g., livestock grazing permit, special use authorization, approved plan of operation, etc.). Formal authorized uses can involve both commercial and noncommercial activity, facility placement, or event. These authorized uses are often spatially or temporally limited. Unless constrained or bounded by statute, regulation, or an approved land use plan decision, legal activities involving public enjoyment and use of the public lands (e.g., hiking, camping, hunting, etc.) require no formal Forest Service authorization.

Biologically significant unit - A geographical/spatial area within greater sage-grouse habitat that contains relevant and important habitats that is used as the basis for comparative calculations to support evaluation of changes to habitat. A biologically significant unit or subset of the unit is used in the calculation of the anthropogenic disturbance threshold and in the adaptive management habitat trigger.

The biologically significant unit is defined as:

- Idaho: All of the modeled nesting and delineated winter habitat, based on 2012 data, within priority and/or important habitat management areas within a Conservation Area.
- Montana: All of the priority and sagebrush focal management areas.

Co-locate - Installation of new linear improvements in or on existing linear improvements.

Communication tower site - Sites that include broadcast types of uses (e.g., television, AM/FM radio, cable television, broadcast translator) and non-broadcast uses (e.g., commercial or private mobile radio service, cellular telephone, microwave, local exchange network, passive reflector).

Compensatory mitigation – Compensating for the residual impact of a certain action or parts of an action by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments(s).

Compensatory mitigation projects – The restoration, creation, enhancement, and/or preservation of impacted resources, such as on-the-ground actions to improve and/or protect habitats (e.g. chemical vegetation treatments, land acquisitions, conservation easements)

Conservation area - Areas determined to be necessary to monitor population objectives to evaluate the disturbance density and adaptive regulatory triggers and engage adaptive management responses. Conservation Areas may contain priority, sagebrush focal, important, and general habitat management areas. Specifically, these areas are Mountain Valleys, Desert, West Owyhee, and Southern and Southwestern Montana.

Disruptive activities - Land resource uses/activities that are likely to alter the behavior, displace, or cause excessive stress to greater sage-grouse populations occurring at a specific location and/or time. Actions that alter behavior or cause the displacement of individuals such that reproductive success is negatively affected, or an individual's physiological ability to cope with environmental stress is compromised.

Distribution line - An electrical utility line with a capacity of less than 100kV or a natural gas, hydrogen, or water pipeline less than 24" in diameter.

Diversity (species) – The number, distribution, and geographic ranges of plant and animal species including focal species and species-at-risk.

Durable (protective and ecological) - The administrative, legal, and financial assurances that secure and protect the conservation status of a compensatory mitigation site, and the ecological benefits of a compensatory mitigation project, for at least as long as the associated impacts persist.

Enhance - The improvement of habitat by increasing missing or modifying unsatisfactory components and/or attributes of the habitat (e.g., road commissioning) to meet greater sage-grouse objectives.

Exception (minerals) - A case-by-case exemption from a lease stipulation. The stipulation continues to apply to all other sites within the leasehold to which the restrictive criteria apply. The authorized officer (any employee of the Forest Service to whom has been delegated the authority to perform the duties described in the applicable Forest Service manual or handbook) may grant an exception if an environmental record of review determines that the action, as proposed or conditioned, would not impair the function or utility of the site for the current or subsequent seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of greater sage-grouse.

Feasible – see technically/economically feasible.

Fluid minerals - Oil, gas, coal bed natural gas, and geothermal resources.

General habitat management areas - Areas identified by the Forest Service, in coordination with respective state wildlife agencies, as those areas outside of priority and sagebrush focal management areas and occupied by greater sage-grouse seasonally or year-round.

Grazing system - Scheduled grazing use and non-use of an allotment to reach identified goals or objectives by improving the quality and quantity of vegetation. Include, but are not limited to, developing pastures, utilization levels, grazing rotations, timing and duration of use periods, and necessary range improvements.

Habitat - An environment that meets a specific set of physical, biological, temporal, or spatial characteristics that satisfy the requirements of a plant or animal species or group of species for part or all of their life cycle.

Hard triggers - Thresholds indicating that immediate action is necessary to stop a severe deviation from sage grouse conservation objectives set forth in the land and resources management plan.

High-voltage transmission line – An electrical power line that is 100 kilovolts or larger.

Holder – An individual or entity that holds a valid special use authorization.

Impact - The effect, influence, alteration, or imprint caused by an action.

Important habitat management areas - High value habitat and populations that provide a management buffer for the priority and sagebrush focal management areas and connect patches of priority and sagebrush focal management areas. The areas encompass areas of generally moderate to high conservation value habitat and/or populations and, in some conservation areas, include areas beyond those identified by USFWS as necessary to maintain redundant, representative, and resilient populations. The areas are typically adjacent to priority and sagebrush focal management areas but generally reflect somewhat lower greater sage-grouse population status and/or reduced habitat value due to disturbance, habitat fragmentation, or other factors. No important habitat management areas are designated within the southwestern Montana conservation area.

Indicators - Factors that describe resource condition and change and can help the BLM and the Forest Service determine trends over time.

Isolated parcel - An individual parcel of land that may share a corner, but does not have a common border with another parcel.

Invasive species (invasives plant species, invasives) - An alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. The species must cause, or be likely to cause, harm, and be exotic to the ecosystem it has infested before considered invasive.

Landscape – A distinct association of land types that exhibit a unique combination of local climate, landform, topography, geomorphic process, surficial geology, soil, biota, and human influences. Landscapes are generally of a size that the eye can comprehend in a single view.

Lease – A type of special use authorization (usually granted for uses other than linear rights-of-way) that is used when substantial capital investment is required and when conveyance of a conditional and transferable interest in National Forest System lands is necessary or desirable to serve or facilitate authorized long-term uses, and that may be revocable and compensable according to its terms.

Leasable minerals - Those minerals or materials designated as leasable under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. These include energy-related mineral resources such as oil, natural gas, coal, and geothermal, and some non-energy minerals, such as phosphate, sodium, potassium, and sulfur. Geothermal resources are also leasable under the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970.

Lessee - A person or entity authorized to use and occupy National Forest System land under a specific instrument identified as a lease. Forest special use leases are limited to authorize certain wireless communication uses. Leases are also used for certain mineral leasable activities.

Lek - A courtship display area attended by male greater sage-grouse in or adjacent to sagebrush dominated habitat. For management purposes, leks with less than five males observed strutting should be confirmed active for 2 years to meet the definition of a lek (Connelly et al 2000, Connelly et al. 2003, 2004).

Locatable minerals - Mineral disposable under the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended, that was not excepted in later legislation. They include hardrock, placer, industrial minerals, and uncommon varieties of rock found on public domain lands.

Major pipeline – A pipeline that is 24 inches or more in outside-pipe diameter (Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 30 U.S.C. § 181; 36 CFR 251.54(f)(1)).

Mineral - Any naturally formed inorganic material, solid or fluid inorganic substance that can be extracted from the earth, any of various naturally occurring homogeneous substances (as stone, coal, salt, sulfur, sand, petroleum, water, or natural gas) obtained usually from the ground. Under Federal laws, considered as locatable (subject to the general mining laws), leasable (subject to the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920), and salable (subject to the Materials Act of 1947).

Mineral materials - Common varieties of mineral materials such as soil, sand and gravel, stone, pumice, pumicite, and clay that are not obtainable under the mining or leasing laws but that can be acquired under the Materials Act of 1947, as amended.

Minimization mitigation - Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.

Mitigation - Includes specific means, measures, or practices that could reduce, avoid, or eliminate adverse impacts. Mitigation can include avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action, minimizing the impact by limiting the degree of magnitude of the action and its implementation, rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitation, or restoring the affected environment, reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action, and compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

Modification (oil and gas) - A fundamental change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or for the term of the lease. A modification may include an exemption from or alteration to a stipulated requirement. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to all other sites within the leasehold to which the restrictive criteria applied.

Native plant species - Species that were found here before European settlement, and consequently are in balance with these ecosystems because they have well developed parasites, predators, and pollinators.

No surface occupancy (NSO) - Use or occupancy of the land surface for fluid mineral exploration or development prohibited to protect identified resource values. The NSO stipulation includes stipulations that may be worded as “No Surface Use/Occupancy,” “No Surface Disturbance,” “Conditional NSO,” or “Surface Disturbance or Surface Occupancy Restriction (by location).”

Occupied Lek - A lek that has been active during at least one strutting season within the prior 10 years.

Opportunity (allotment closure) - A suitable or favorable time to abolish or close an allotment because of nonuse violations, term permit waivers where the permit is waived back to the government, resource protection, or permit actions resulting in cancellation of the permit.

Permit — A special use authorization that provides permission, without conveying an interest in land, to occupy and use National Forest System land or facilities for specified purposes, and which is both revocable and terminable.

Persistent woodlands – Long-lived pinyon-juniper woodlands that typically have sparse understories and occur on poor substrates in the assessment area.

Plan of Operation - A Plan of Operation is required for all mining activity conducted under the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended, if the proposed operations will likely cause significant disturbance of surface resources. The Plan of Operation describes the type of operations proposed and how they would be conducted, the type and standard of existing and proposed roads or access routes, the means of transportation to be used, the period during which the proposed activity will take place, and measures to be taken to meet the requirements for environmental protection (36 CR 228.4).

Prescribed fire - Any fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist and NEPA requirements, where applicable, must be met before ignition.

Priority management areas - Areas identified by the Forest Service, in coordination with respective state wildlife agencies, as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable greater sage-grouse populations. These areas include breeding, late brood-rearing and winter concentration areas.

Reclamation plans – Plans that guide the suite of actions taken within an area affected by human disturbance, the outcome of which is intended to change the condition of the disturbed area to meet pre-determined objectives and/or make it acceptable for certain defined resources (e.g., wildlife habitat, grazing, ecosystem function, etc.).

Residual impacts - Impacts from an implementation-level decision that remain after applying avoidance and minimization mitigation; also referred to as unavoidable impacts.

Restoration - Implementation of a set of actions that promotes plant community diversity and structure that allows plant communities to be more resilient to disturbance and invasive species over the long term. The long-term goal is to create functional, high quality habitat that is occupied by greater sage-grouse. Short-term goal may be to restore the landform, soils and hydrology and increase the percentage of preferred vegetation, seeding of desired species, or treatment of undesired species.

Right-of-way - Land authorized to be used or occupied for the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of a project or facility passing over, upon, under or through such land.

Road or trail - A road or trail wholly or partly within or adjacent to and serving the National Forest System that the Forest Service determines is necessary for the protection, administration, and utilization of the National Forest System and the use and development of its resources.

Sagebrush focal areas – A subset of priority greater sage-grouse habitat, as identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which are considered most vital to the species persistence and therefore, have the strongest levels of protection.

Soft triggers - An intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are needed at the implementation level to address habitat or population losses.

Special use authorization - A written permit, term permit, lease, or easement that authorizes use or occupancy of National Forest System lands and specifies the terms and conditions under which the use or occupancy may occur.

Stipulation (general) - A term or condition in an agreement, contract, or written authorization.

Stipulation (oil and gas) - A provision that modifies standard oil and gas lease terms and conditions in order to protect other resource values or land uses and is attached to and made a part of the lease.

Soft trigger - An intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are needed at the implementation level to address habitat or population losses.

Surface disturbing and disruptive activities - Actions that alter the vegetation, surface/near surface soil resources, and/or surface geologic features, beyond natural site conditions and on a scale that affects other public land values. Examples of surface disturbing activities may include operation of heavy equipment to construct well pads, roads, pits and reservoirs; installation of pipelines and power lines; and the conduct of several types of vegetation treatments (e.g., prescribed fire, etc.). Surface disturbing activities may be either authorized or prohibited

Surface use - Activities that may be present on the surface or near-surface (e.g., pipelines) of public lands. When administered as a use restriction (e.g., no surface occupancy), this phrase prohibits all but specified resource uses and activities in a certain area to protect particular sensitive resource values and property. This designation typically applies to small acreage sensitive resource sites (e.g., plant community study enclosure, etc.), and/or administrative sites (e.g., government ware-yard, etc.) where only authorized, agency personnel are admitted.

Tall structures - A wide array of infrastructures (e.g., poles that support lights, telephone and electrical distribution, communication towers, meteorological towers, high-tension transmission towers, and wind turbines) that have the potential to disrupt lekking or nesting birds by creating new perching/nesting opportunities and/or decreasing the use of an area. A determination as to whether something is considered a tall structure would be based on local conditions such as vegetation or topography.

Technically/economically feasible - Actions that are practical or feasible from the technical and economic standpoint and using common sense, rather than simply desirable from the standpoint of the applicant. It is the Forest Service's sole responsibility to determine what actions are technically and economically feasible. The Forest Service will consider whether implementation of the proposed action is likely given past and current practice and

technology; this consideration does not necessarily require a cost-benefit analysis or speculation about an applicant's costs and profit.

Temporary special use permit – A type of permit that terminates within 1 year or less after the approval date. All other provisions applicable to permits apply fully to temporary permits. Temporary special use permits are issued for seasonal or short-duration uses involving minimal improvement and investment.

Term permit – An authorization to occupy and use National Forest System land, other than rights-of-way for a specified period that is both revocable and compensable according to its terms.

Timely - The conservation benefits from compensatory mitigation accruing as early as possible or before impacts have begun.

Transmission line - An electrical utility line with a capacity greater than or equal to 100kV or a natural gas, hydrogen, or water pipeline greater than or equal to 24" in diameter.

Travel management system – Planned and authorized roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use on National Forest System lands that are managed in a controlled, sustained manner.

Utility-scale and/or commercial energy development – A project that is capable of producing 20 or more megawatts of electricity for distribution to customers through the electricity-transmission-grid system.

Valid existing rights - Documented, legal rights, or interests in the land, which allow a person or entity to use said land for a specific purpose and that are still in effect. Such rights include but are not limited to fee title ownership, mineral rights, and easements. Such rights may have been reserved, acquired, granted or otherwise authorized under various statutes of law.

Vegetation treatments - Management practices that are designed to maintain current vegetation structure or change the vegetation structure to a different stage of development. Vegetation treatment methods may include managed fire, prescribed fire, chemical, mechanical, and seeding.

Viability - For purposes of the National Forest Management Act and its enabling regulations, viability is the availability of habitat that allows a species to persist on landscapes for long-periods (multi-generational) of time. It assumes that populations are abundant (sufficient numbers) and well-distributed (sufficient redundancy of populations) to provide for long-term population persistence on a landscape.

Waiver (oil and gas) - Permanent exemption from a lease stipulation. The stipulation no longer applies anywhere within the leasehold.

West Nile virus - A virus that is found in temperate and tropical regions of the world and most commonly transmitted by mosquitoes. West Nile virus can cause flu-like symptoms in humans and can be lethal to birds, including greater sage-grouse.

Wildfire suppression - An appropriate management response to wildfire, or prescribed fire that results in curtailment of fire spread and eliminates all identified threats from the particular fire.

From: Joseph Stout
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2014 3:01 AM
To: Kathryn Stangl; Steve Small
Subject: Fwd: Adaptive Management
Attachments: IDswMT Adaptive Management 091514.docx

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>
Date: September 15, 2014 at 6:12:23 PM EDT
To: Joseph Stout <j2stout@blm.gov>, Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>, Lauren Mermejo <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Cc: John Carlson <jccarlso@blm.gov>, Jason Pyron <jason_pyron@fws.gov>, Katie Powell <katie_powell@fws.gov>, Don Kemner <don.kemner@idfg.idaho.gov>, "Dustin T. Miller" <Dustin.Miller@osc.idaho.gov>
Subject: Adaptive Management

Here is Idaho's adaptive management information. We've had some beginning talks about incorporating sw Montana into this approach if necessary, although Montana is working through their own approach which we expect to incorporate into the subregional plan when done.

Brent Ralston
Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Lead
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Subregion
Idaho State Office
208-373-3812

Idaho and Southwest Montana Adaptive Management Strategy

The Adaptive Management Strategy in Idaho is consistent with the NPT AM guidance and incorporates elements associated with scale and evaluation and response for both hard and soft triggers – see Table. Soft triggers and hard triggers would be used at the level of Conservation Area and triggers are based on a monitoring strategy agreed upon by the State of Idaho, USFWS, and Forest Service.

The Adaptive Management Strategy was developed in close coordination with our conservation partners (e.g., State of Idaho, USFWS, Forest Service), and is based on biologically sound sage-grouse data (e.g., maps, lek data, published and unpublished scientific studies). For example, Conservation Areas were delineated based on breeding bird density, habitat connectivity and persistence, similarity of habitat and common threats. The strategy also use mapped vegetation and habitat maintained through the Key habitat map and annual updates which are made each winter by BLM in coordination with the FS and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG). The BLM and Forest Service would maintain GRSG habitat information, through use of the Key Habitat map or latest sagebrush/vegetation map, which would be used to track and identify habitat changes to assess the habitat trigger in the adaptive management approach.

Responses to soft triggers are conducted at the implementation level and include consideration of the inclusion of various design features during project implementation. The hard triggers in the Idaho plan are numeric and quantifiable; they are tied to trends in population changes or habitat losses and have been developed in cooperation with the State of Idaho, US FWS and Forest Service. The BLM, in coordination with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) would utilize population data collected and maintained by the IDFG to track and identify population changes to assess the population triggers. Responses to the hard triggers would implement more restrictive measures (identified within the proposed plan and consistent with more restrictive aspects of other alternatives) and further focus suppression and restoration priorities in areas beyond critical habitats.

Adaptive Management Trigger Rationale

Adaptive management triggers have been developed to appropriately respond to unexpected events (e.g., wildfire, West Nile Virus) that may result in a substantial loss of habitat or decline in sage-grouse populations. These triggers are intended to improve sage-grouse population trends, protect the overall baseline population, preserve a buffer population, and conserve sage-grouse habitat. The adaptive management strategy is composed of both population and habitat components.

Population

Population components consider population growth and change in lek size. Lek size has been related to population change in numerous studies (Connelly and Braun 1997, Connelly et al. 2004, Baumgart 2011, Garton et al. 2011). Garton et al. (2011) used both characteristics as well as number of active leks to assess change for sage-grouse populations throughout the west. The adaptive management triggers set at a lambda (change or trend of population) value less than one, a 10% (soft trigger) and 20% (hard trigger) decline in males counted on lek routes.

Although populations cannot be accurately estimated, lek counts of males provide a robust method for assessing population trend and estimating population growth (λ) in an unbiased fashion. Calculating lambda (λ finite rate of change) between successive years for a sage-grouse population is

described in Garton et al. (2011). The ratio of males counted in a pair of successive years estimates the finite rate of change (λ_t) at each lek site in that one-year interval. These ratios can be combined across leks within a population for each year to estimate λ_t for the entire population (or Conservation Zone) or combined across all leks to estimate λ_t for the state between successive years.

Because small game populations (including sage-grouse) typically fluctuate among years due to weather and other environmental variables, a λ_t for any given year is not very meaningful. However, a series of years where λ_t remains at or above 1.0 indicates a stable to increasing population. Moreover, this situation would also provide strong evidence of the effectiveness of conservation actions that may have been employed.

Lek attendance by males has been used as an indicator of population trend in some areas since at least the early 1950s. For many years it was the only indicator used to assess status of sage-grouse populations. However, recent research has shown that male attendance at leks can be affected by severity of the previous winter, weather, timing of counts during spring, and a variety of other factors (Emmons and Braun 1984, Hupp 1987, Baumgart 2011). Baumgart (2011) indicated the probability of male sage-grouse attending leks in south-central Idaho varied among years and appeared to be tied to winter severity. Although lek data provide a powerful data set for assessing population trends over time (Garton et al. 2011), counts for a single year may not reflect trends very well. Thus using lek counts as a trigger must consider the inherent variation in these counts. Moreover, males counted on leks appear to have the most value for assessing population change when used in conjunction with other indicators of population status (e.g., finite rate of change). Published information suggests that a change in maximum number of males counted on leks of say 10-15% cannot confidently be considered a reflection of population status. However, a 20% decline in maximum number of males counted on leks would likely not be related to lek attendance patterns but instead would reflect a population decline. Thus, the trigger was set at 20%.

Habitat

The habitat component considers loss of breeding and/or winter habitat. A variety of researchers (Swensen et al. 1987, Connelly et al. 2000a, Miller et al. 2011) have shown that loss of winter or breeding habitats resulted in decreased sage-grouse populations. The adaptive management triggers are set at a 10% (soft trigger) and a 20% (hard trigger) loss of breeding or winter habitats.

Numerous studies have documented the negative effects of habitat loss including fire and energy development on sage-grouse (Connelly et al. 2000b, Fischer et al. 1996, Nelle et al. 2000, Doherty et al. 2008), but few studies have related the amount of sagebrush habitat lost to population change. Based on current scientific findings a 30% loss of breeding and winter habitat is thus far the lowest amount of habitat loss for which a population response could be detected and landscapes with < 30% area in sagebrush within 6.4 km of lek center have the lowest probability of lek persistence. Idaho is taking a more conservative approach than suggested by the literature. A soft trigger is set at a 10% loss of breeding or winter habitat in Core or Important management zones of a Conservation Area, which initiates a review of the management approach. A hard trigger is set at a 20% loss of breeding or winter habitat within a Core Habitat Zone of a Conservation Area, which automatically causes a change in management status of the corresponding Important Habitat Zone.

Table – Idaho Adaptive Management Strategy and the National Policy Guidance

Adaptive Management Sideboards			
AM Element	How the AM element was addressed in the concept paper (February 2014)	Sideboards (April 2014)	Sub-regional ADPP Approach
Scale	“Each plan will include an overarching adaptive management strategy that includes soft and hard triggers for specific populations.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommend that the scale used to monitor the adaptive management hard triggers is at the population level. If the scale used to monitor the trigger is smaller than the population level (such as a population management unit or PAC), ensure that the information collected at this smaller scale can be aggregated up to the population level. ✓ Recommend that the scale used to monitor the adaptive management soft trigger is at the project/implementation scale and local population level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The scale for evaluation of the adaptive management hard and soft triggers are: 1) Habitat – the modeled nesting (6.2 mile buffer around leks) and winter habitat within Core or Important Management Zones by Conservation Area; 2) Population – designated leks and lek routes within Core or Important Management Zones by Conservation Area. ✓ Conservation Areas were delineated based on breeding bird density, habitat connectivity and persistence, similarity of habitat and common threats. Smaller population areas are typically contained within a broader Conservation Area where larger population areas are split across several Conservation Areas. ✓ The triggers are evaluated within a Conservation Area by Core and Important Management Zones separately, further refining the sensitivity of the measure, so that losses can be measured and responded to at a level finer than the population.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The responses to the hard triggered are implemented at the Conservation Area scale while responses to the soft trigger are implemented at the project level. ✓ The sampling and monitoring design for population is consistent with the Conservation Area breakdown to make evaluation of the triggers appropriate at the level for which data is collected.
Soft Triggers	<p>“Soft triggers represent an intermediate threshold indicating that management changes are needed at the implementation level to address habitat or population losses.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommended that if a numeric soft trigger is not outlined in the land use plan/plan amendment, the soft trigger should be any anomaly that is observed at a project/implementation and/or local population level. <p><i>Example of an anomaly: Population monitoring data indicates the number of male sage-grouse found on a local lek has decreased. Annual land use plan implementation monitoring data indicates that the majority of land use authorizations taking place in this area are rights-of-way for overhead transmission lines and there is reason to believe some loss of sage grouse has occurred from guy-wire collision. The plan implementation level response by the BLM/FS would be to require flagging guy-wires for all future transmission line authorizations within this local population area, in order to decrease the amount of sage-grouse collisions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Soft triggers are included in the plan.
Soft trigger responses	<p>“If a soft trigger is tripped, the BLM/FS will apply more conservative or restrictive implementation conservation measures to mitigate for the specific causal factor in the decline of populations and/or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Responses to soft triggers may require the adjustment of future project level/plan implementation activities in the short- or long-term, as consistent with the individual site specific NEPA analyses. Soft trigger responses can come in the form of design features, BMPs, or site specific mitigation measures. <p><i>Examples of soft trigger responses could include (but are not</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Responses to soft triggers are conducted at the implementation level and include consideration of the inclusion of various design features during project implementation.

	habitats, with consideration of local knowledge and conditions.”	<p><i>limited to) the following for future BLM/FS implementation level actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Extending seasonal restrictions for seasonal surface disturbing activities (provided as stipulations to a ROW grant or a Condition of Approval to an oil and gas lease),</i> • <i>Reprioritizing wild horse and burro gathers;</i> • <i>Applying sequential development after reclamation;</i> • <i>Temporary area closures related to travel management; (2-year maximum);</i> • <i>Modifying seasons of use for livestock grazing through annual permit authorizations; and/or</i> • <i>Applying additional restrictions on discretionary activities, or reject the authorization if mitigation criteria cannot be met.</i> 	
Hard triggers	“Hard triggers represent a threshold indicating that immediate action is necessary to stop a severe deviation from sage grouse conservation objectives set forth in the BLM and FS plans.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommend that there be numeric hard triggers for both population and habitat declines. ✓ Recommend that numeric hard triggers identified in the plans are tied to a specific trend (e.g., a percent range of normal variation or a number of standard deviations from normal variation). ✓ Recommend that the hard triggers be developed in cooperation with state and FWS partners. 	✓ The hard triggers in the Idaho plan are numeric and quantifiable; they are tied to trends in population changes or habitat losses and have been developed in cooperation with the State of Idaho, US FWS and Forest Service.
Hard trigger responses	“The Proposed RMPs/Final EISs will include a “hard-wired” plan-level response; that is, it will provide that, upon reaching the trigger, a more restrictive alternative, or an appropriate component of a more restrictive alternative... in the event that new scientific information becomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The hard trigger response will be an entire restrictive alternative, or one or more appropriate components of a more restrictive alternative such as the immediate cessation of authorizing land use authorizations (within the area/scale in which we will be implementing the responses to these triggers). After the hard-trigger is tripped, the BLM or FS will determine the causal factor and develop and implement a recovery strategy. 	✓ The hard trigger responses are implemented for a Conservation Area and included additional restrictions that were considered and analyzed within the Proposed Plan as well as in design features in other more restrictive alternatives. A causal factor determination and evaluation is also included as part of the evaluation and response for both

	available demonstrating that the hard wired response would be insufficient to stop a severe deviation from sage grouse conservation objectives set forth in the BLM and FS plans, the BLM or FS will immediately implement a formal directive akin to BLM IM 2012-043 to protect greater sage-grouse and its habitat and to ensure that conservation options are not foreclosed.”		hard and soft triggers.
“How to incorporate in the document”	Do we want to provide sideboards which articulate how the AM elements should be presented in the plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistent chapter 2 introductory template language (see section 2.X below) is recommended to be included in each of the 14 FEISs. This language will replace the language that was presented in the DEISs and is consistent with the language presented in the adaptive management concept paper. ✓ It is recommended that the numeric hard trigger, hard trigger response, and the scale in which we will be implementing the responses are presented as a management action in the PRMP/FEIS. ✓ Ensure that the chapter 4 impact analysis is updated to support the adaptive management responses. 	✓ Language has been included in Chapter 2 consistent with or identical to the language indicated.

<p>WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team</p>	<p>While not articulated in the concept paper, both the draft monitoring and draft mitigation frameworks reference this group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team is the same team that will be referenced in the Mitigation and Monitoring Frameworks. ✓ The WAFWA Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team would be responsible for: (1) evaluating the adaptive management responses made by each sub-regional plan in a WAFWA MZ, (2) evaluating the effectiveness of these responses in the context of the overall zone, (3) evaluating the monitoring data that is being collected to inform the triggers, and (4) providing overall adaptive management recommendations to the surface management agencies based on their evaluations. If there is an existing state adaptive management working group already in place, the working group agreement between the state, BLM, and FWS, would not be impacted by the responsibilities provided to this WAFWA MZ or any of the above sideboards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yes, this is the intent within Idaho. There are still some specific details to be worked out – primarily the composition membership of these teams. In Idaho several key stakeholders and developers of the State Mitigation Framework and the Adaptive Management Framework that the States intend to remain involved are not Government employees (state or Federal) which raises a potential FACA concern which we are trying to resolve.
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From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 9:09 AM
To: Munson, Johanna
Cc: Kathryn Stangl; Jon Raby; Lauren Mermejo; David Batts; Frank Quamen
Subject: Re: Pop Summary Table - MT pops 19 and 22
Attachments: SW Montana (19-22).docx

Hi Johanna - we sure did (as part of the Great Basin tables since it is the area that is associated with the Idaho/SW MT EIS). It is attached.

Thanks,

Matt

On Fri, Aug 1, 2014 at 11:48 AM, Munson, Johanna <jmunson@blm.gov> wrote:

Hi Matt -

Did we create draft pop summary tables for MT pops 19 and 22? If so, could you please send me a copy? If not, do we need to? How can I assist?

Thanks!

--

Johanna Munson
Rocky Mountain Region GRSG Project Mgr
Bureau of Land Management
5353 Yellowstone Rd.
Cheyenne, WY 82009

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Cell: 307-433-4447
Fax: 307-775-6042
Email: jmunson@blm.gov

"It's not enough we do our best; sometimes we have to do what's required."
Sir Winston Churchill

--

Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)

(202) 912-7085

Montana portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region
Populations (fully within Montana portion of Idaho/SW Montana Sub-region): 19-22

Population Statistics (19-22)				
	Core	General	Non-Habitat	
PAC	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	
Non-PAC	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	BLM: FS: Other Federal: Private: State: Other:	
Population Present & Widespread Threats	ADPP Allocations Addressing Threat <i>*Allocation that deviate from NPT Guidance</i>		Major points as to how threat will be ameliorated <i>*Rationale for NPT guidance deviations (as described in State Director memos)</i>	
A. Weeds/Annual Grasses (Applicable to:19-22)	N/A		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize treatments to remove invasive annual grasses to provide the most benefit to GRSG habitat conditions using the FIAT Report. • Require use of native seeds for fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives. 	
B. Grazing (Applicable to:19-22)	Core: Available General: Available		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage livestock grazing according to rangeland health standards and Connelly/Coates quantitative vegetation objectives. Corrective actions will be taken when not meeting standards. • Use HAF methodology for monitoring • Manage grazing structures to minimize the impacts to GRSG. 	
C. Energy (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	Solar/Wind ROWs Core: Exclusion General: Avoidance FS: General = Avoidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All consistent with NPT guidance • “Purple” - differs from Idaho in General Habitat 	

Draft Deliberative Internal Working Document – Do not disclose

	<p align="center"><u>Fluid Mineral Resources</u></p> <p>Core: NSO General: Open with Major and Moderate Constraints (CSU with TLs) FS: Consistent</p> <p align="center"><u>Non-Energy Leasable Minerals</u></p> <p>Core: Closed General: Open FS: Consistent</p>	
D. Mining (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>Mineral Materials</u></p> <p>Core: Closed General: Open FS: Consistent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance.
E. Infrastructure (NOT A PRESENT AND WIDESPREAD THREAT)	<p align="center"><u>High-Voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs</u></p> <p>Core: Avoidance <i>General: Open</i> FS: General = Avoidance</p> <p align="center"><u>Other (Minor) Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations/Permits</u></p> <p>Core: Avoidance General: Open FS: Consistent</p>	<p><i>The rationale for not avoiding general zones to HV transmission and major pipeline ROWs in Montana:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>General zones contain less than 5% of the population and represent the least intact and productive habitats for GRSG. Any proposed development in general zones is guided by application of lek buffers, RDFs, and appropriate seasonal and timing restrictions to limit impacts to GRSG or habitat. In addition, mitigation of residual impacts would be required.</i> <i>Montana is still working thru discussions on whether or not to make High Voltage Transmissions and Major Pipeline ROWs an “avoidance” area for General Habitat.</i>
Disturbance	<p>3% within BSU – All Core FS: 3% applied to Core</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with NPT guidance. “Purple” - The BSUs are different than Idaho <i>The concept of “no net unmitigated loss” may not be applied to PGMA in SW Montana - still working thru the issue and may still apply it.</i> FS: <i>No net unmitigated loss will be applied to PGMA in Montana</i>

Idaho Southwest Montana Response Friday December 5, 2014.

1. Mapping PPH and PGH: When initially mapping preliminary priority and preliminary general habitat for your sub-region with your respective state wildlife agency (per IM-2012-044), were distances from leks part of this mapping exercise? If so, what distance from the lek was used? Please provide the citation if available. If not, what was the criteria/basis for mapping priority and general habitat?

Response: Distances from leks were used to map PPH and PGH. The distances used were 6.4 km (4 mile) to construct 75% breeding bird density and 8.5 km (5.3 mile) to capture the 76-100% breeding bird density (Doherty et al., 2010). Additional factors were also incorporated including a lek connectivity model, winter habitat, key habitat, etc.

Doherty, K.E., J.D. Tack, J.S. Evans, and D.E. Naugle. 2010. Mapping breeding densities of greater sage-grouse: A tool for range-wide conservation planning. BLM Completion Report. Interagency Agreement # L10PG00911.

2. Rationale for existing buffer distances: We recognize that sub-regions provided this information to the WO prior to the Federal Family Meetings, but in order to reflect any changes that have been made since then, what buffer distances and their supportive scientific references are identified in your ADPP for both PHMA (Core and IHMA) **and** GHMA (please note if they are seasonal or year-round buffers)? Do these distances fall within the Report's interpreted range for surface disturbance, linear features, and energy development (3.1 miles to 5 miles), tall structures (2 miles to 5 miles), and low structures (1.2 miles to 5 miles)?

If the sub-regional buffers do not fall within the Report's interpreted ranges, do you feel you need to make changes to your existing ADPP buffers? If not, why?

Response: Please see the attached table for buffer distances, relationship to the USGS buffers, rationale for differences and the corresponding ADPP language. The team will meet to consider changes to the transmission buffer (currently 600m considering 2 mile), and unleased fluid minerals buffer (currently 2 mile considering 3 mile).

3. Application of buffer distances in your ADPP: Do you attach any BLM land use plan allocations (NSO, ROW exclusions/avoidances, or closures for example) within the buffer distances from leks in your ADPP for both PHMA (Core and IHMA) **and** GHMA? If so, are these buffer allocations depicted in the data that you will be using for cumulative effects analysis and mapping purposes?

If no land use plan allocations are associated within a buffer distance from a lek, how does the sub-region plan to implement the conservation actions associated with the buffer distance?

Response: The buffers are not considered allocations. The allocations are made through the ADPP decisions, based on the type of Habitat Management Area designation. For example the ADPP makes

Pre-decisional Deliberative Document – Not for Distribution

priority and important habitat (PHMA, IHMA) NSO for fluid minerals; and commercial scale wind and solar are excluded in PHMA. These are the types of allocations that will be considered in the cumulative effects analysis. The buffers and Required Design Features (RDFs) are applied at the site specific implementation phase to mitigate effects. These are not allocations because the lek data are not static- i.e, leks may disappear or new leks may be located over time.

4. If a 3.1 mile buffer was to be applied to every occupied lek present in the sub-region’s planning area, would BLM managed PHMA and GHMA within this 3.1 mile buffer area be covered by restrictive land use plan allocations? In order to effectively respond to this question, please work with your GIS specialist to develop the following:
 - a. A map of your planning area with the following layers: 1) all known leks with a 3.1 mile buffer (shown as a circle), ADPP PHMA (Core and IHMA), and ADPP GHMA.
 - b. Acreage figures populated for the below categories.

	Acres
Acres of BLM/FS managed PHMA (Core and IHMA) within a 3.1 mile buffer from a lek.	4,496,036
Acres of BLM/FS managed GHMA within a 3.1 mile buffer from a lek.	342,340
Acres of BLM/FS lands within 3.1 mile from a lek that is not managed as PHMA or GHMA.	243,859

Buffer Review Meeting – 12-09-14

Powell; Pyron, Makela, Beck; Bockting; Colt; Ellsworth; and Sutter

Objective: Informational Meeting: Review the buffer table provided to the WO for the buffer data call. Discuss any inconsistencies with ADPP buffers and USGS buffer paper.

Background: When assembling the data for the WO buffer data call we noticed that six of the twelve total buffers are below the USGS recommended minimum. The team concluded that the allocation decisions in the ADPP combined with the exception criteria, and the buffers should provide adequate protection to GRSG habitat and populations in most cases. Although the team provided sound rationale in the buffer table explaining the reason for selecting those buffers, and we feel our buffers are adequate when taken in context with the rest of the ADPP, unleased Fluid minerals and Transmission differed enough to trigger further discussions.

This was a proactive meeting to start buffer conversations in anticipation of possible direction based on the Buffer data call and to contemplate how to best streamline the Buffer and RDF appendices.

Discussion Items:

1. Unleased fluid mineral buffers in our buffer table (2 mile) are below the USGS minimum (3 mile). Possible solution: add BMP or RDF that would increase the buffer area.
2. The transmission lines RDF buffer in Priority and Important and General habitat is below the USGS recommendation (600m vs 2 miles). Possible solution: Keep as is and rely on other decisions (i.e, exceptions criteria and ADPP allocations and 2 mile buffer BMP) to protect sage grouse habitat.
3. The team would like to consider combining the RDF appendix with the Buffer Table so there is one place for managers to look when they implement these decisions.
4. The Buffer table BMPs could be added into the RDF table in the “as appropriate” column.

Idaho/ Southwest Montana GRSG Buffers and USGS Review

December 5, 2014

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
<p>Noise and Visual Disturbance</p> <p>(Applies to all discretionary activities within 2-miles of occupied leks)</p>	<p>Buffer Table: Priority and Important- No repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise over 10 dbA, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season3.</p> <p>BMP-General: Avoid repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am within 2 miles (3.2 km) of leks during the lekking season3.</p>	<p>Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km (~ 1 mile) from grouse leks. IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to managing disturbance to minimize risk of disturbance.</p>	
<p>USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Surface Disturbance 3.1-5.0 mi (5.0-8.0 km)</p>			
<p>Salable Minerals</p>	<p>Buffer Table: Salables-BMP: Important and General: Do not construct new salable development within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks</p>	<p>NO: Salables- No literature specific to salables but buffer distance is based on the noise literature for roads. See Patricelli et al. 2012 (WY recommendations for interim noise protections) that recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat. Chose BMP in Important and General habitat since new Salable pits (e.g., gravel) may be necessary to support road maintenance or improvement for access by fire operations or for other locally important factors.</p>	<p>Salable Minerals Salable Minerals (SAL)-1: Priority: No new site authorizations would be approved. Important: New site authorizations could be considered provided the Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria (AD-4) can be met, and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Sales from existing community pits within PHMA and IHMA would be subject to seasonal timing restrictions.</p>

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
			General: Open to new site authorizations subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. Existing sites Open to new sales subject to seasonal timing restrictions.
USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Linear Features 3.1-5.0 mi (5.0-8.0 km)			
Pipelines	Buffer Table: BMP: Priority, Important, General. Minimize removal of sagebrush within 0.6 miles of leks.	NO: However, application of this measure is designed to minimize loss of sagebrush in the vicinity of the lek. The main concern was with loss of sagebrush in the vicinity of a lek that is used by GRSG for cover. The 0.6 mile buffer is based on rationale in the Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan as below: BACKGROUND INFORMATION: From Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan Appendix B: [Lek Habitat (March through mid-May) - The basis and rationale for the first radius, 0.6 miles from a lek (Fig. B-1), is developed by summarizing data from 5 separate studies of daytime movements of adult male sage-grouse during the breeding season (Carr 1967, Wallestad and Schladweiler 1974, Rothenmaier 1979, Emmons 1980, Schoenberg 1982), because daytime movements of adult male GRSG during the breeding season do not vary greatly. Wallestad and Schladweiler (1974) found daily movements of adult males ranged between 0.2 and 0.8 miles from leks, with a maximum cruising radius of 0.9 - 1.2 miles. Ellis et al. (1987) reported that dispersal flights of male GRSG (to day-use areas) ranged from 0.3 – 0.5 miles, with the longest flights ranging from 1.2 – 1.3 miles. Carr (1967) recorded a cruising radius for male GRSG that ranged from 0.9-1.1 miles. Rothenmaier (1979) found that 60-80% of male GRSG locations were within 0.6 - 0.7 miles of a lek. Emmons (1980) reported that male dispersal	Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Priority: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-3 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-4 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General: Designate and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open with proposals subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
		<p>distances to day use areas of 0.1 miles were common and that 67% of all use areas were greater than 0.3 miles from the lek. In addition, Schoenberg (1982) found that male daily movements averaged 0.6 miles, but ranged from 0.02 - 1.5 miles.</p> <p>Male GRSG activity patterns during the breeding season include strutting during the early morning hours, feeding and loafing during the day, and roosting on the lek during the night. Grouse attending the lek do not always roost on the exact location where the strutting occurs the next morning. Occasionally (this is lek-dependent), grouse roost in adjacent sagebrush cover. Ultimately, male GRSG require an open area for strutting, and sagebrush immediately adjacent for feeding and loafing. Sagebrush adjacent to the lek is also used as escape cover from predators or other types of disturbance. Female GRSG that attend the lek also use the area in this zone in the same fashion as do males (Patterson 1952, Barnett and Crawford 1994, Coggins 1998).] Study locations noted above: Carr- Colorado; Wallestad and Schladweiller- Montana; Emmons- Colorado; Schoenberg- Colorado; Rothenmaier – unable to locate Univ. WY Thesis but study area not defined.</p>	
Roads	<p>Buffer Table: NESTING BMP: Priority, Important, General: Avoid construction of new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of nesting habitat.</p> <p>Buffer Table-LEK BMP: BMP: Priority, Important, General: Do not construct new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads within 0.8 mile (1.3 km) of leks.</p>	<p>NO: The 0.8 mile BMP is based on noise/GRSG literature (see below). Rationale for BMP is that we may need to construct a gravel or two track road for fire access or other reasons such as access to private lands. Use of a large lek buffer may force new road further into important nest/winter habitat increasing risk of fire/other impacts including more linear disturbance.</p> <p>Patricelli et al. 2012 (Recommendations for interim</p>	<p>TM-5: Conduct road construction, upgrades, and maintenance activities to avoid disturbance during specific times at different seasons – see seasonal and timing restrictions section.</p>

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
		<p>protections in WY) We apply it here as a lek-centric BMP because we may need to construct a road near a lek (perhaps for fire operations/ access or to allow access to private lands or per ROW need). If we buffer roads in the Priority or Important Areas via a large lek buffer, it may lead to disturbance of a much larger area of nesting habitat in the course of avoiding the lek and buffers. The BMP would at least allow for siting to avoid the lek, and reducing road noise near the lek, without compromising broader landscapes.recommended siting roads 0.7 to 0.8 miles from crucial seasonal habitat.</p>	
USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Energy Development 3.1-5.0 mi (5.0-8.0 km)			
Unleased Fluid Minerals	<p>Buffer Table: Stipulation: Priority, Important, General: Do not allow wells, pads, facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek.</p>	<p>NO: Considering working with the team to update. This impact may have a population level effect and trip a population trigger therefore we recommended this be an RDF. Recent literature says 0.25 mile and 0.6 mile buffers are not sufficient (Harju et al. 2010). Hess (2011 MS Thesis) found statistical evidence that oil/well pad influence extended as far as 1.6 km from grouse leks. The 1/640 density per based on consideration of 1) Harju et al. (2010) who found pad density of 1.54 pad/sq km (1 pad/247 ac) had 13-74% lower attendance at leks and 2) Doherty (2008 page iii and 79) who noted potential impacts from oil and gas development were indiscernible at ~1 well/640 acres. IDswMT biology team recommended a more conservative approach to minimize risk of tripping a population trigger, hence the 1/640.</p>	<p>Fluid Minerals (FLM)-1: Idaho and Montana: Areas within Priority Habitat Management Areas and Important Habitat Management Areas would be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to no surface occupancy with a limited exception</p> <p>(FLM-3). General Habitat Management Areas would be open to mineral leasing and development and geophysical exploration subject to CSU which includes buffers, seasonal timing restrictions and standard stipulations.</p>
USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Tall Structures 2.0-5.0 mi (3.3-8.0 km)			

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
Transmission	<p>Buffer Table: RDF: Priority, Important, General: Do not allow transmission line construction within 600 m of a lek.</p> <p>BMP Priority, Important, General: Avoid transmission line construction within 2 miles (3.2 km) of a lek.</p>	<p>NO: Considering working with the team to update. A 600 m GRSG avoidance zone reported per Gillan et al. (2013). No other spatial buffer supported by literature. While 600 m is a citable buffer, a 2 mile zone as BMP for Transmission is recommended as well. Based on Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines to avoid tall structures in important seasonal habitats.</p>	<p>Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Priority: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-3 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-4 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General: Designate and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open with proposals subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.</p>
Distribution	<p>Buffer Table: BMP: Priority, Important and General-Avoid distribution line construction within 600 m of a lek or bury where possible</p>	<p>NO: 600 m, based on Gillan et al. BMP as this may not always be feasible.</p>	
Solar	<p>RDF: Important- Do not allow new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek4.</p> <p>BMP-General: Avoid new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure within 2 miles (3.2 km) a lek4.</p>	<p>YES: No specific literature available relative to solar development. Recommended buffer is based on recent literature (Harju et al 2010) that 0.6 or 0.25 mile buffers are not. The 2 mile buffer is consistent with Connelly et al. 2000 regarding energy facilities (page 978).</p>	<p>Consistent with USGS and literature. Priority:</p> <p>LR-2: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as exclusion areas for utility scale (20 MW) Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower energy development. Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as avoidance areas for Wind and Solar testing and development, nuclear and hydropower development. General: Designate</p>

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
			and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open for Wind and Solar testing and development and nuclear and hydropower development subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.
Communication Towers	<p>Buffer Table: RDF: Priority -Do not allow communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek unless needed to address public safety needs.</p> <p>BMP- Important and General--Avoid communication tower construction within 3 miles (5 km) of a lek unless needed to address public safety needs.</p>	YES: Johnson et al. (2011 pg. 427) noted "Analogously, across all management areas there was a steady downward pattern of trends of lek counts as the number of towers increased, either within 5 km (Fig. 21) or within 18 km (Fig. 22)."	Lands and Realty (LR)-1: Priority: Designate and manage Priority Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-3 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions (Appendix A, B & C). Important: Designate and manage Important Habitat Management Areas as ROW avoidance areas, consistent with AD-4 and subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions. General: Designate and manage General Habitat Management Areas as open with proposals subject to RDFs, buffers and seasonal timing restrictions.
USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Low Structures 1.2-3.2 mi (2.0-5.1 km)			
Fences	RDF 104: Avoid building new wire fences within 2 km of occupied leks (Stevens 2011). If this is not feasible, ensure that high risk segments are marked with collision diverter devices or as latest science indicates.	YES: Consistent with USGS and literature	RM-12: Design any new structural range improvements, following appropriate cooperation, consultation and coordination, to minimize and/or mitigate effects to GRSG habitat. Any new structural range improvements should be placed

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
			along existing disturbance corridors or in unsuitable habitat, to the extent practical, and are subject to RDFs (Appendix A). Structural range improvement in this context, include, but are not limited to: fences, exclosures, corrals or other livestock handling structures; pipelines, troughs, storage tanks (including moveable tanks used in livestock water hauling), windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels and spring developments.
Miscellaneous anthropogenic structures/ activities (e.g., corrals, water windmills, apiaries, signs, informational kiosks, etc.)	<p>RDF 105: Place new, taller structures, including corrals, loading facilities, water storage tanks, windmills, out of line of sight or at least one kilometer (preferably 3 km) from occupied leks, where such structures would increase the risk of avian predation.</p> <p>Buffer Table: BMP Priority, Important, General: Avoid human activities or placement of new structures as noted within 2 miles (3.2 km) mi of a lek or ensure they are out of the view shed of the lek.</p>	<p>YES: This is a catch all to reduce impact of miscellaneous structures where possible (some are tall, such as water windmill, some are small, but have human activity- such as kiosks) or activities not otherwise addressed in this table. Based on biology team discussion and input, and Connelly et al. 2000 Guidelines that state, “avoid building powerlines and other tall structures that provide perch sites for raptors within 3 km of seasonal habitats” (page 977). Avoiding “seasonal habitats” entirely by 3 km would preclude any of these activities at all in Priority, Important or General, but siting 2 miles + from leks as a BMP would nonetheless help protect leks from disturbance.</p> <p>Adding the “view shed” caveat can help with siting in cases where topography or such screens view of the activity or structure.</p>	<p>LR-5: Consistent with LR-2, LR-3 and LR-4, Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations in PHMA would only be considered when consistent with the Anthropogenic Disturbance Exception Criteria (AD-3); Rights-of-way for development of new or amended ROWs and land use authorizations in IHMA could be considered consistent with the Important Habitat Management Area Anthropogenic Disturbance Development Criteria. (AD-4). General: New ROW and land use authorizations could be considered.</p>
USGS Interpreted Range (low-high) Activities (w/o habitat loss) 0.12-3.0 mi (400 m-4.8 km)			
Livestock	RDF 108: During lekking periods, as determined locally (approximately	YES: No literature. BMP based on biology team	RM-11: Incorporate RDFs into Terms and Conditions for

Category	ID/swMT Proposed Plan Buffer Table or RDF	Within USGS Range? & Rationale and Literature Referenced	Wording from Latest ADPP
	<p>March 15-May 1 in lower elevations and March 25-May 15 in higher elevations), livestock trailing will be avoided to the extent possible within 1 km (0.62 mile) of occupied leks between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to avoid disturbance to lekking and roosting sage-grouse. Over-nighting, watering and sheep bedding locations on public lands must be at least 1 km from occupied leks during the lekking season to reduce disturbance from sheep, human activity and guard animals.</p> <p>Buffer Table: BMP Priority, Important, General: Avoid bedding sheep and placing camps within 0.6 mi of a lek during the lekking season.</p>	<p>consensus.</p>	<p>crossing permits to limit disturbance of occupied leks when trailing livestock across BLM- and Forest Service - administered lands in the spring. Work with permittees in locating over-nighting, watering and bedding locations to minimize impacts to seasonal habitats</p>
<p>Organized Recreational Events</p>	<p>Buffer Table: RDF Priority and Important-Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season.</p> <p>BMP General- Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) within 2.0 miles (3.2 km) of occupied leks during the lekking season.</p>	<p>YES: Biology team consensus. No specific literature relative to buffers for recreational events but can manage this through avoiding the appropriate season. This threat (organized recreational events) is a short term, typically one-day event, with temporary disruption from noise the main issue.</p>	<p>REC-1: Manage existing recreation uses and sites to minimize adverse effects on GRSG or their habitat through incorporation of RDFs, buffers and seasonal restrictions.</p>

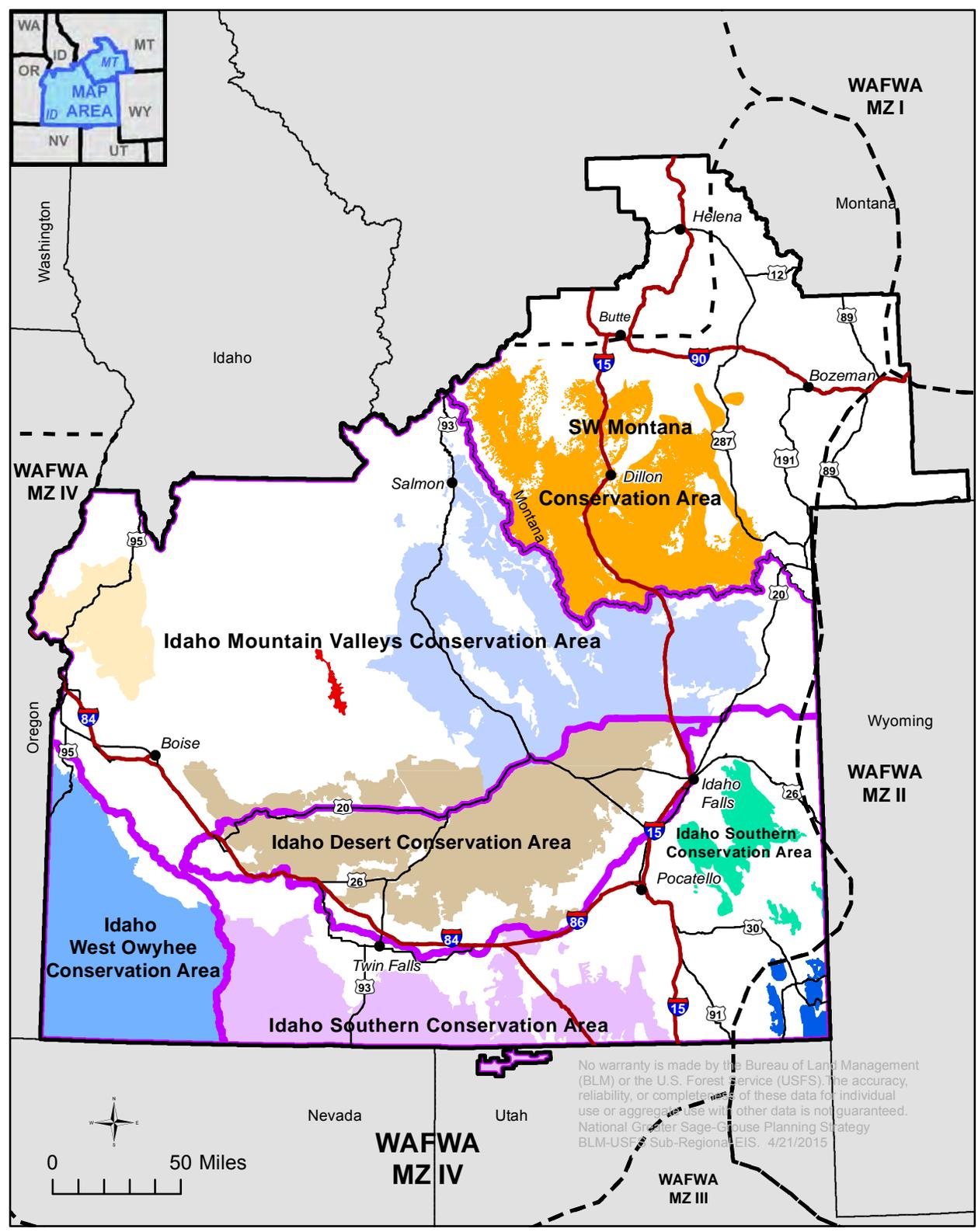
Definitions:

Heavy equipment includes but is not limited to: tractors, discs, drills, mowers, Lawson aerators, large sprayers, masticators, dozers, graders, large trucks, excavators, backhoes cranes.

Occupied lek as per IDFG definitions (active during at least one of past 5 years). Undetermined status leks will be evaluated on a case by case at the site specific scale during project-level NEPA.

Definition of “tall structure”: Any structure that has the potential to disrupt lekking or nesting GRSG and/or decrease the use of an area. This includes but is not limited to communication towers, meteorological towers, electrical transmission or distribution towers, etc.

Figure 2-1
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Conservation Areas



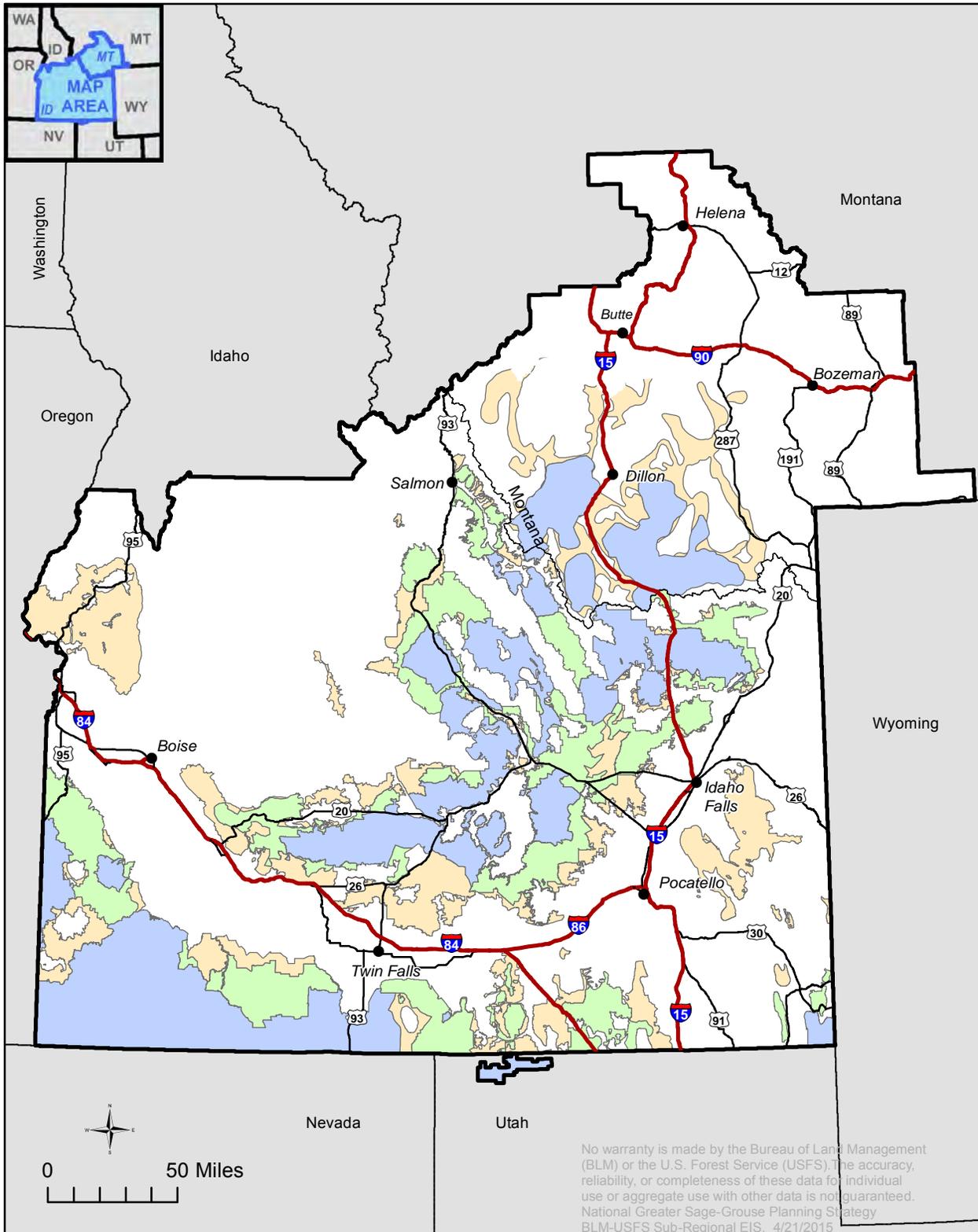
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy BLM-USFS Sub-Regional EIS. 4/21/2015

- Idaho/SW Montana GRSG Conservation Area
- Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
- Sage-Grouse Management Areas (WAFWA)
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary
- Population Area ***
- Bear Lake
- East-Central Idaho
- Mountain Valleys
- North Side Snake
- South Side Snake
- Southwest Idaho
- SW Montana
- Weiser
- Sawtooth

* Modified Connelly et al. 2004



Figure 2-2
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Habitat Management Areas



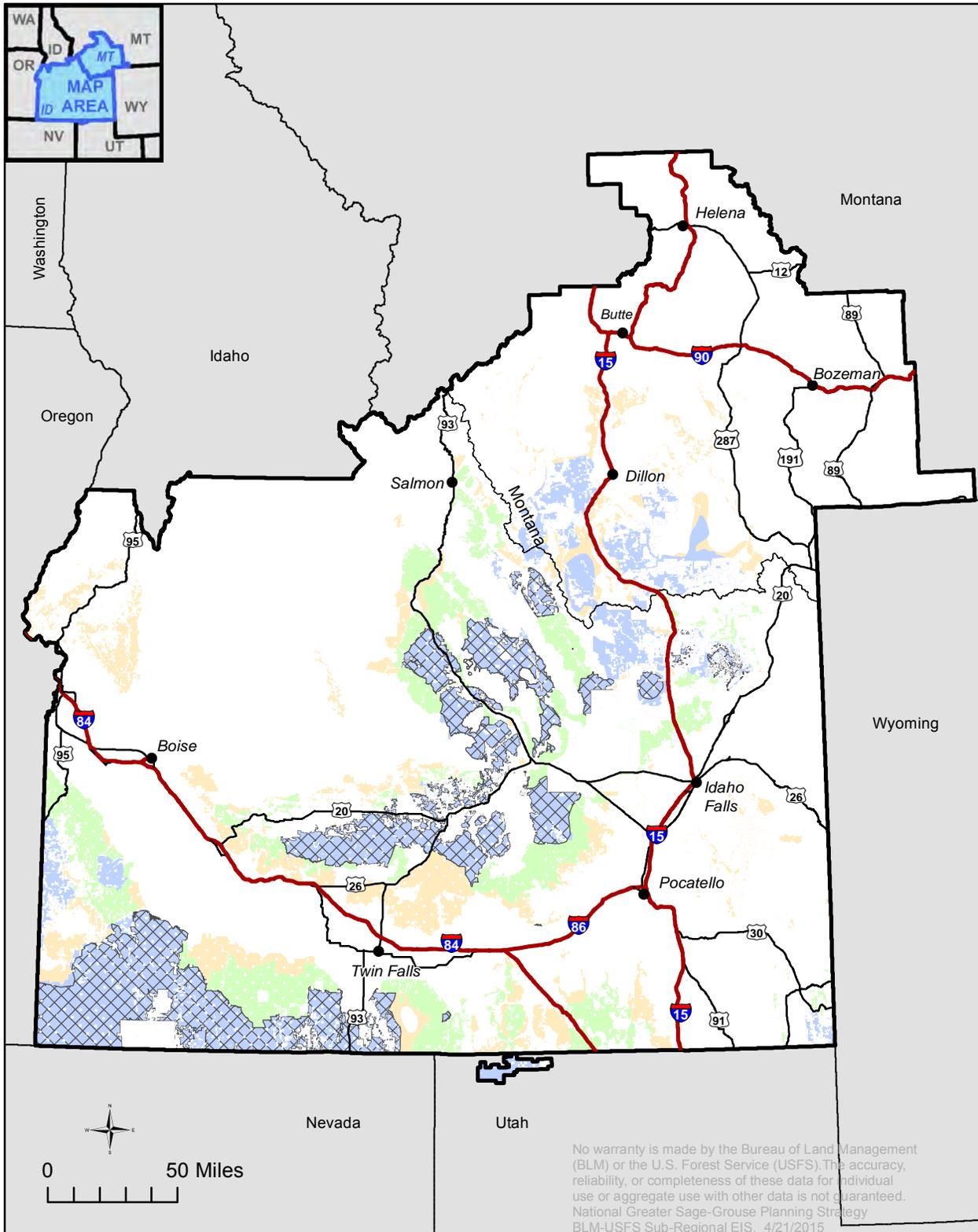
Habitat Management Area

- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-3
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Sagebrush Focal Areas, BLM and USFS Managed Lands



Sagebrush Focal Area

Habitat Management Area

PHMA

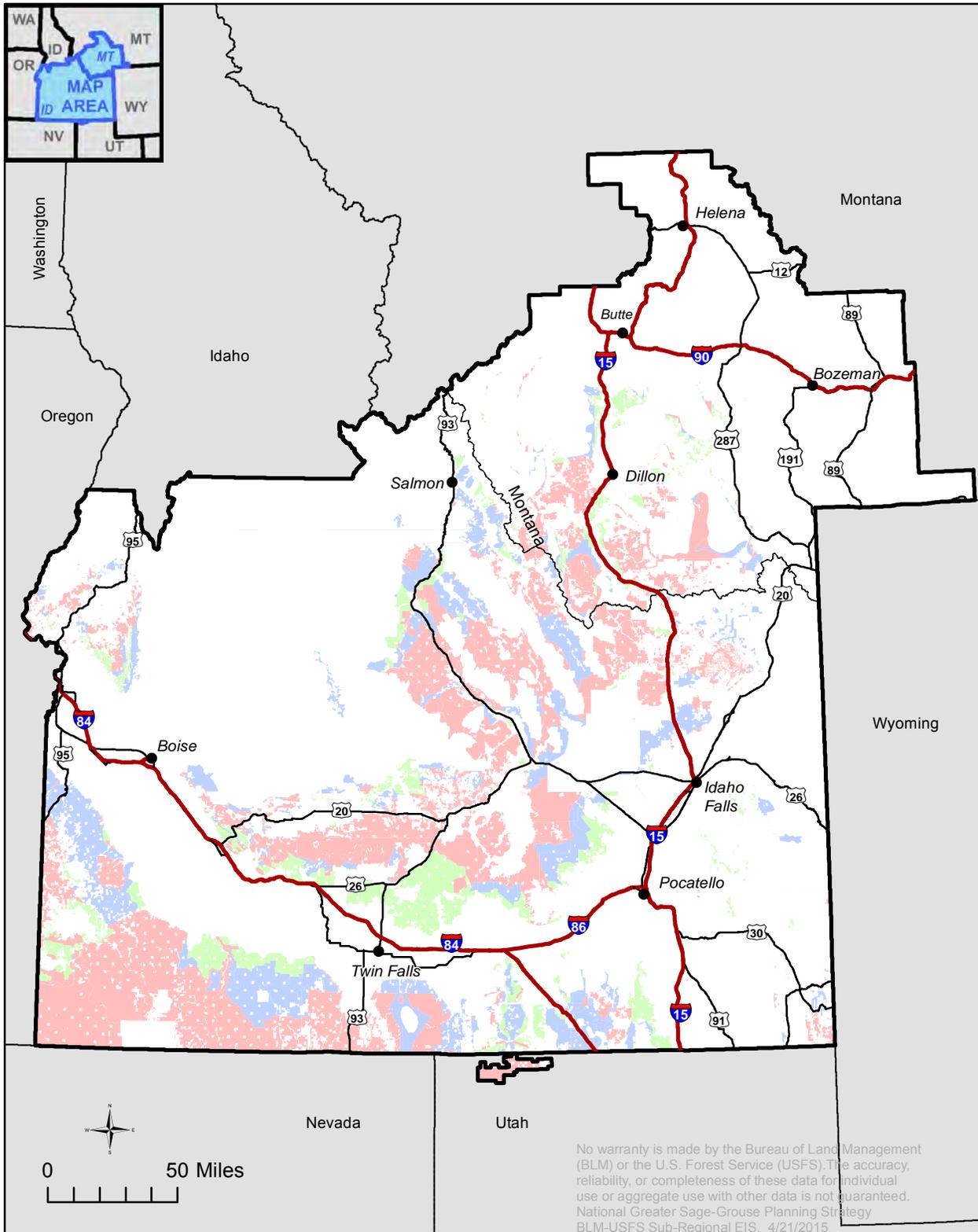
IHMA

GHMA

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-4
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Wind and Solar Allocations



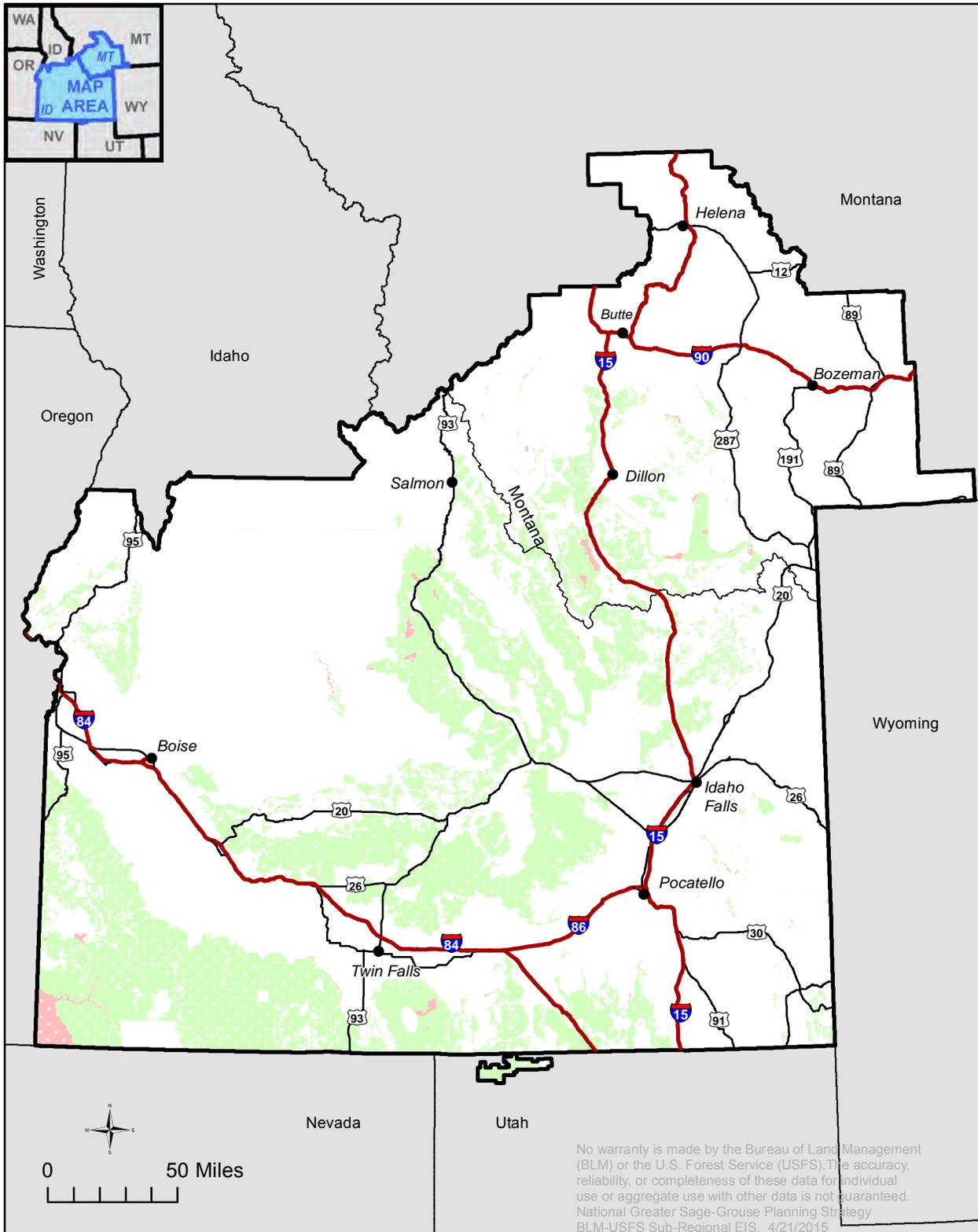
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-5
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Available and Unavailable to Grazing

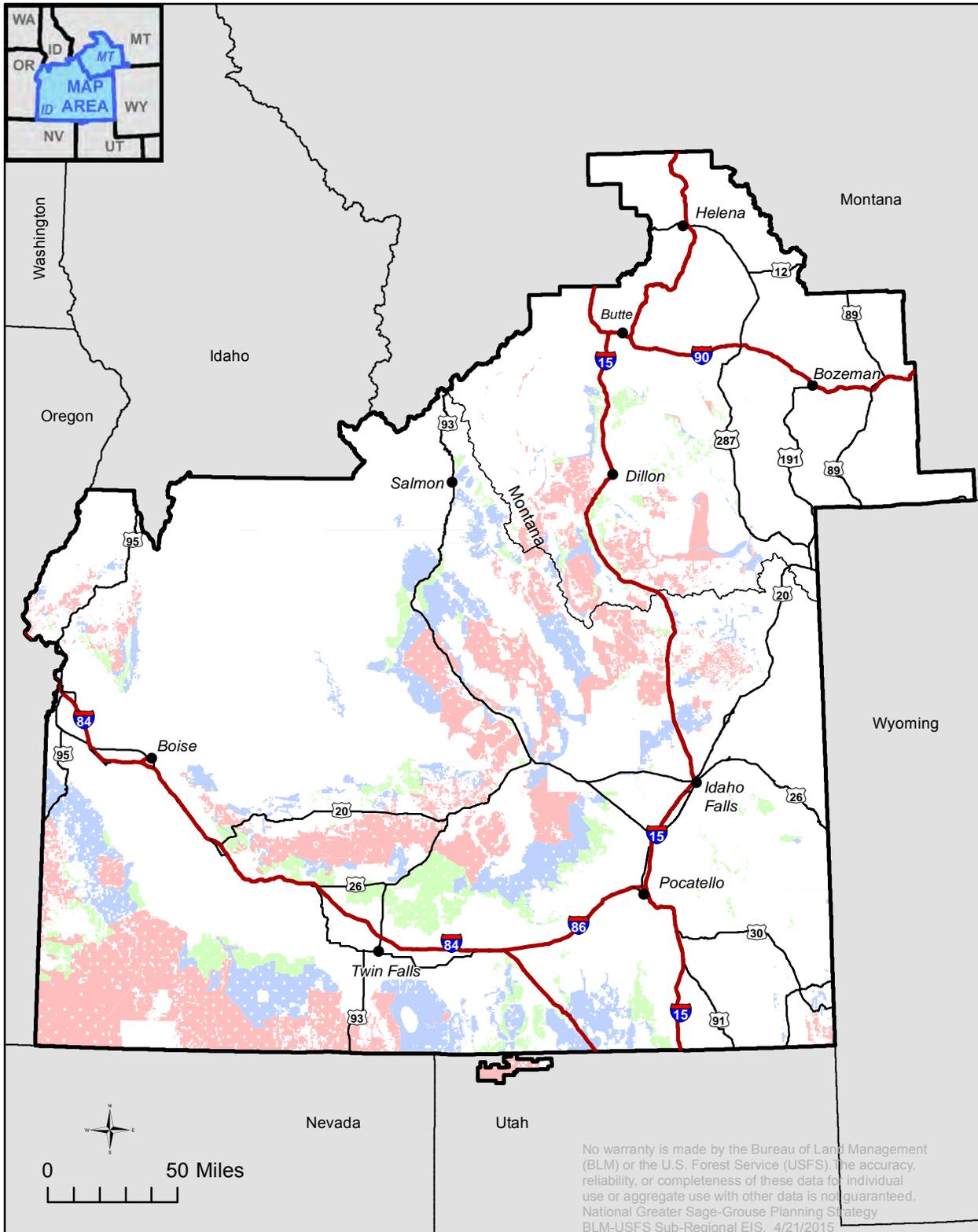


Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-6
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Commercial Service Airport and Landfill Development Allocations



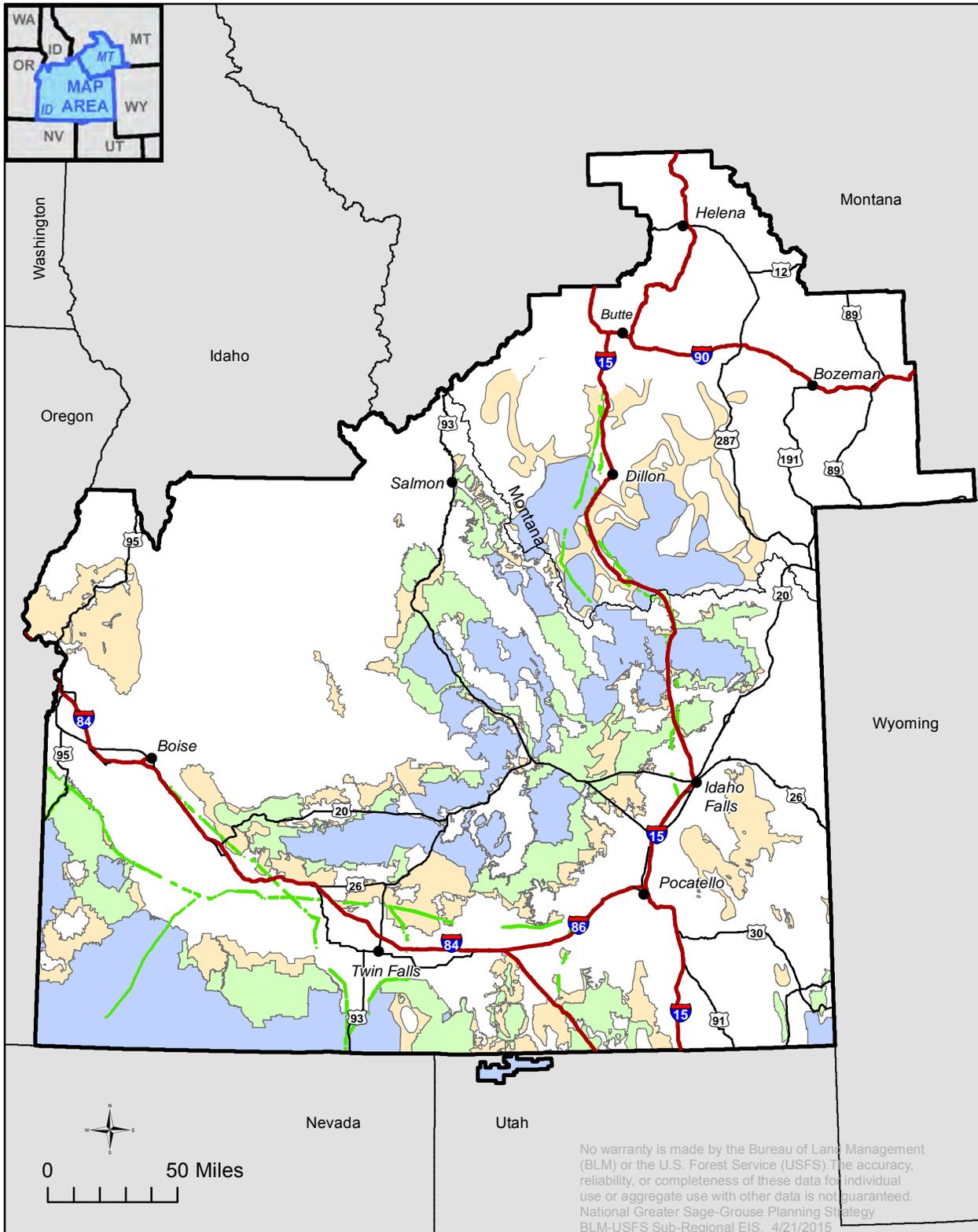
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-7
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Utility Corridors Designation



Habitat Management Area

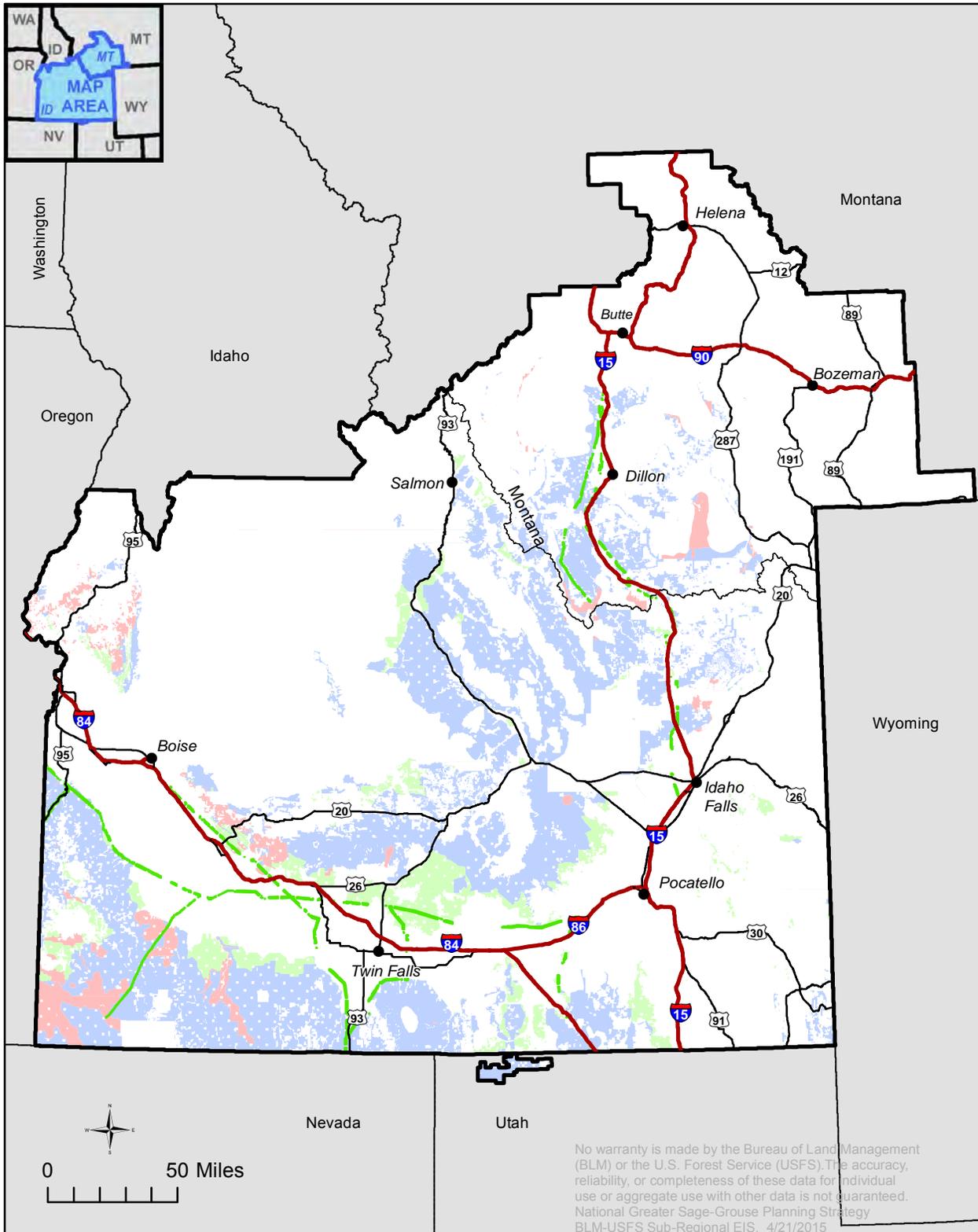
- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-8
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Major Right-of-Way Development Allocations



Constraint

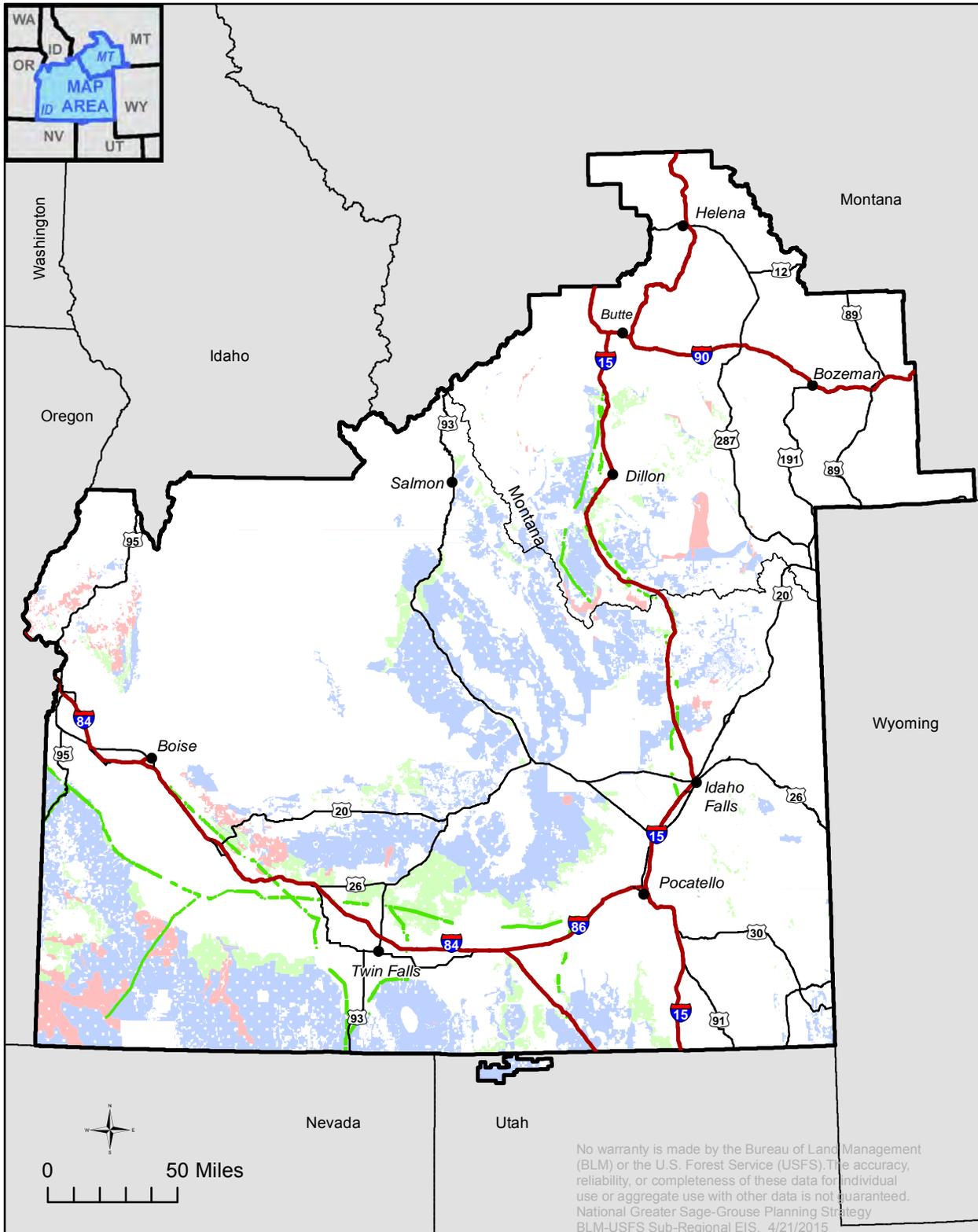
- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-9
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Minor Right-of-Way Development Allocations



Constraint

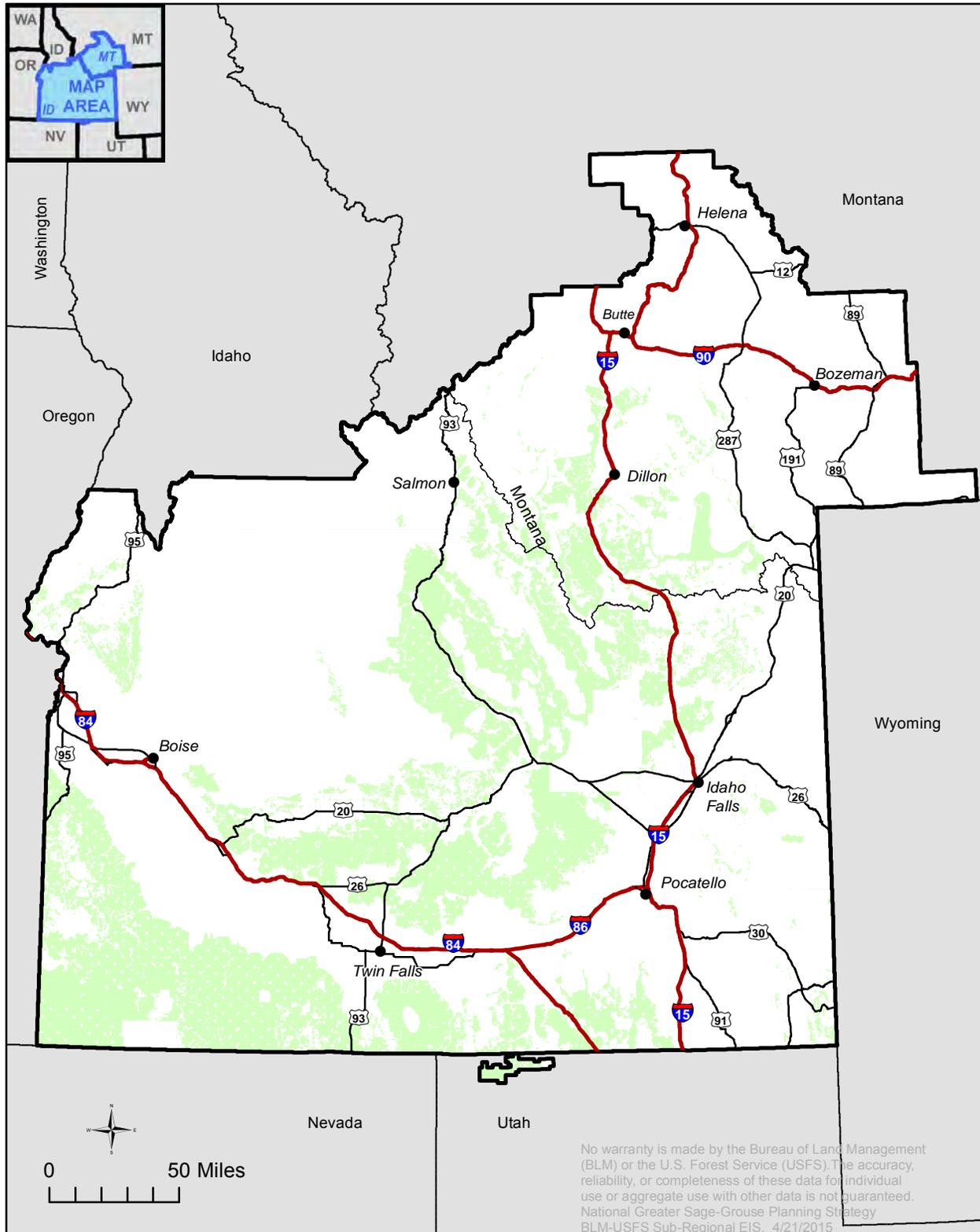
- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-10
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Land Tenure Designations

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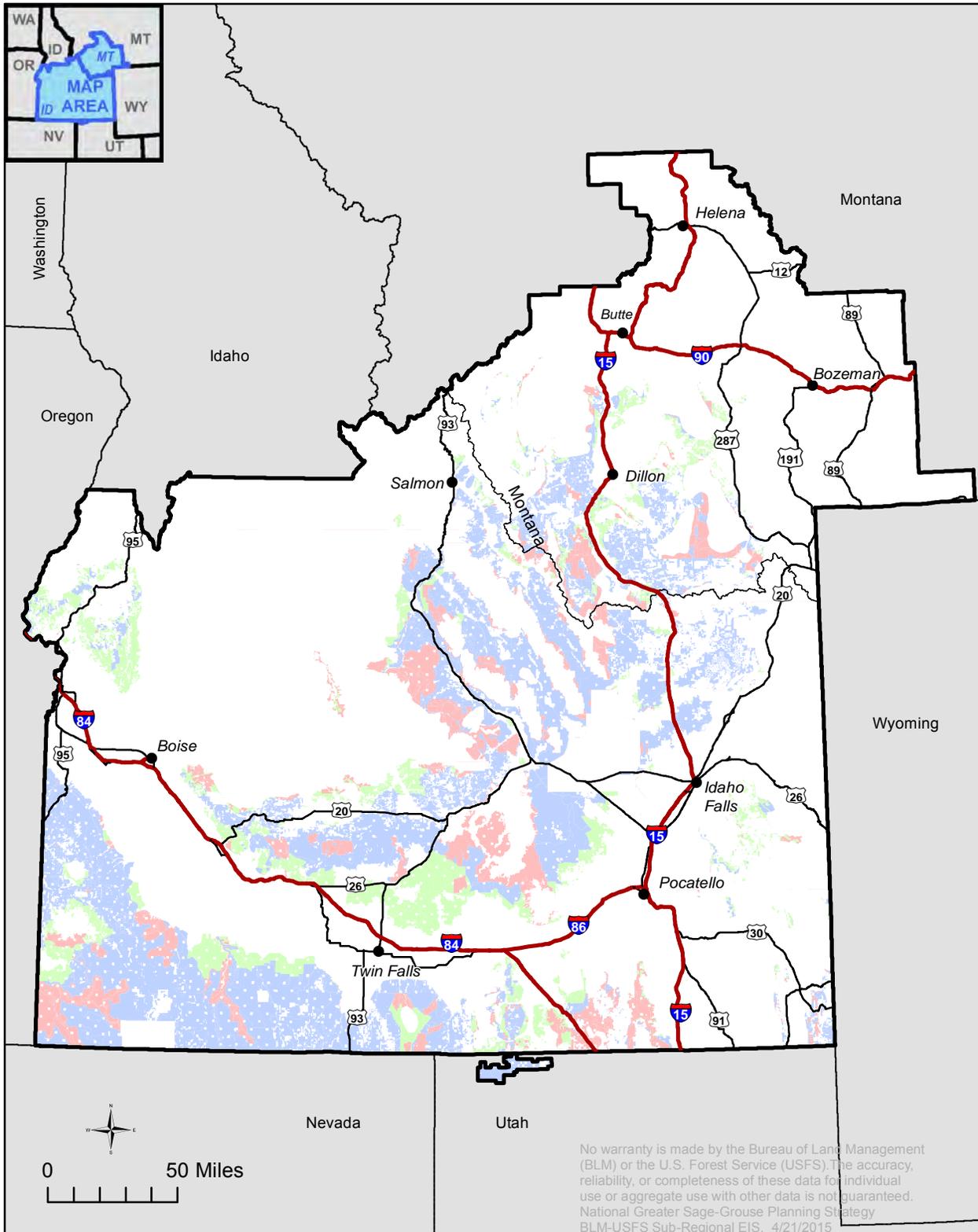


Land Tenure Designation

- Retention
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary
- No Disposal in Habitat



Figure 2-11
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations Oil and Gas



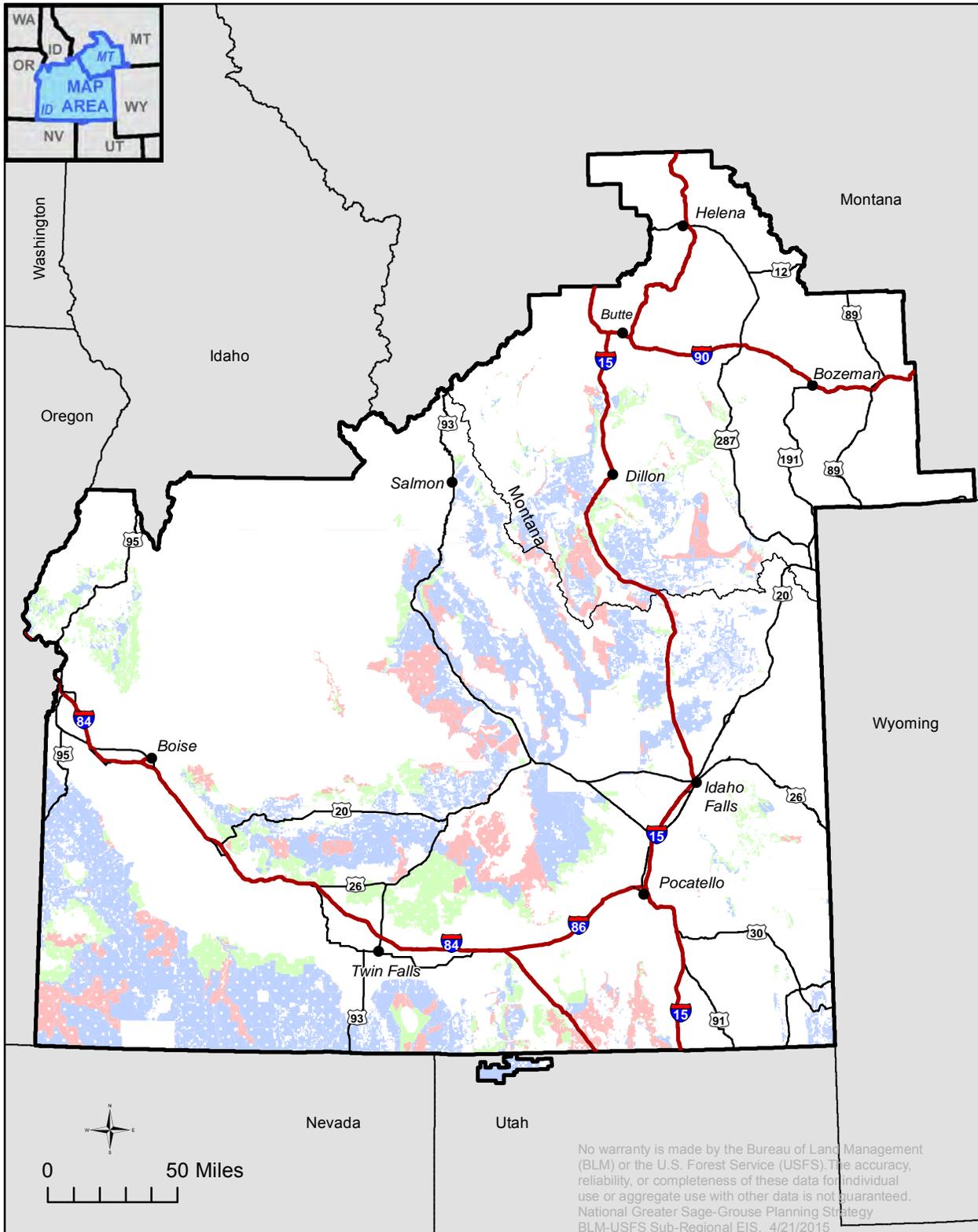
Constraint

- Closed to leasing
- Open to Leasing, NSO
- Open to leasing, moderate constraints

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-12
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations Geothermal



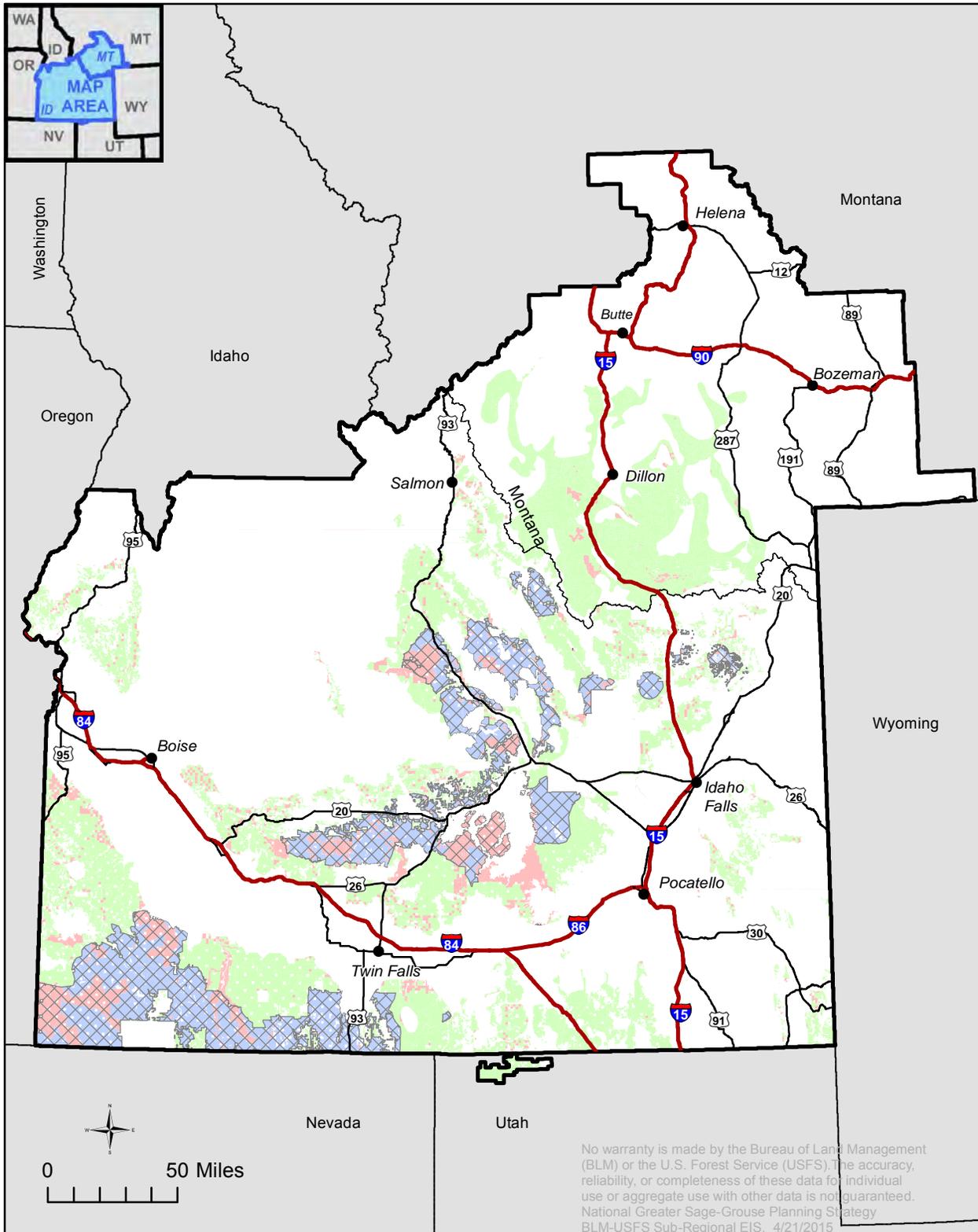
Constraint

- Closed to leasing
- Open to leasing, NSO
- Open to leasing, moderate constraints

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-13
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Locatable Minerals Withdrawals

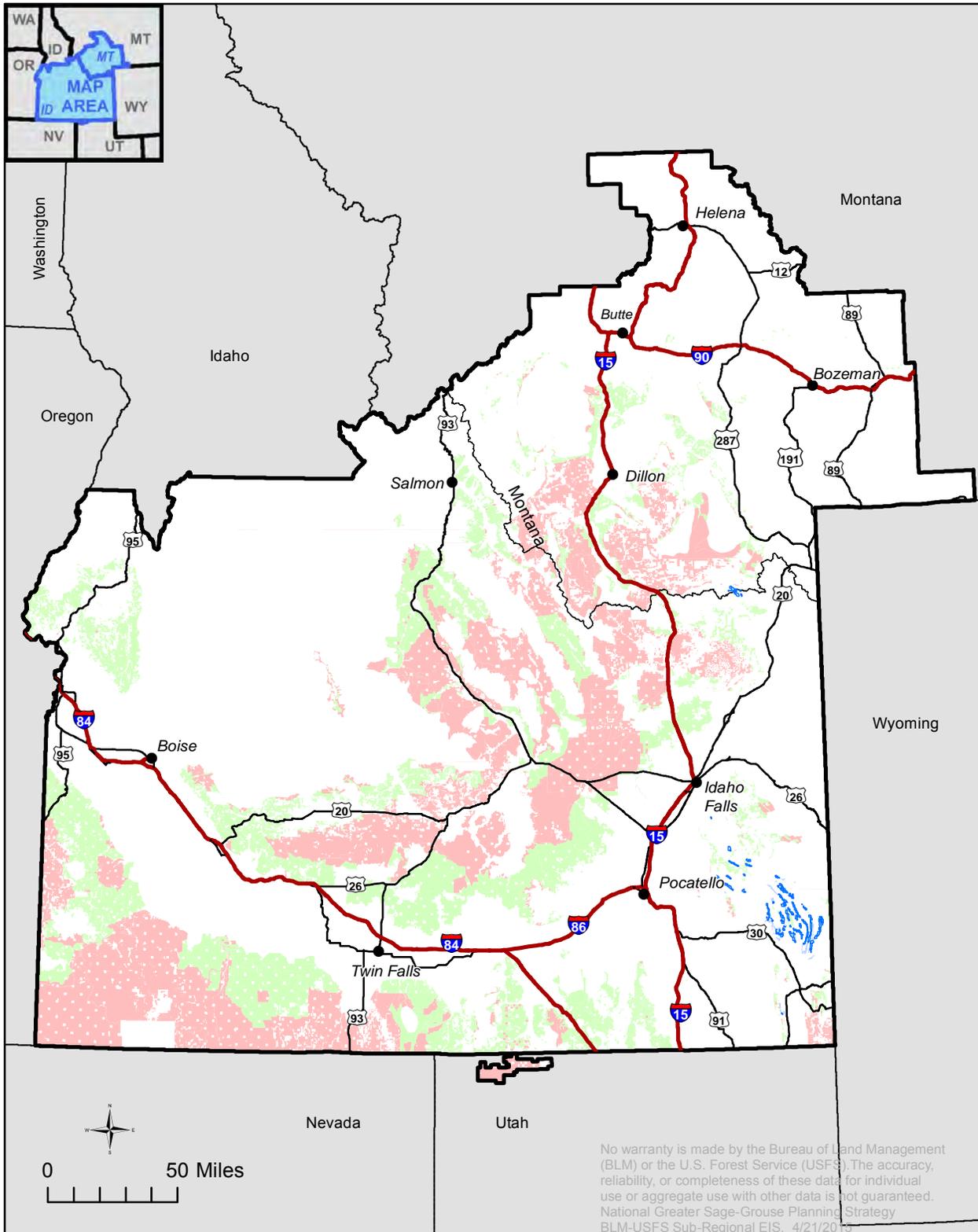


-  Sagebrush Focal Area
- Constraint**
-  Withdrawn
-  Open
-  Recommended for withdrawal

-  Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



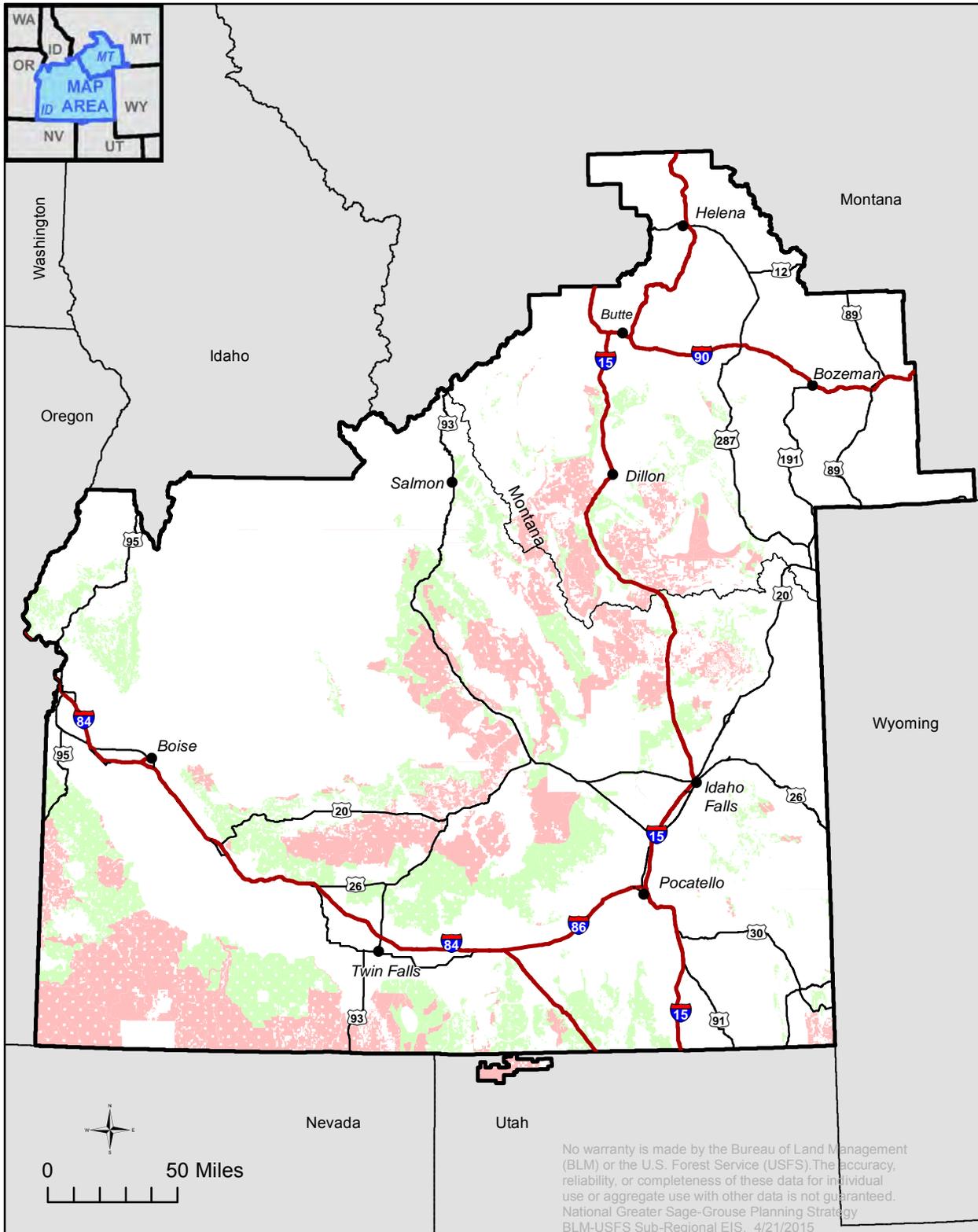
Figure 2-14
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Nonenergy Leasable Resource Allocations



- Phosphate Leases
- Known Phosphate Lease Areas
- Constraint**
- Closed to non-energy leasing
- Open to leasing
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-15
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Saleable (Mineral Materials) Allocations

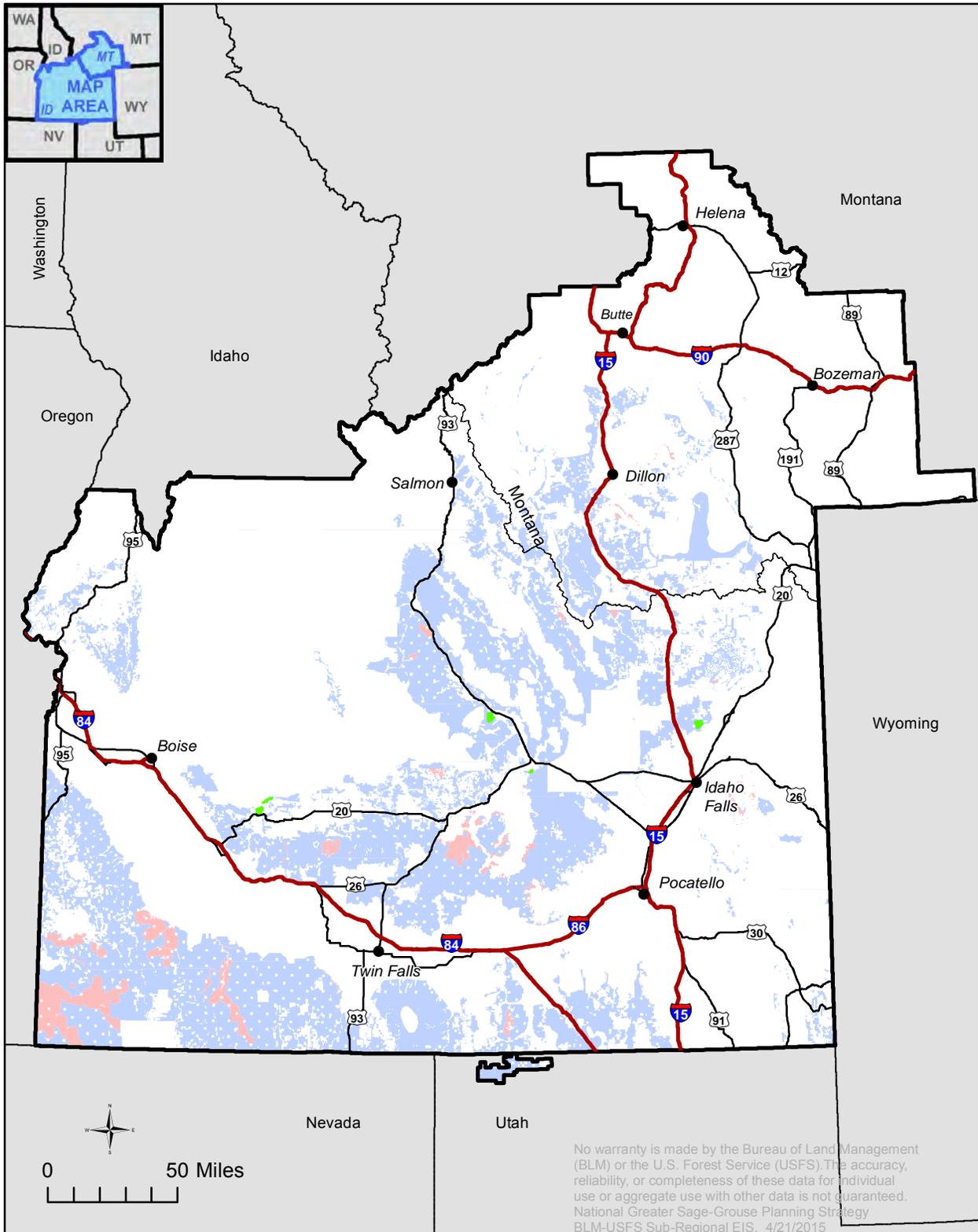


Constraint

- Closed to Saleable (Mineral Material Disposal)
- Open
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-16
Idaho-SW Montana Proposed Plan/Final EIS
Travel Management Allocations



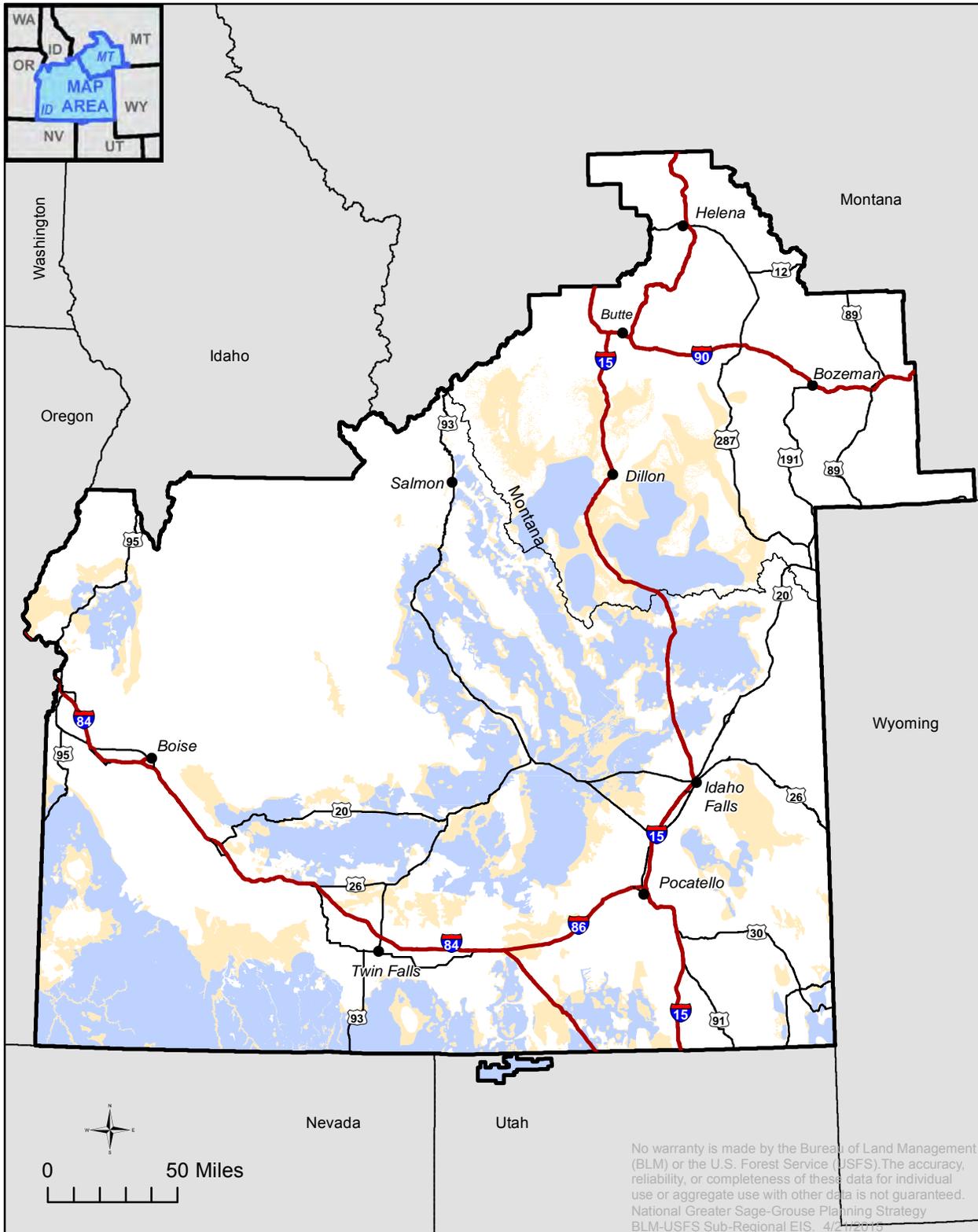
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-17
Alternative A: Existing Habitat with
Preliminary Priority and General Habitat

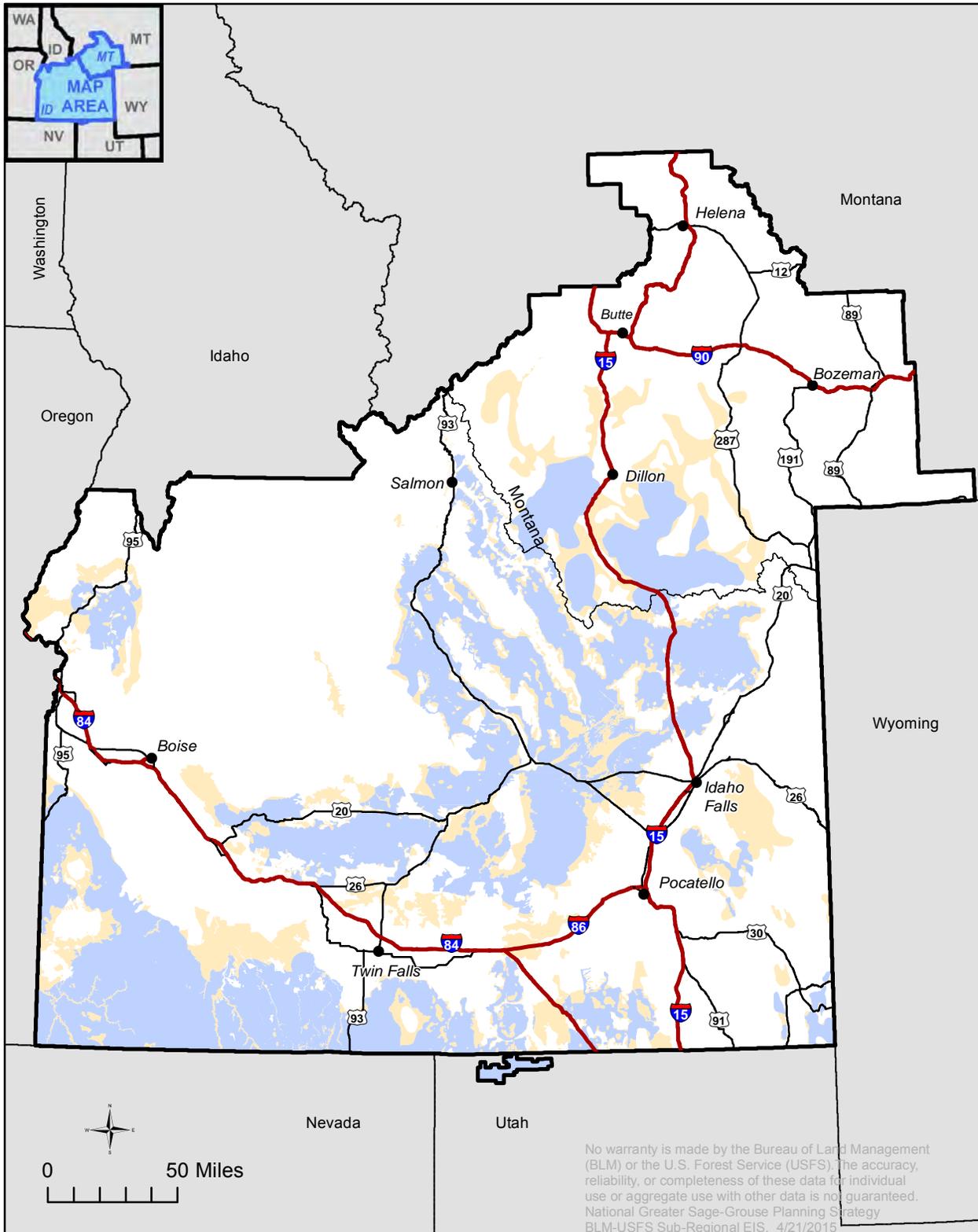


Preliminary Habitat Management Area

- Priority
- General
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-18
Alternative B: Habitat Management Areas

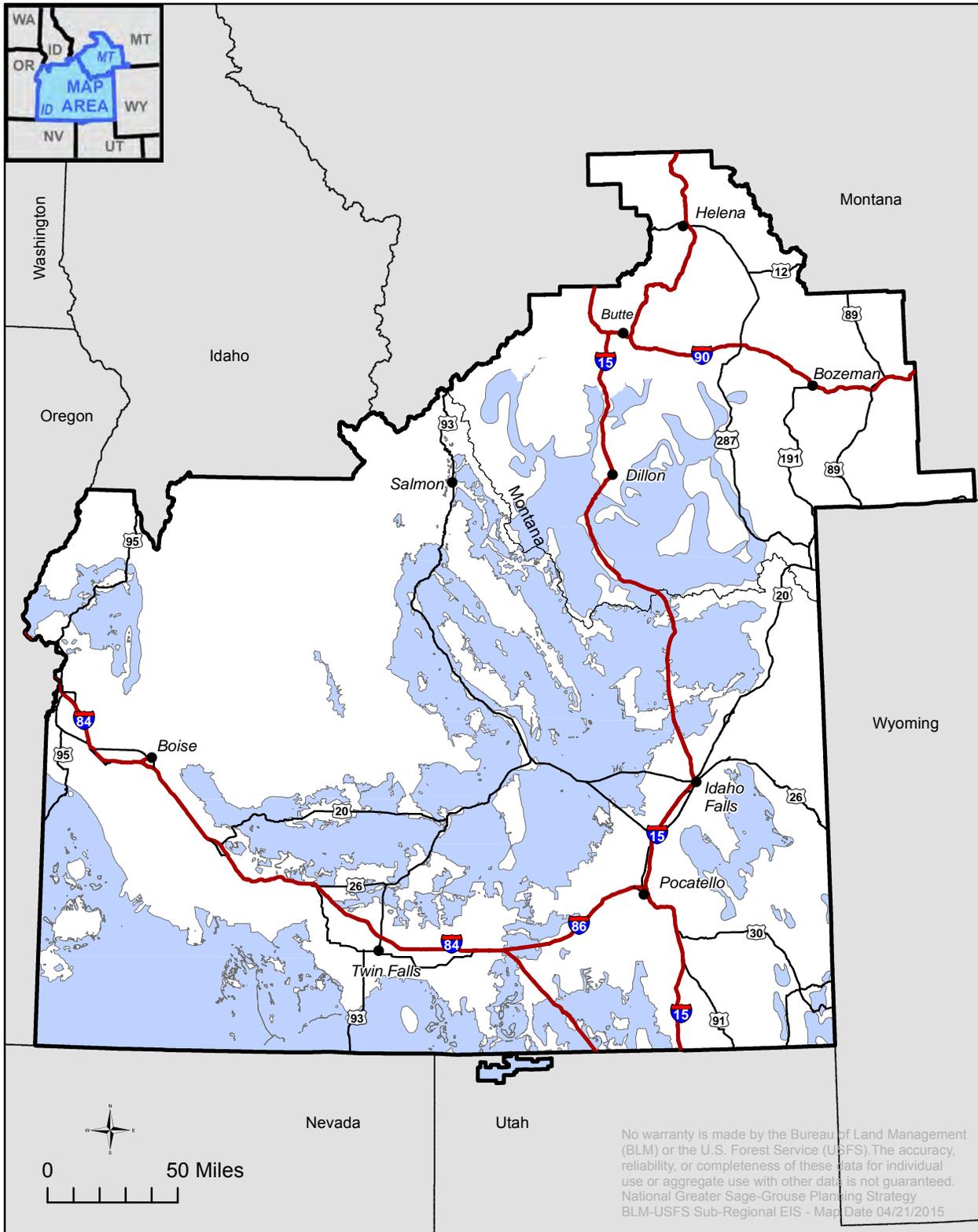


Habitat Management Areas

- PHMA
- GHMA
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-19
Alternative C: Habitat Management Areas



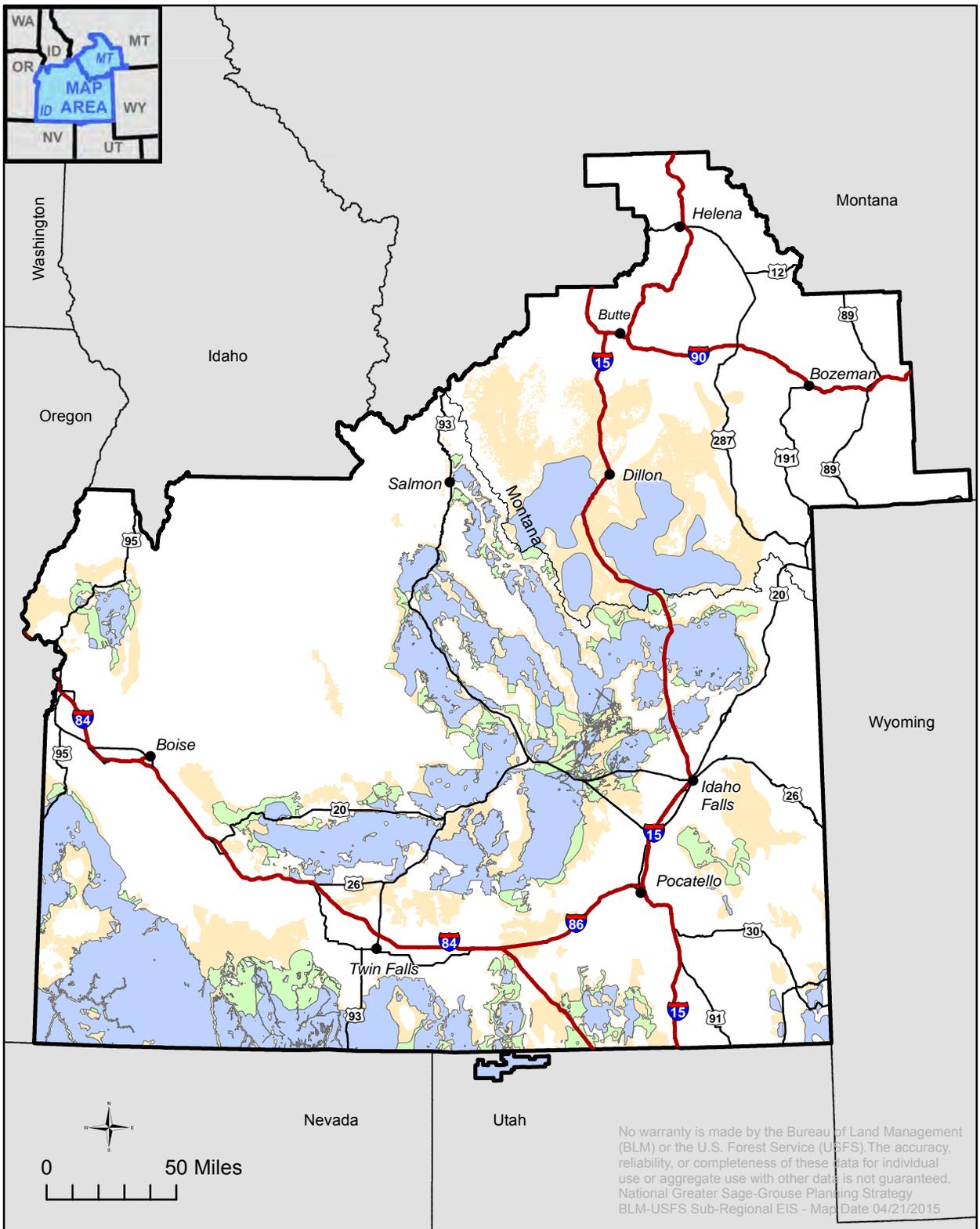
Habitat Management Areas

PHMA

Idaho and SW Montana
Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-20
Alternative D: Habitat Management Areas



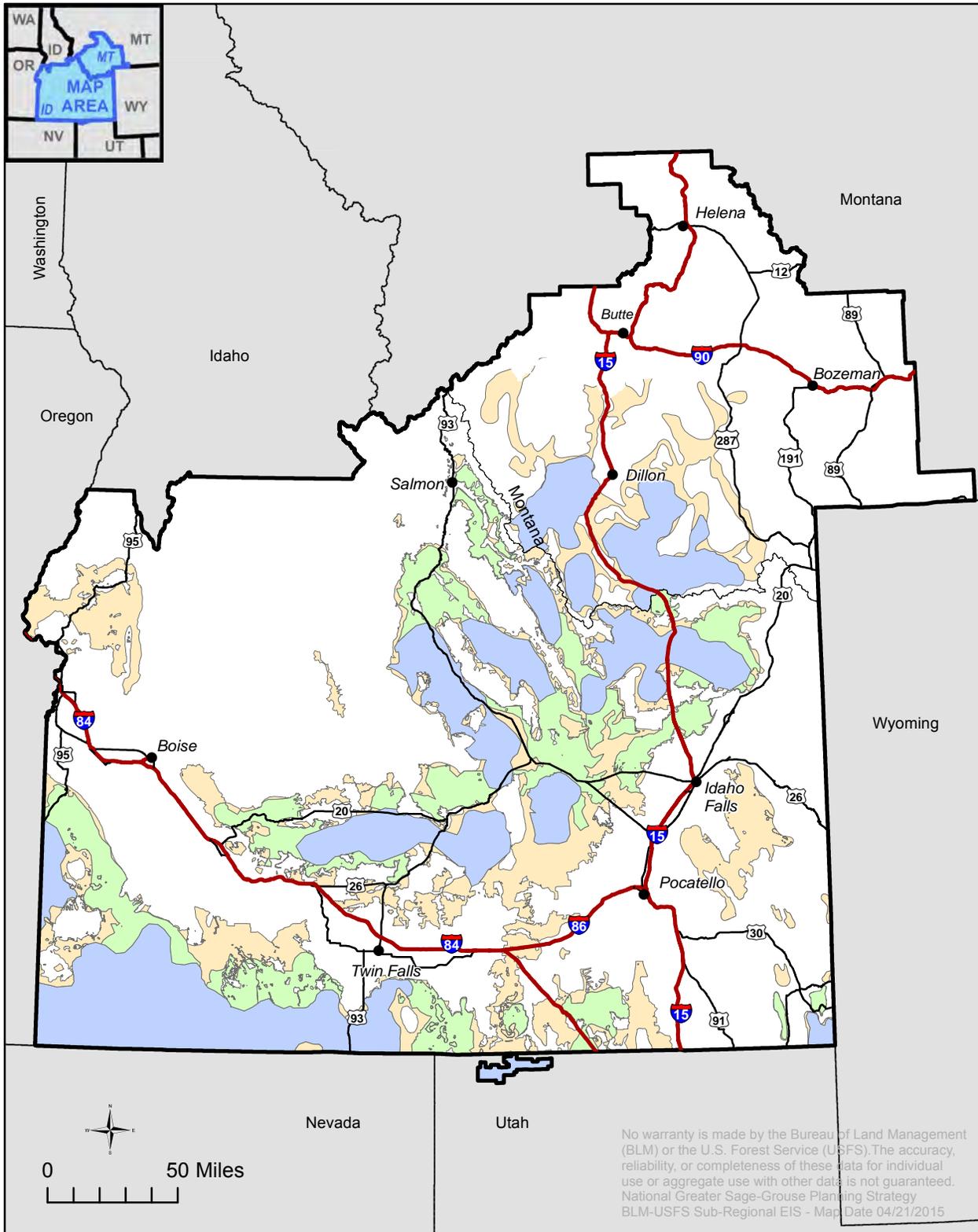
Habitat Management Areas

- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-21
Alternative E: Habitat Management Areas



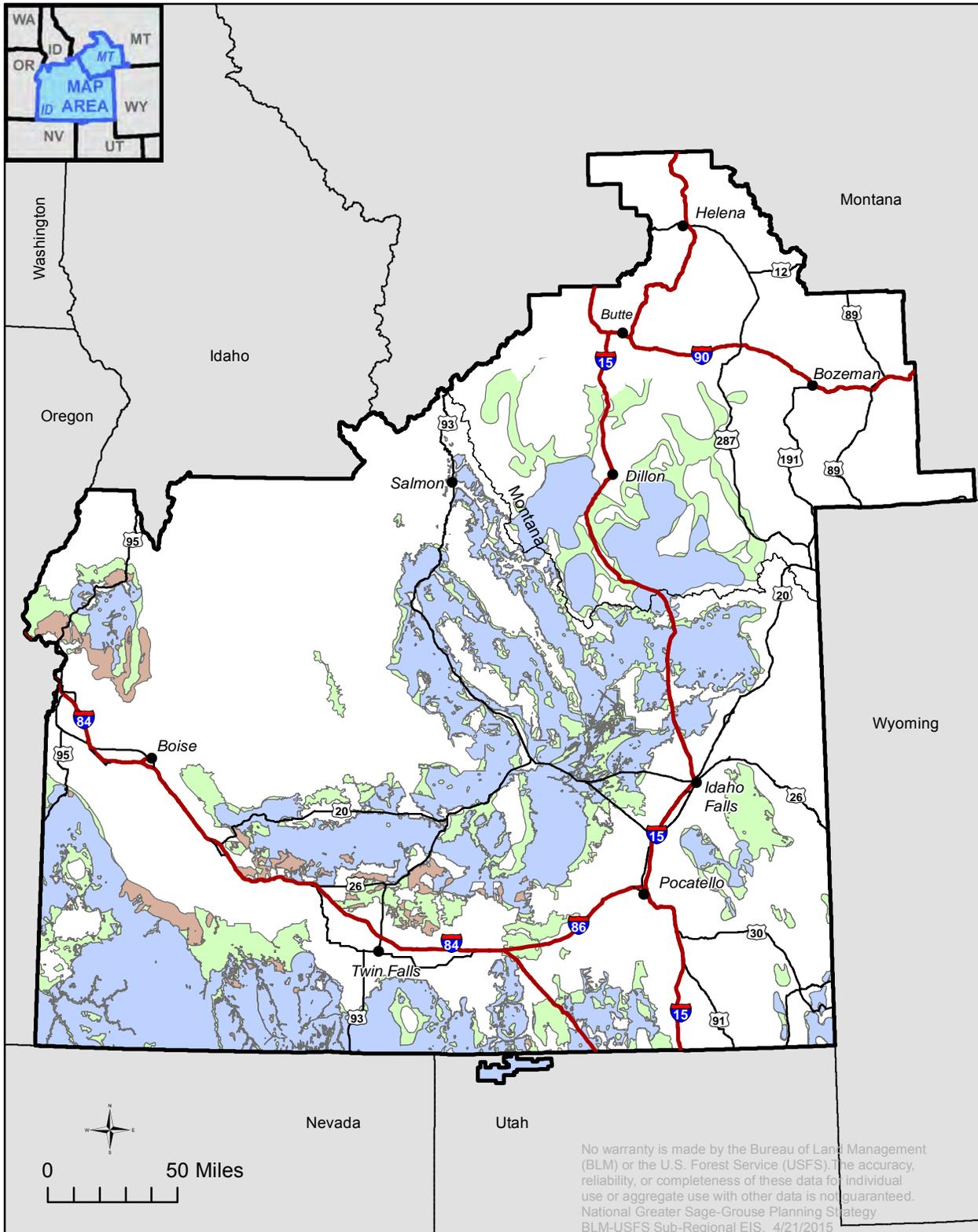
Habitat Management Area

- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Idaho and SW Montana
Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-22
Alternative F: Habitat Management Areas



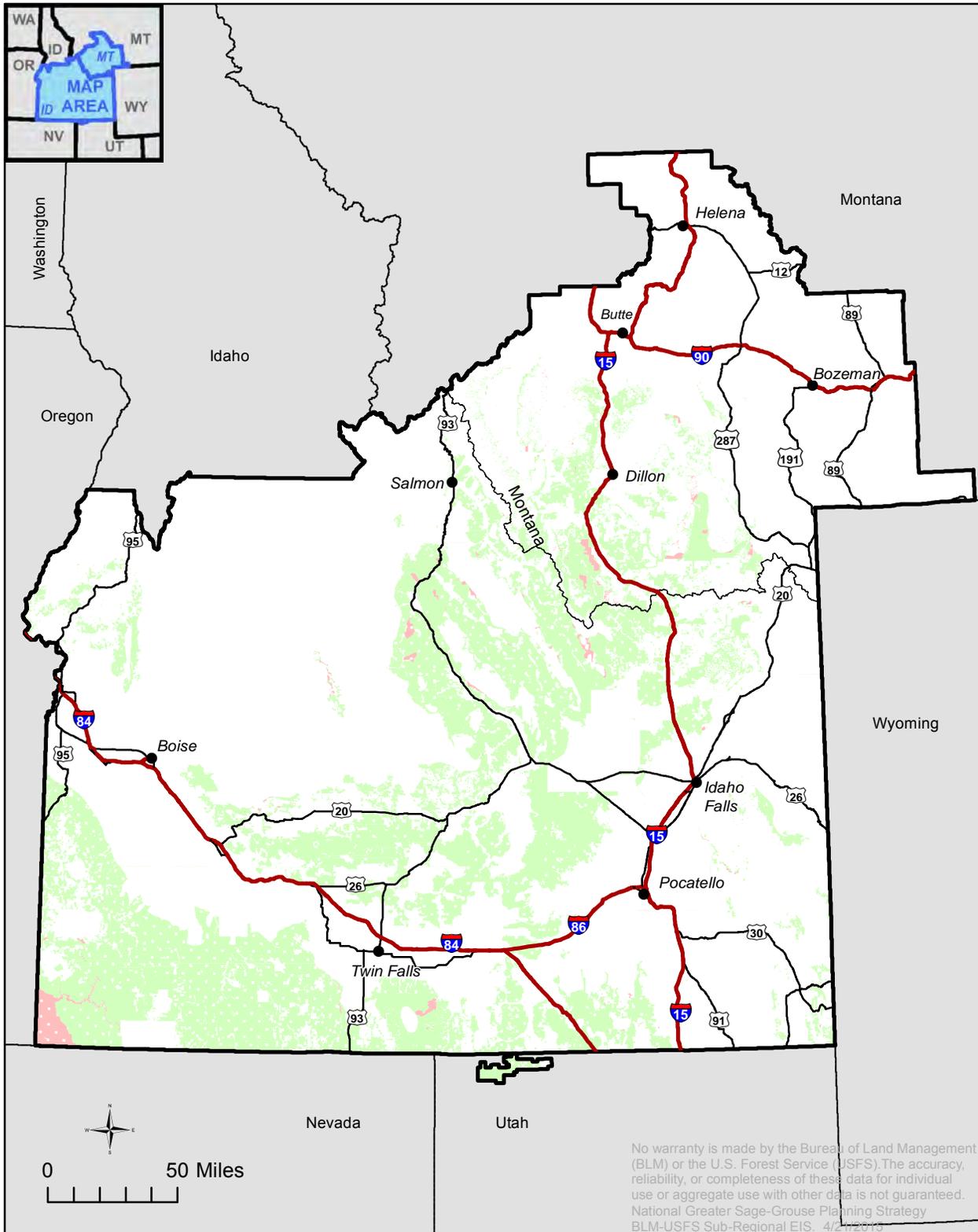
Habitat Management Areas

- PHMA
- GHMA
- RHMA

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-23
Alternative A: Available and Unavailable to Grazing

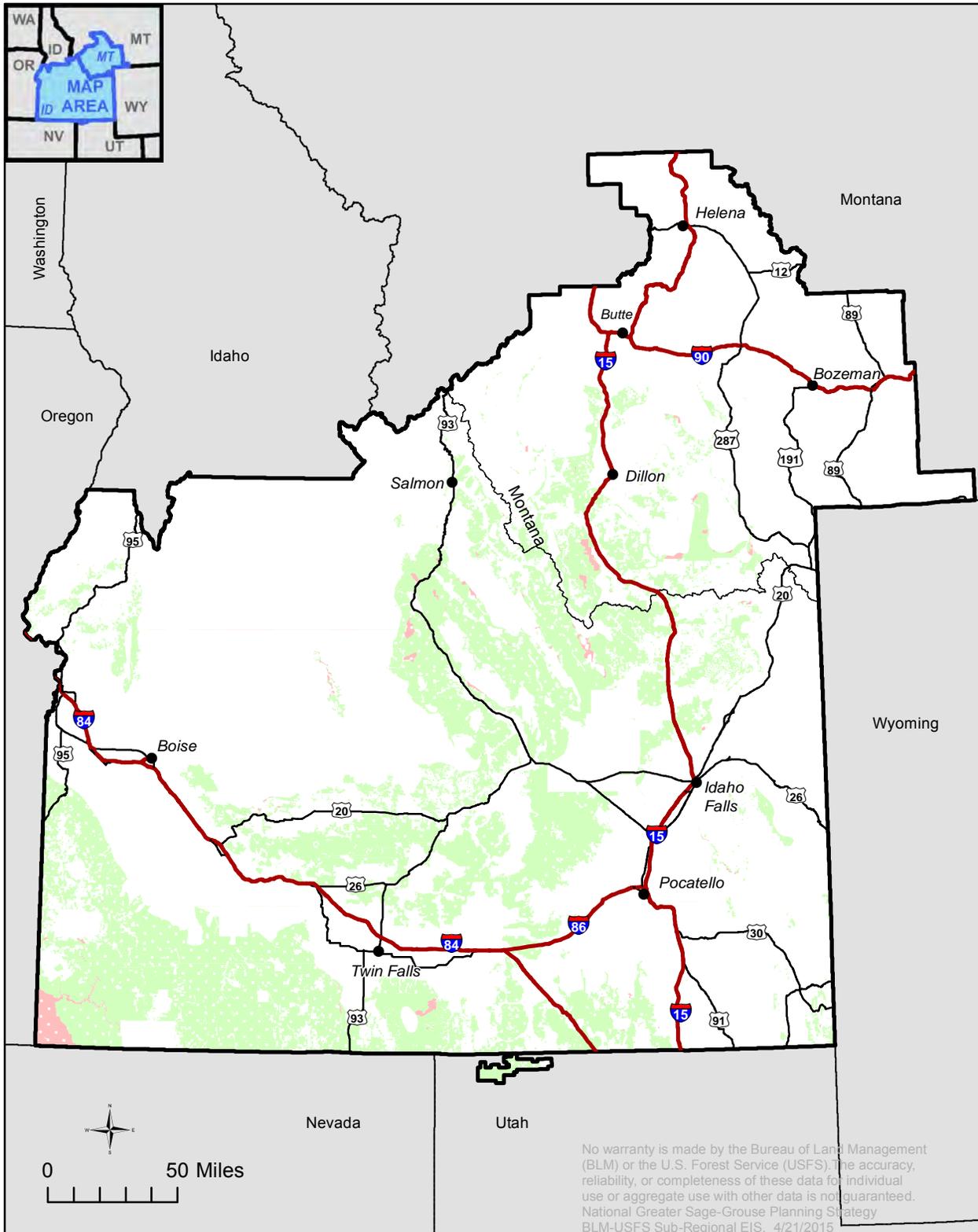


Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-24
Alternative B: Available and Unavailable to Grazing

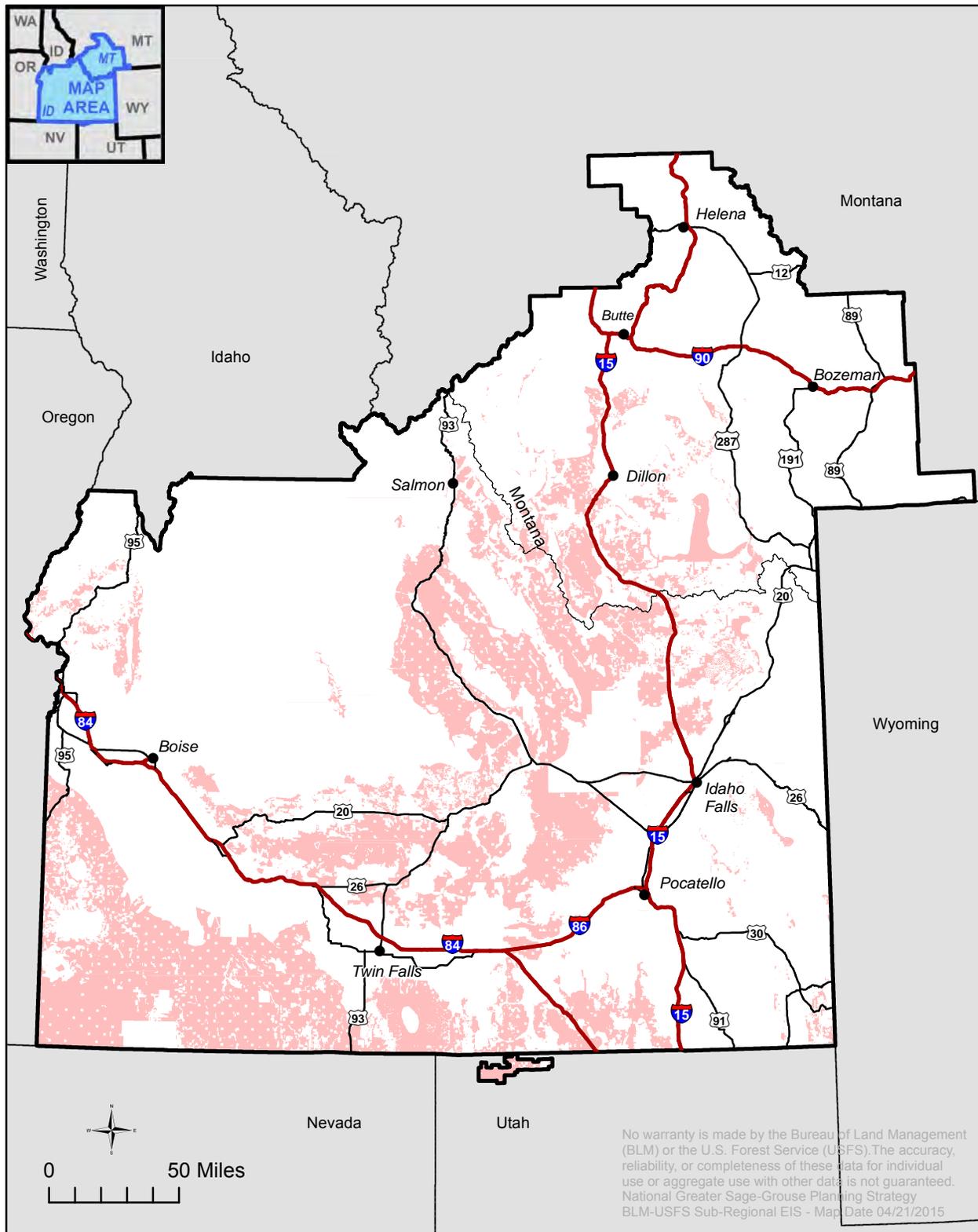


Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-25
Alternative C: Available and Unavailable to Grazing



Availability to Grazing

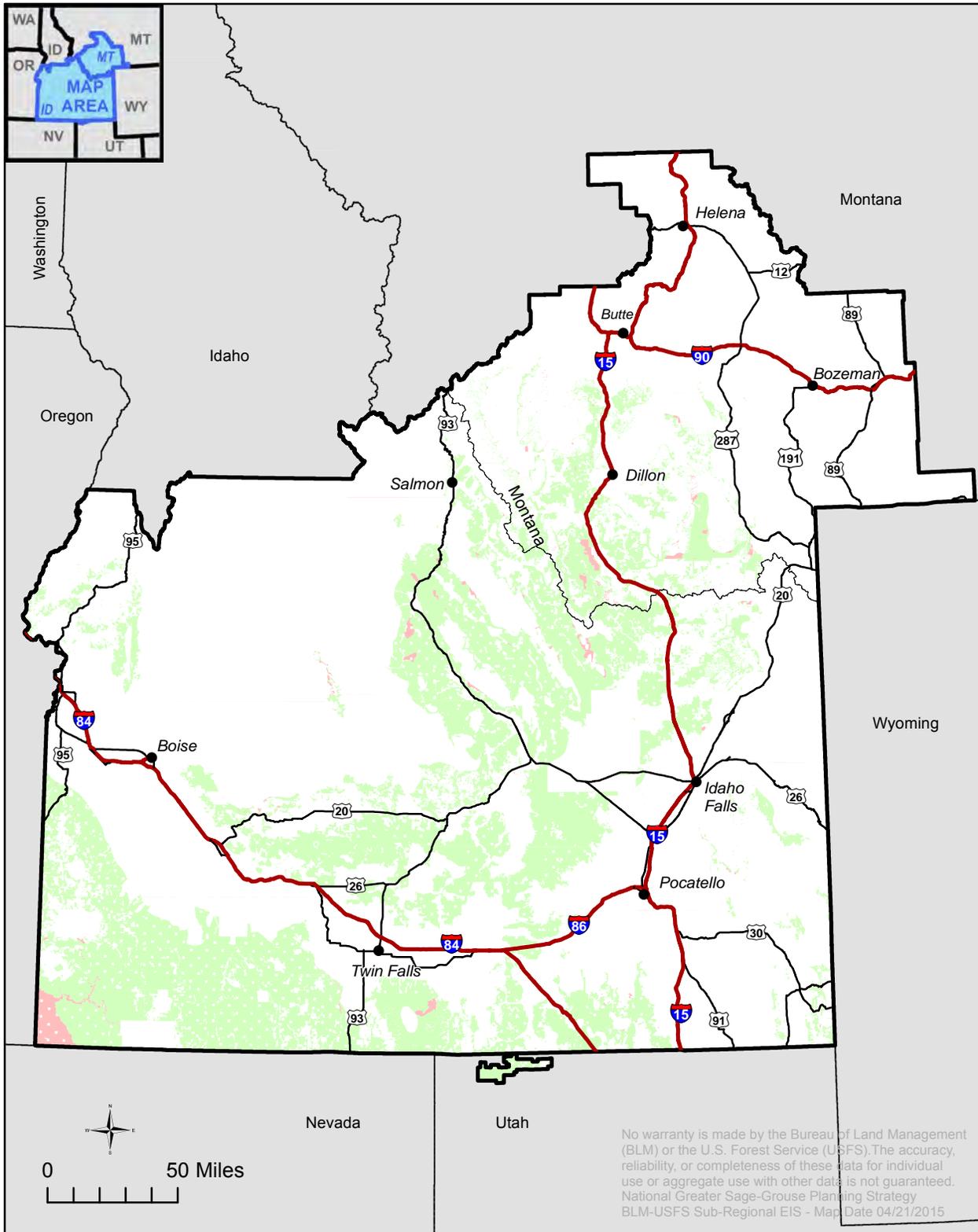
Unavailable *

Idaho and SW Montana
Sub-regional boundary

* All Habitat Unavailable to Grazing



Figure 2-26
Alternative D: Available and Unavailable to Grazing

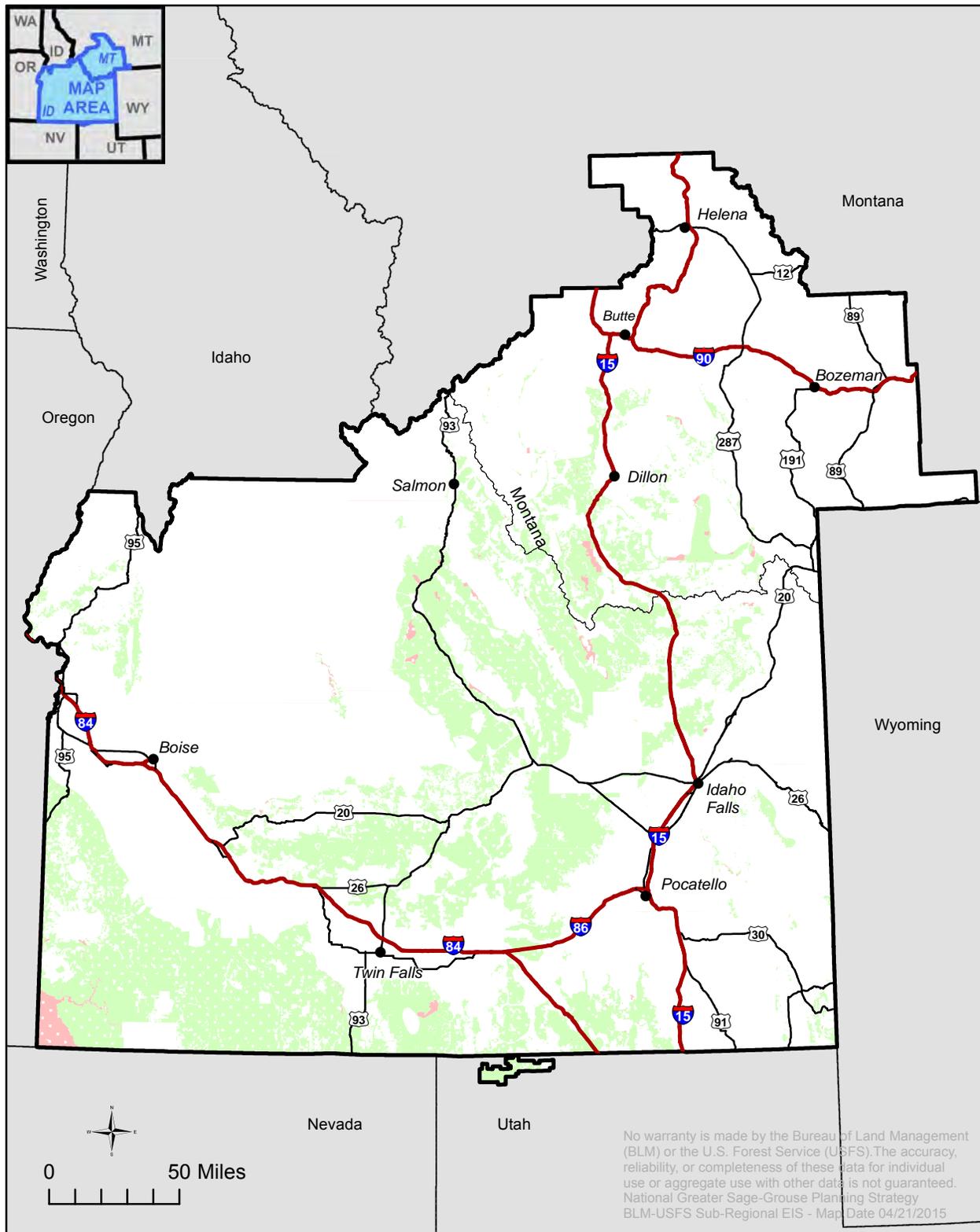


Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-27
Alternative E: Available and Unavailable to Grazing

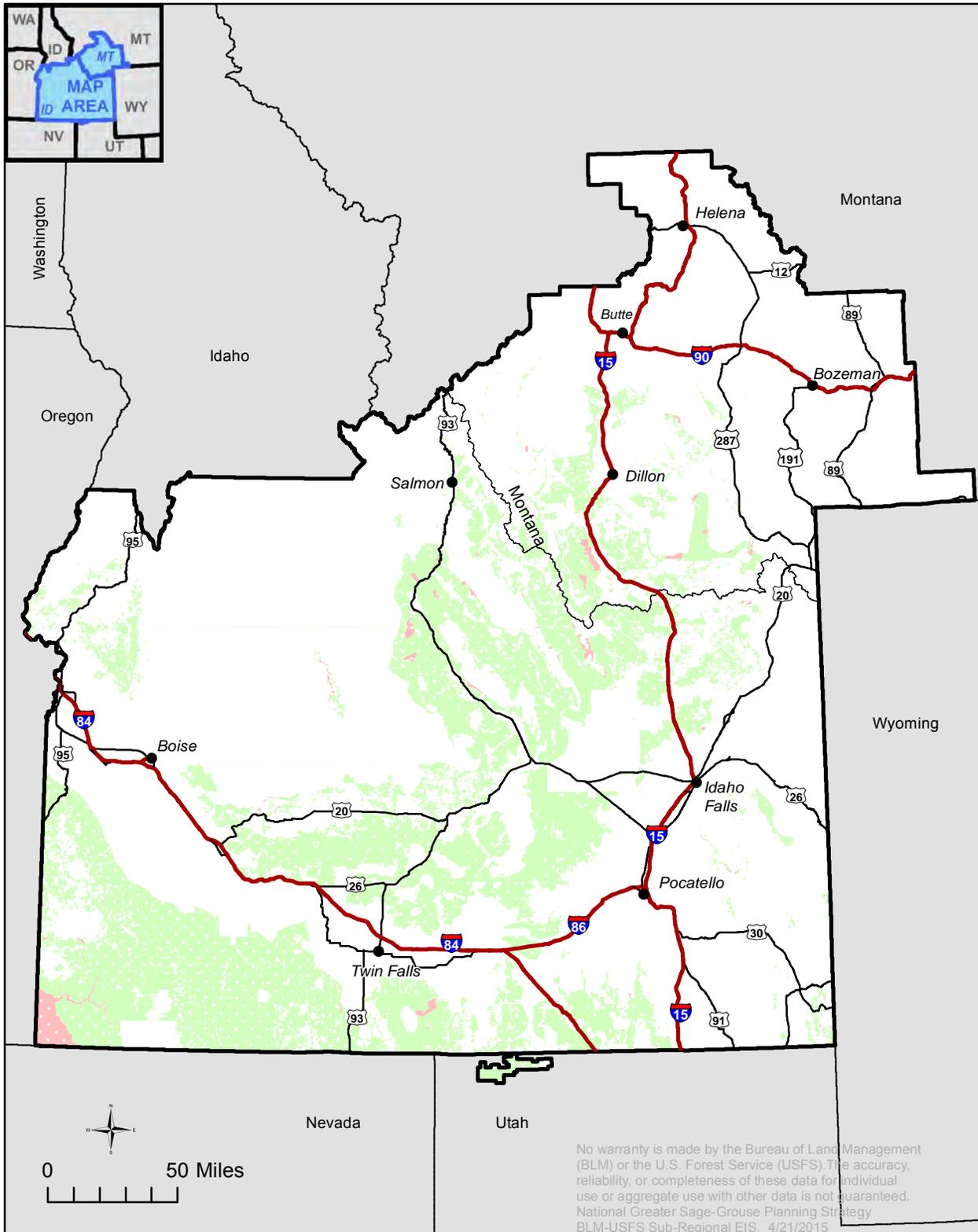


Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-28
Alternative F: Available and Unavailable to Grazing



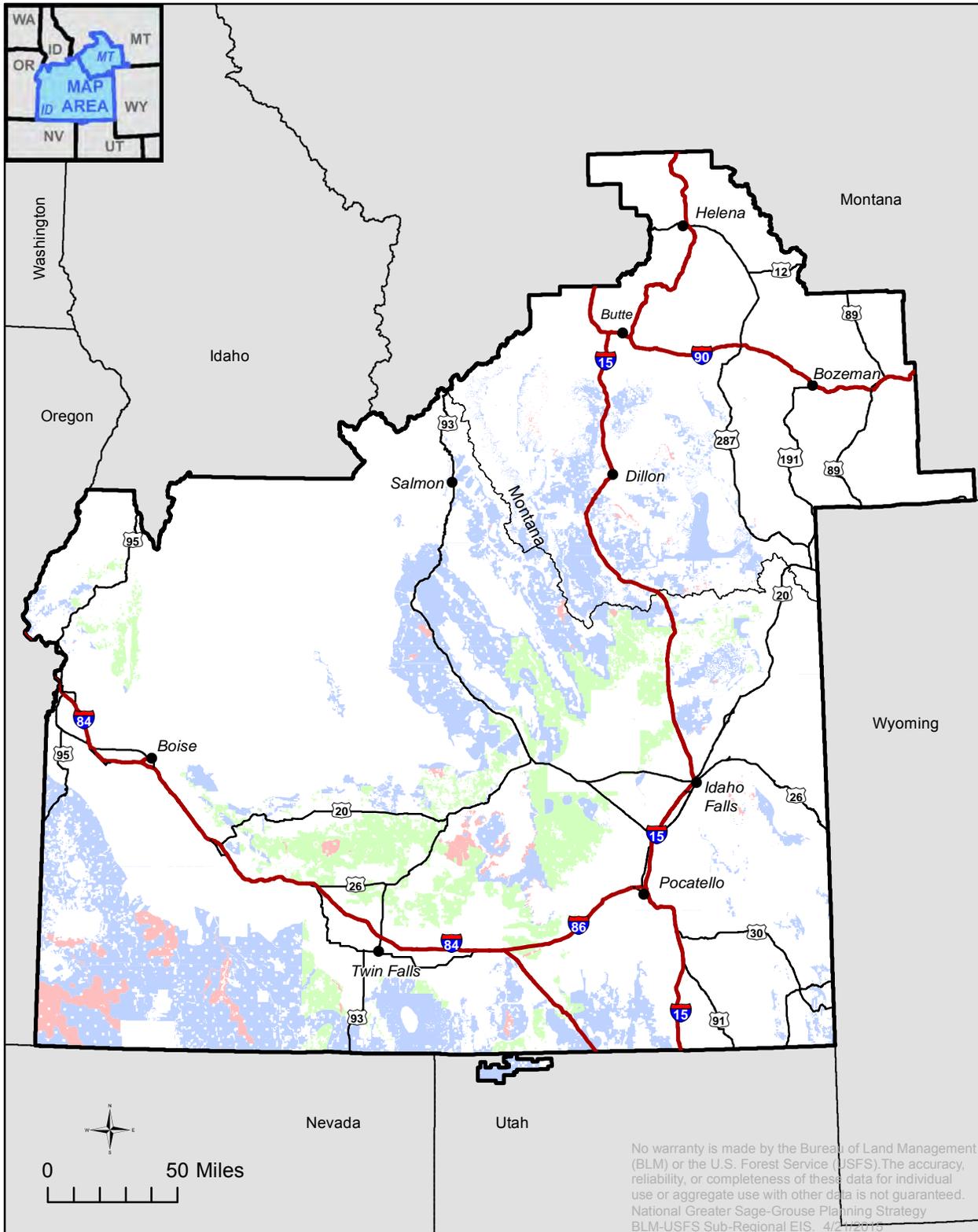
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Availability to Grazing

- Available
- Unavailable
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-29
Alternative A: Travel Management Allocations



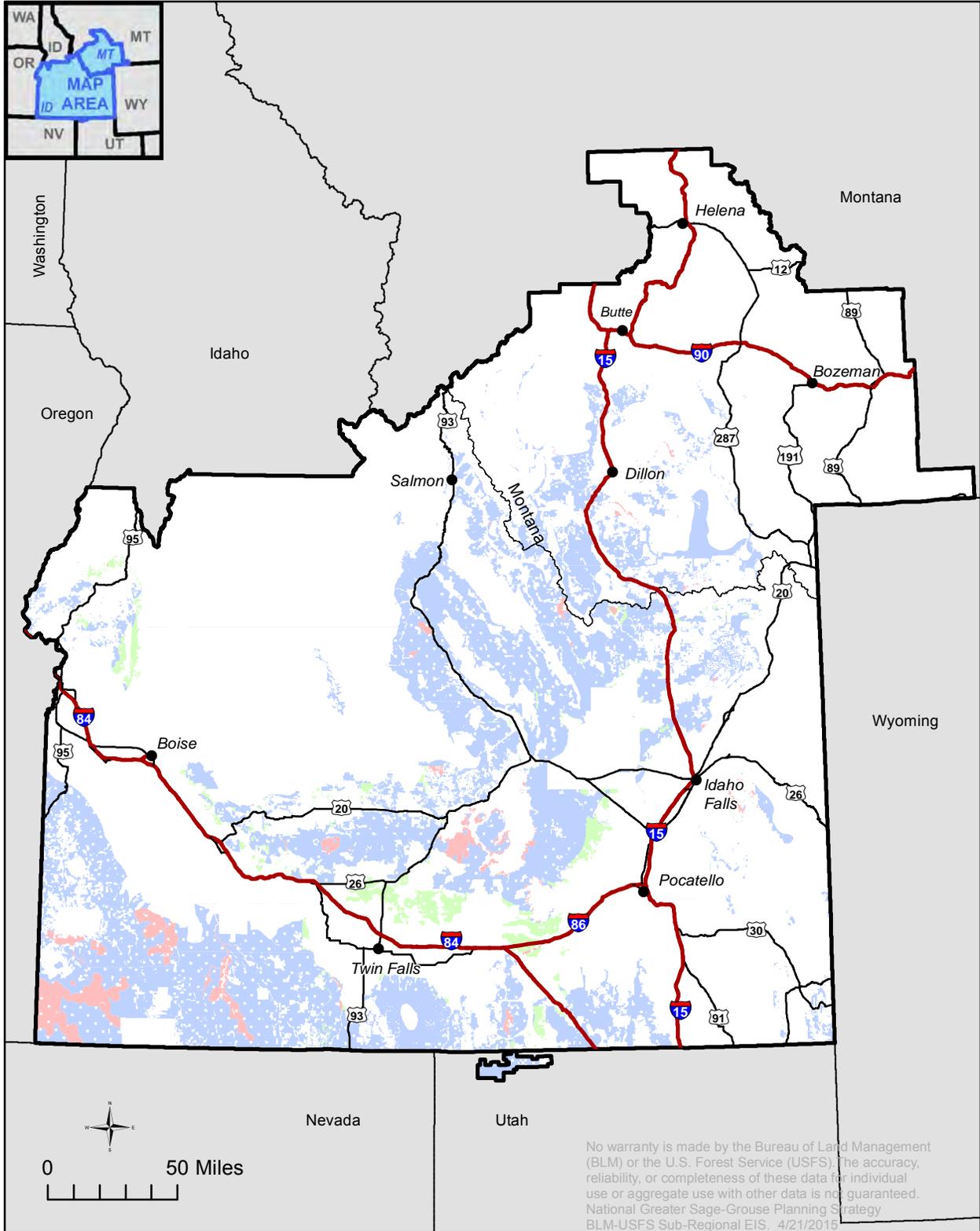
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-30
Alternative B: Travel Management Allocations



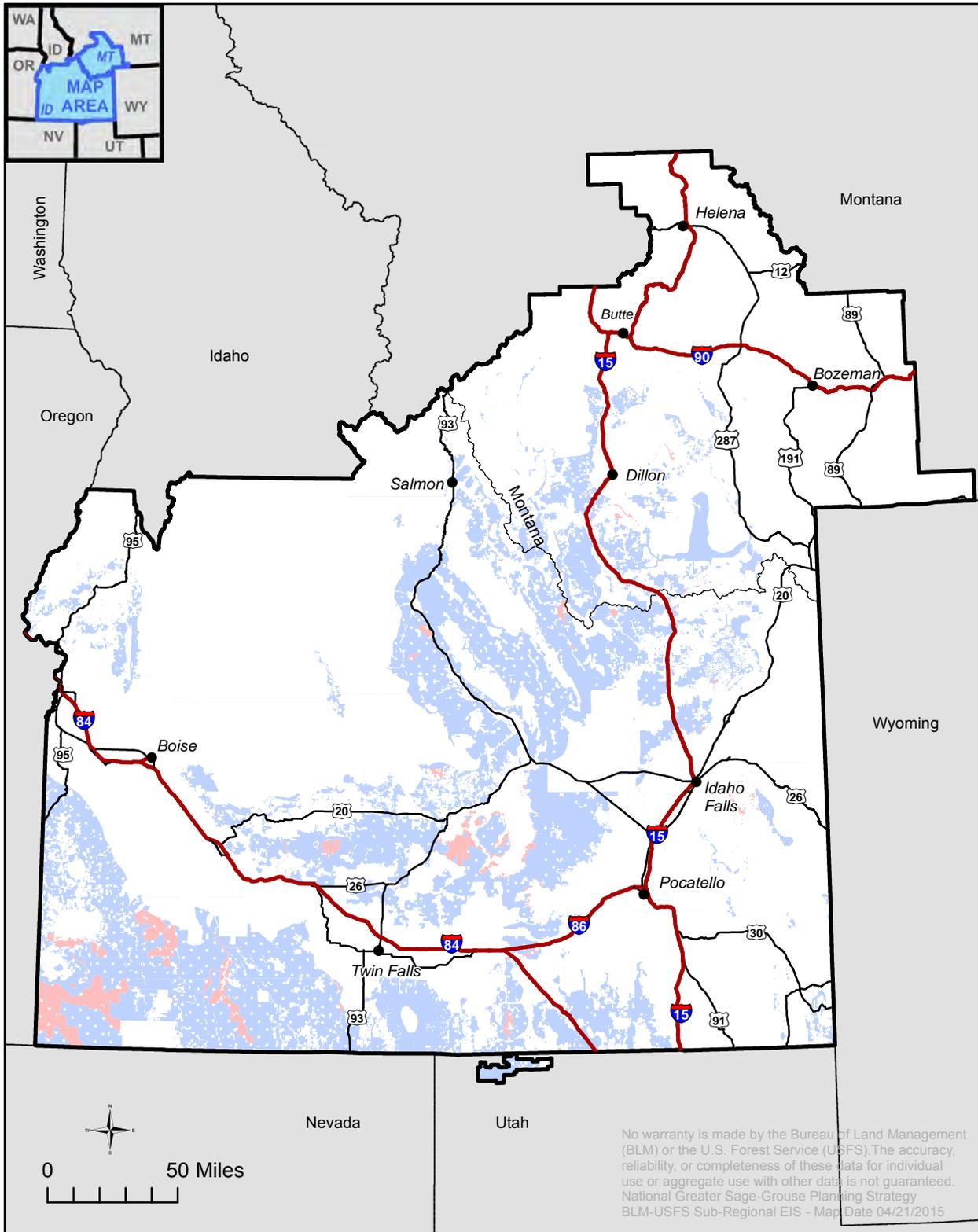
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana
Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-31
Alternative C: Travel Management Allocations



Travel Management Designation

 CLOSED

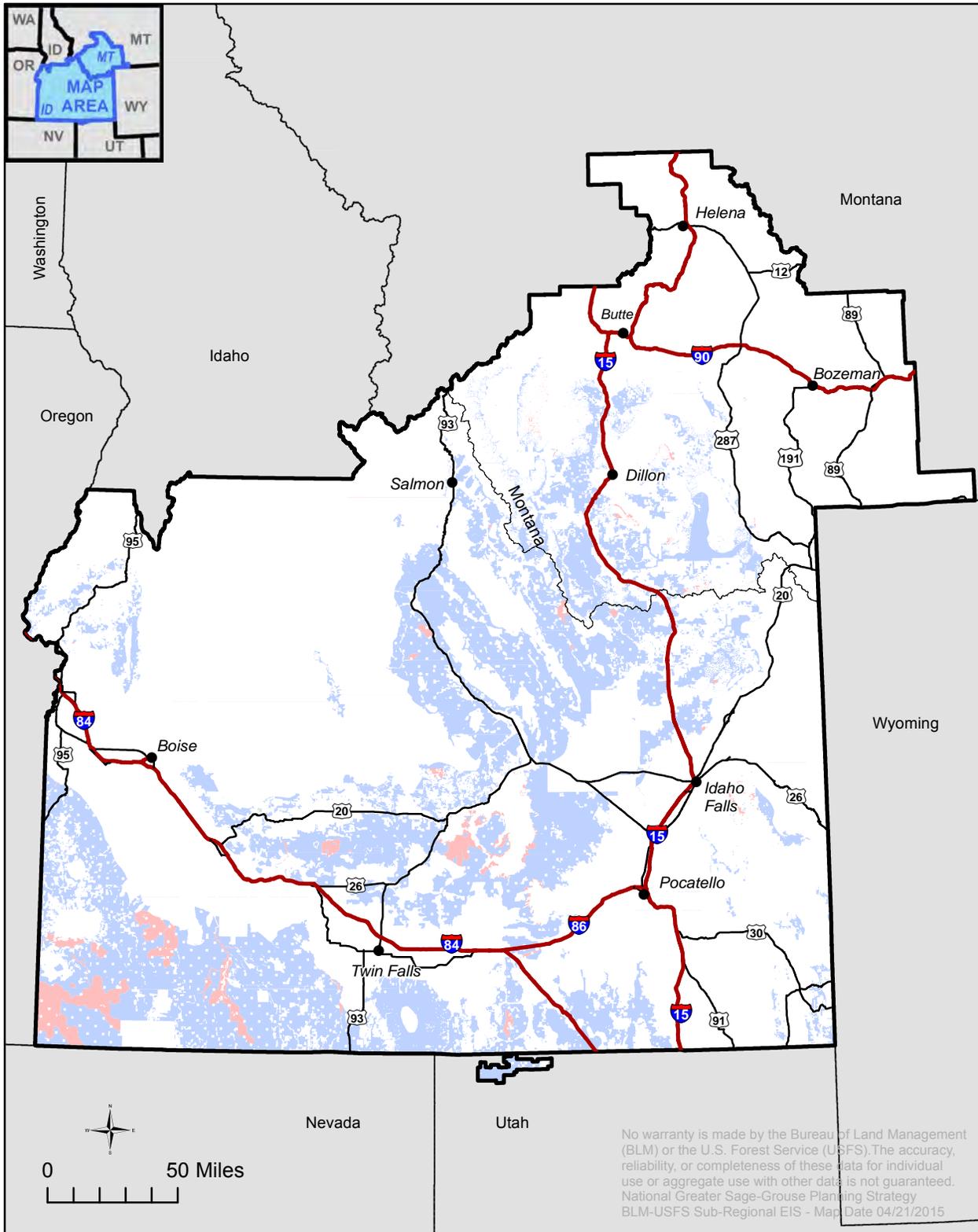
 LIMITED

 *Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary*

No Areas Open to cross-country travel in Habitat



Figure 2-32
Alternative D: Travel Management Allocations



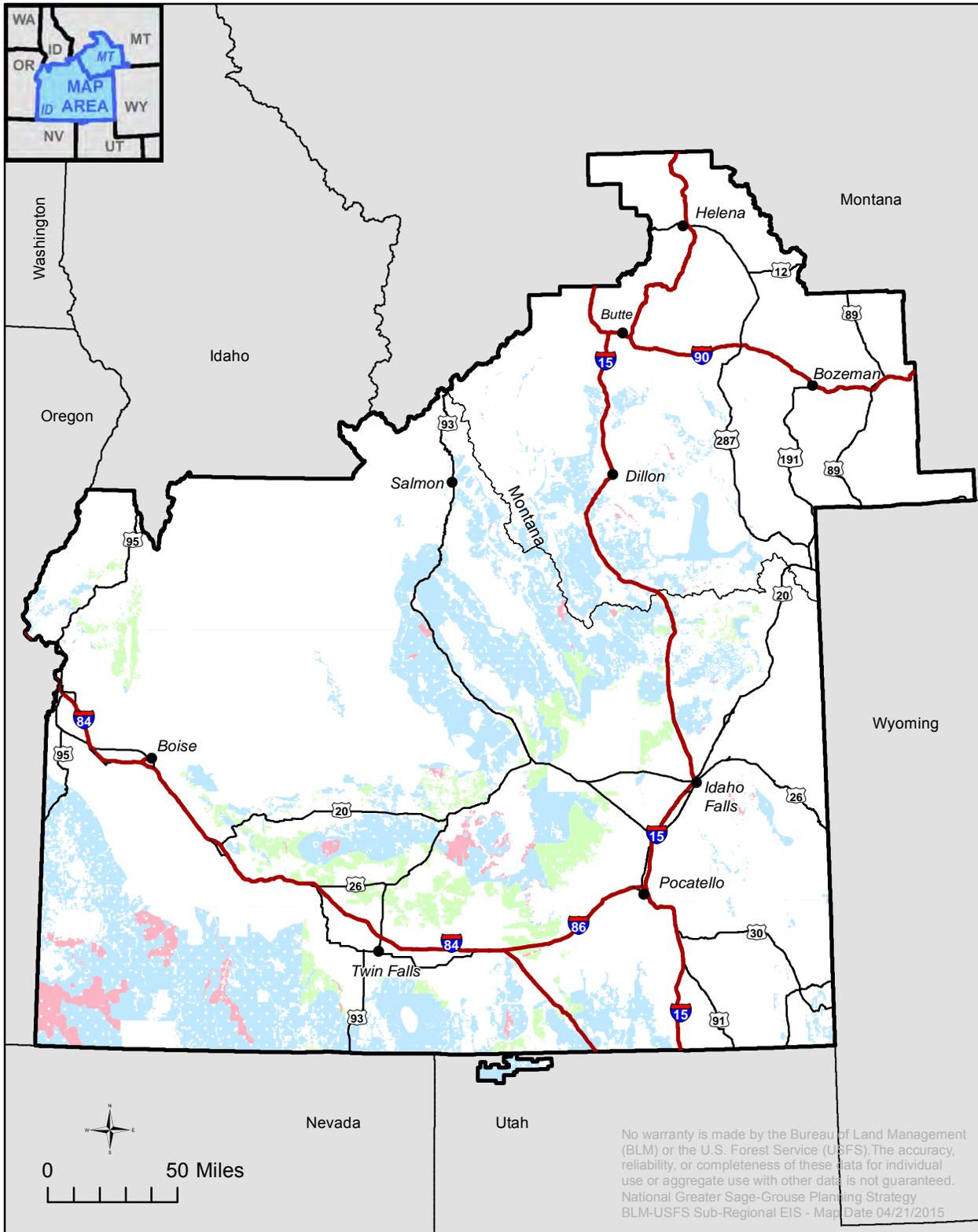
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-33
Alternative E: Travel Management Allocations



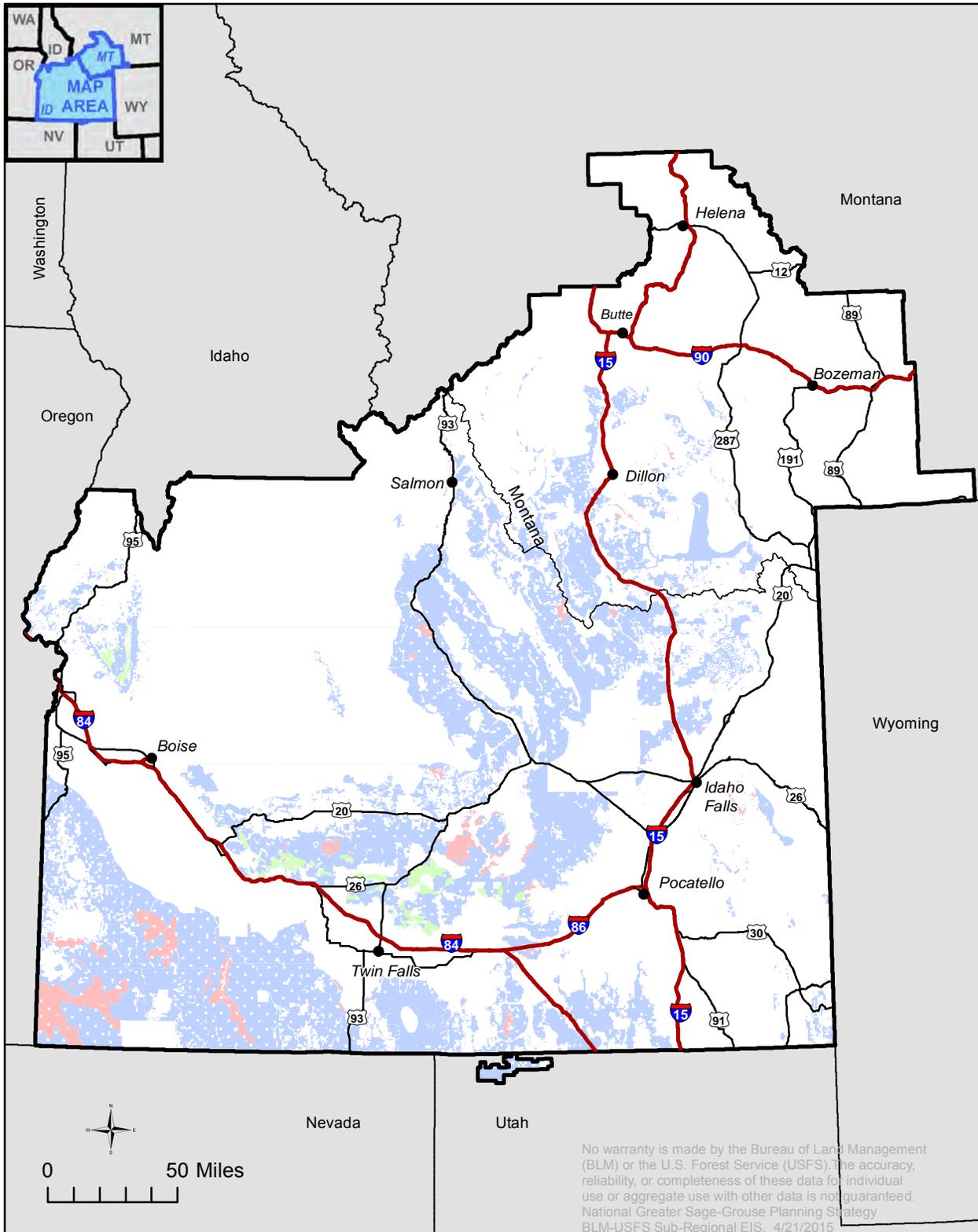
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-34
Alternative F: Travel Management Allocations



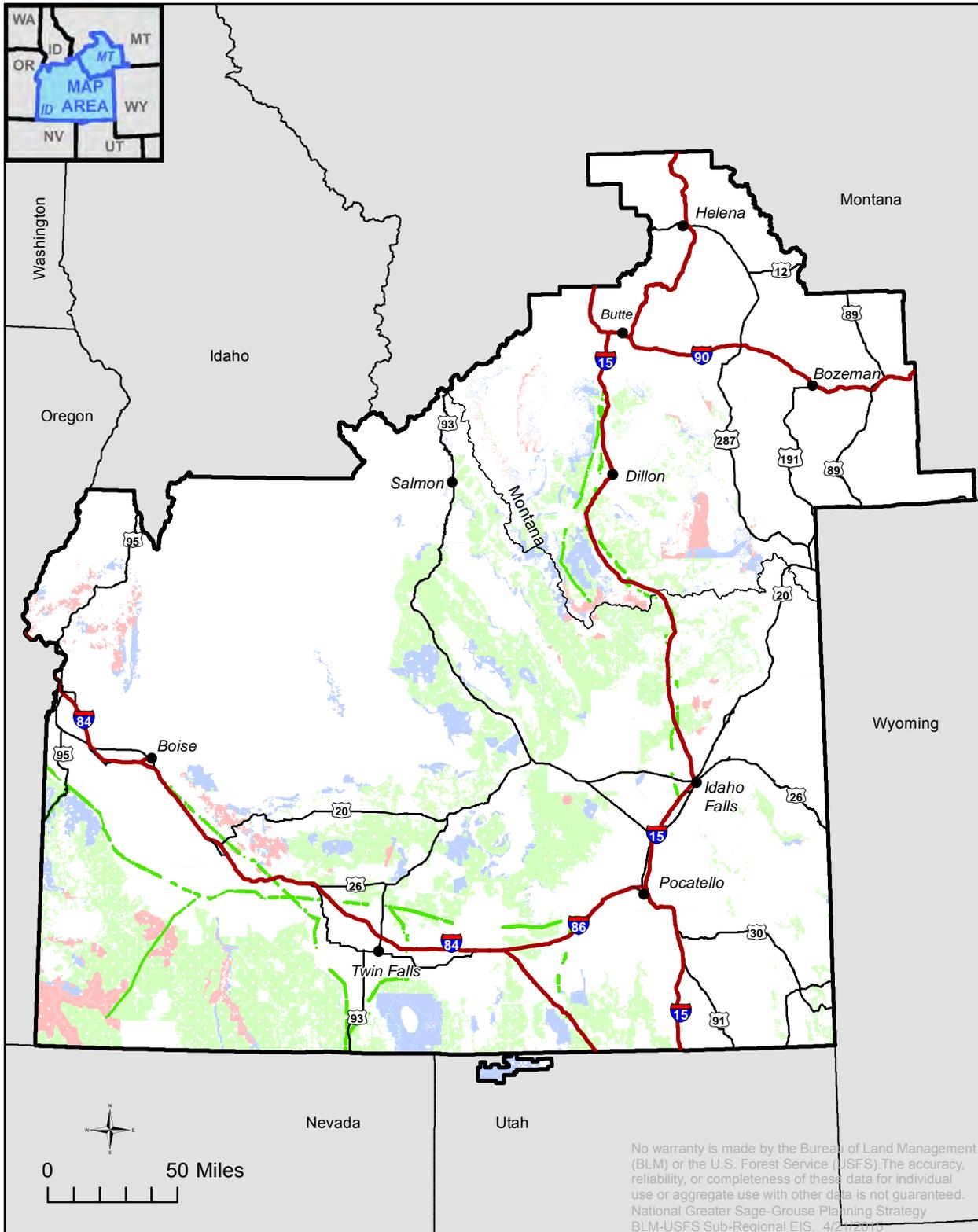
Travel Management Designation

- CLOSED
- LIMITED
- OPEN

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-35
Alternative A: Right-of-Way Development Allocations



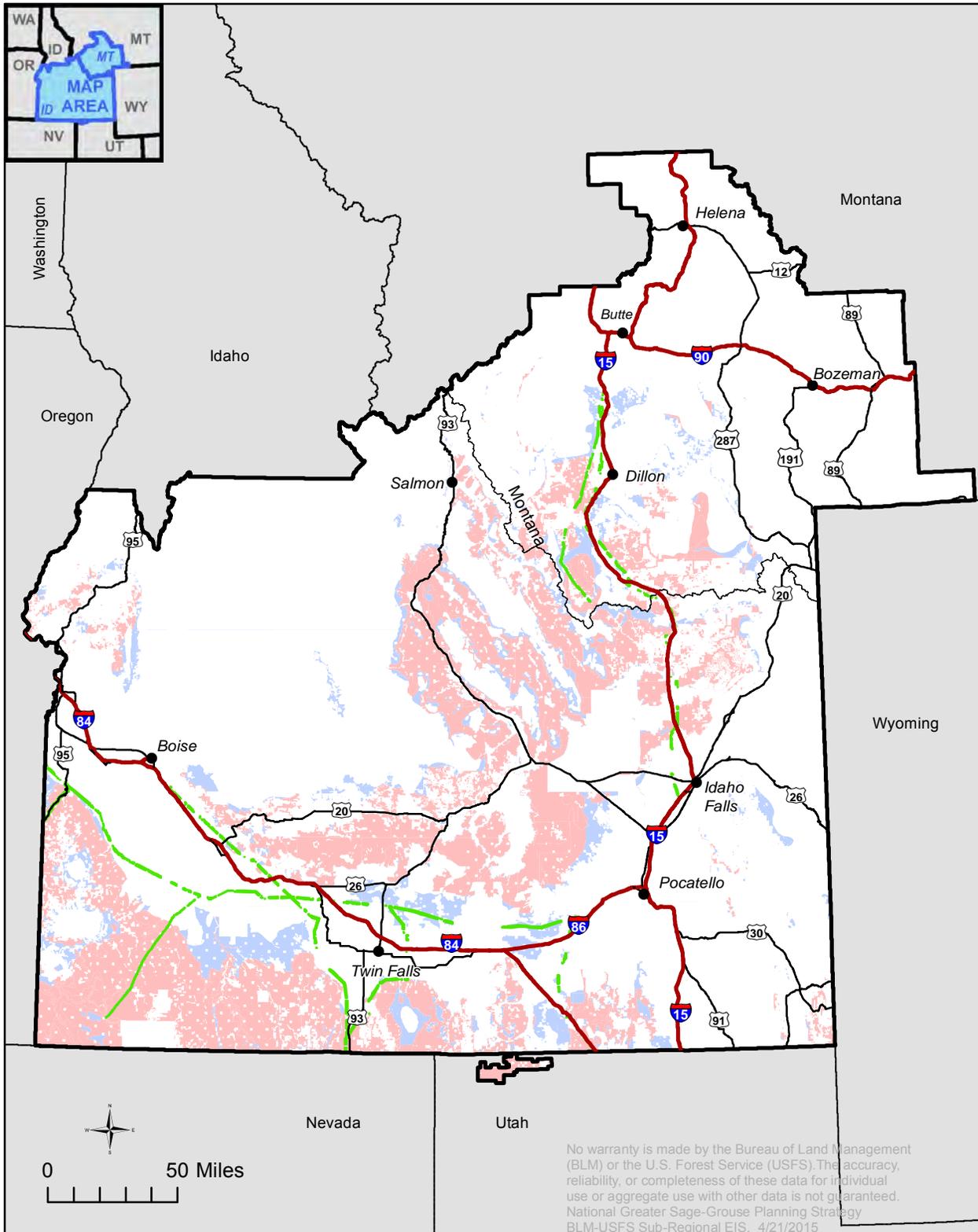
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-36
Alternative B: Right-of-Way Development Allocations



Constraint

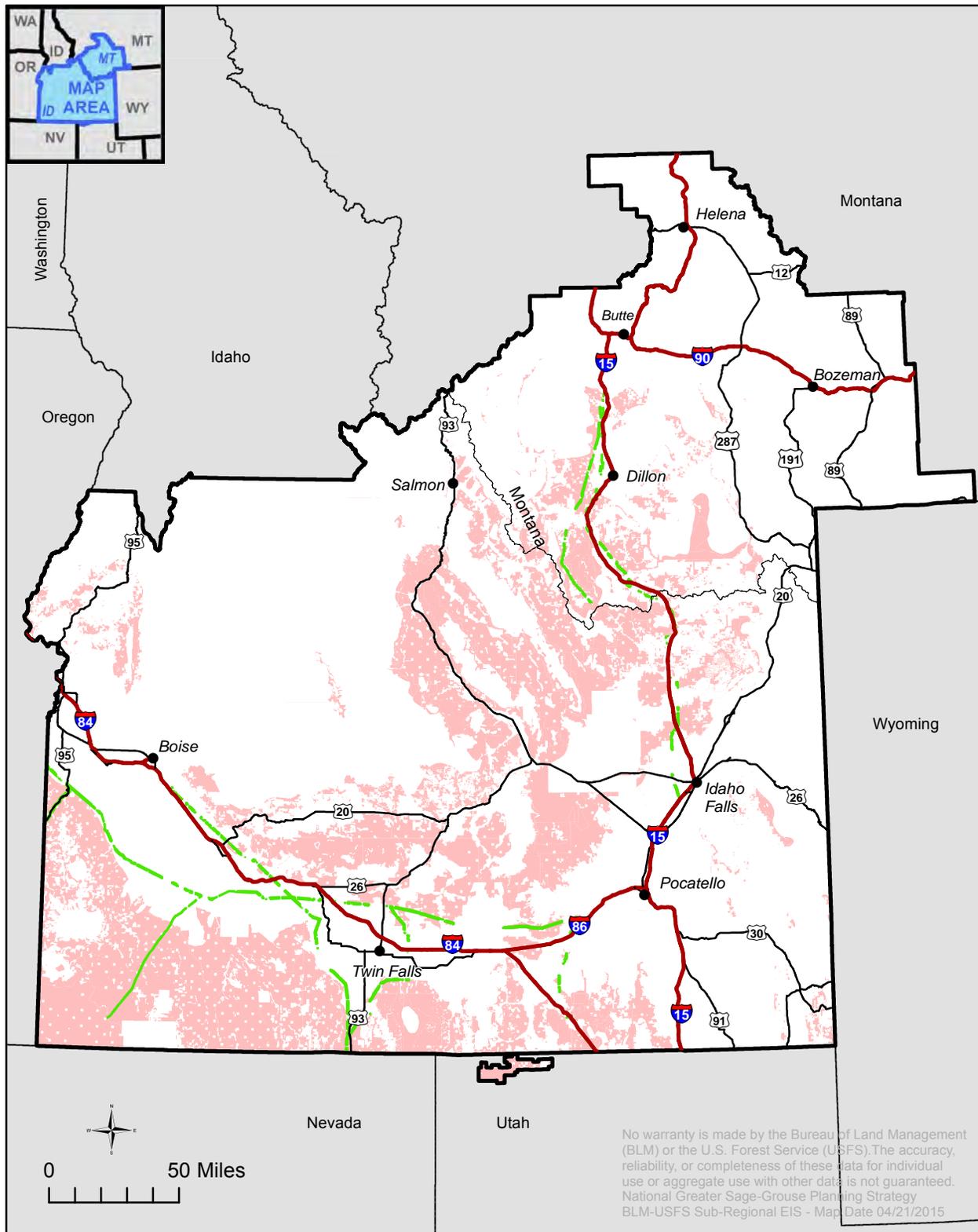
- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-37
Alternative C: Right-of-Way Development Allocations

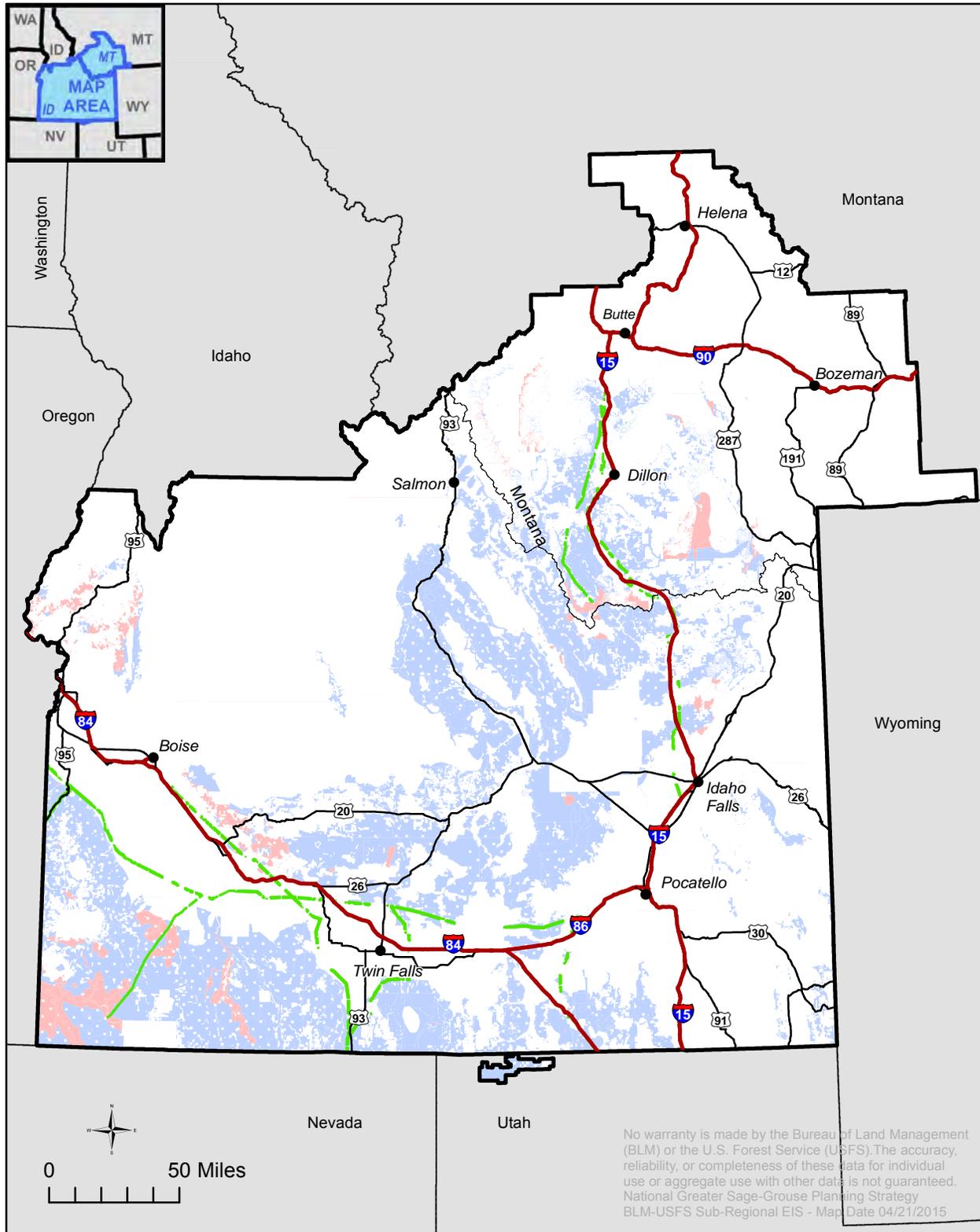


Constraint

- Exclusion
- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-38
Alternative D: Right-of-Way Development Allocations



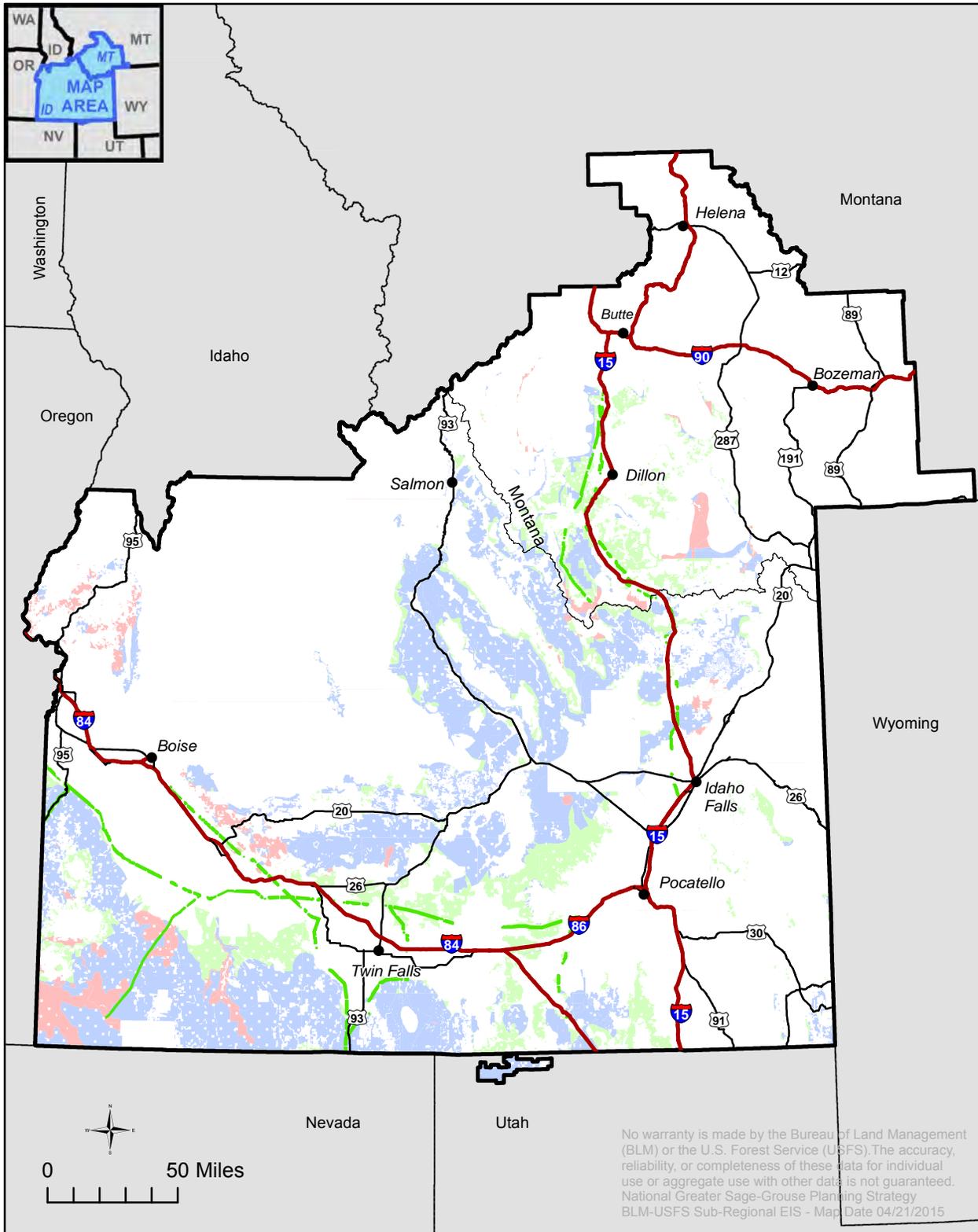
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-39
Alternative E: Right-of-Way Development Allocations



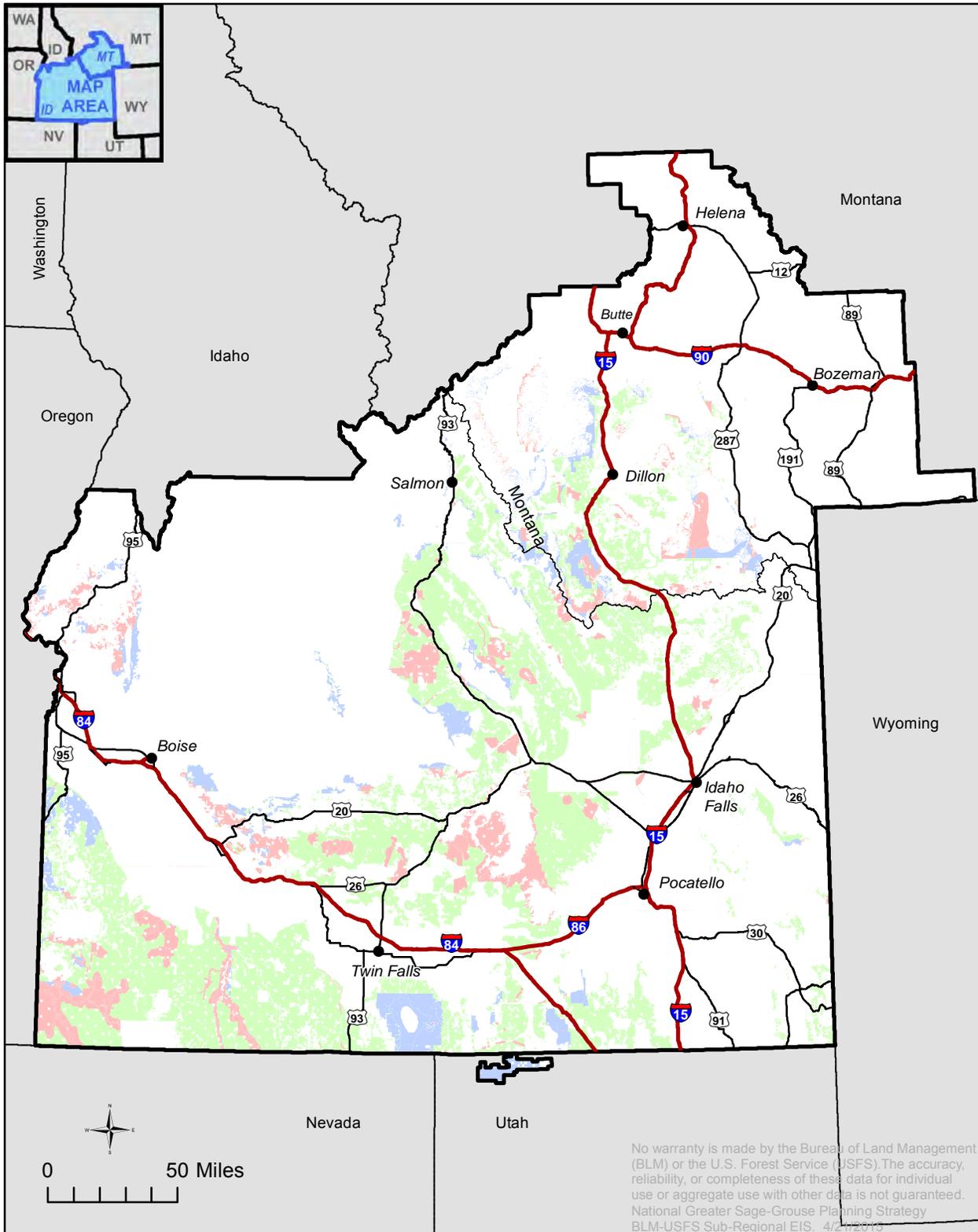
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-41
Alternative A: Wind and Solar Development Allocations



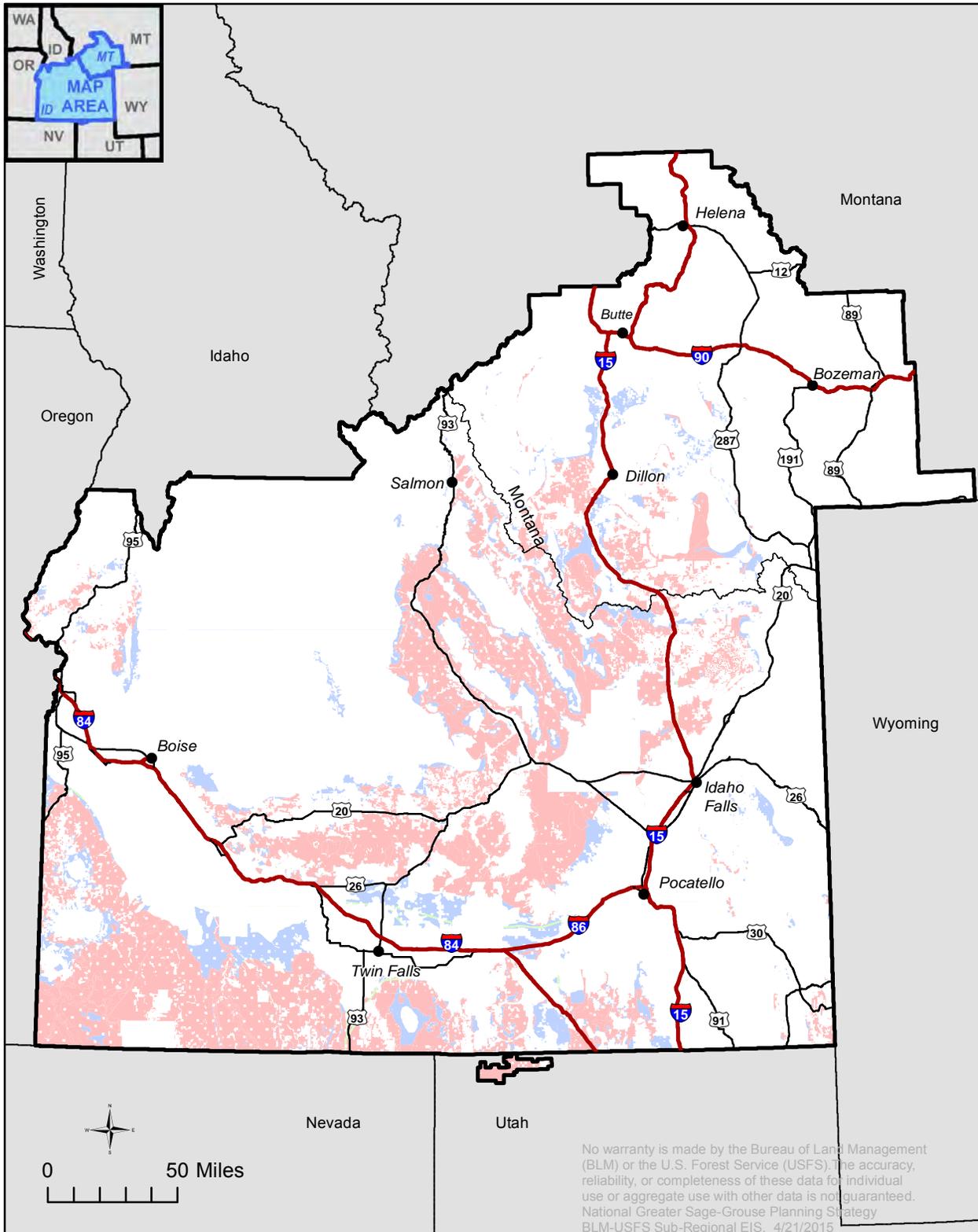
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-42
Alternative B: Wind and Solar Development Allocations



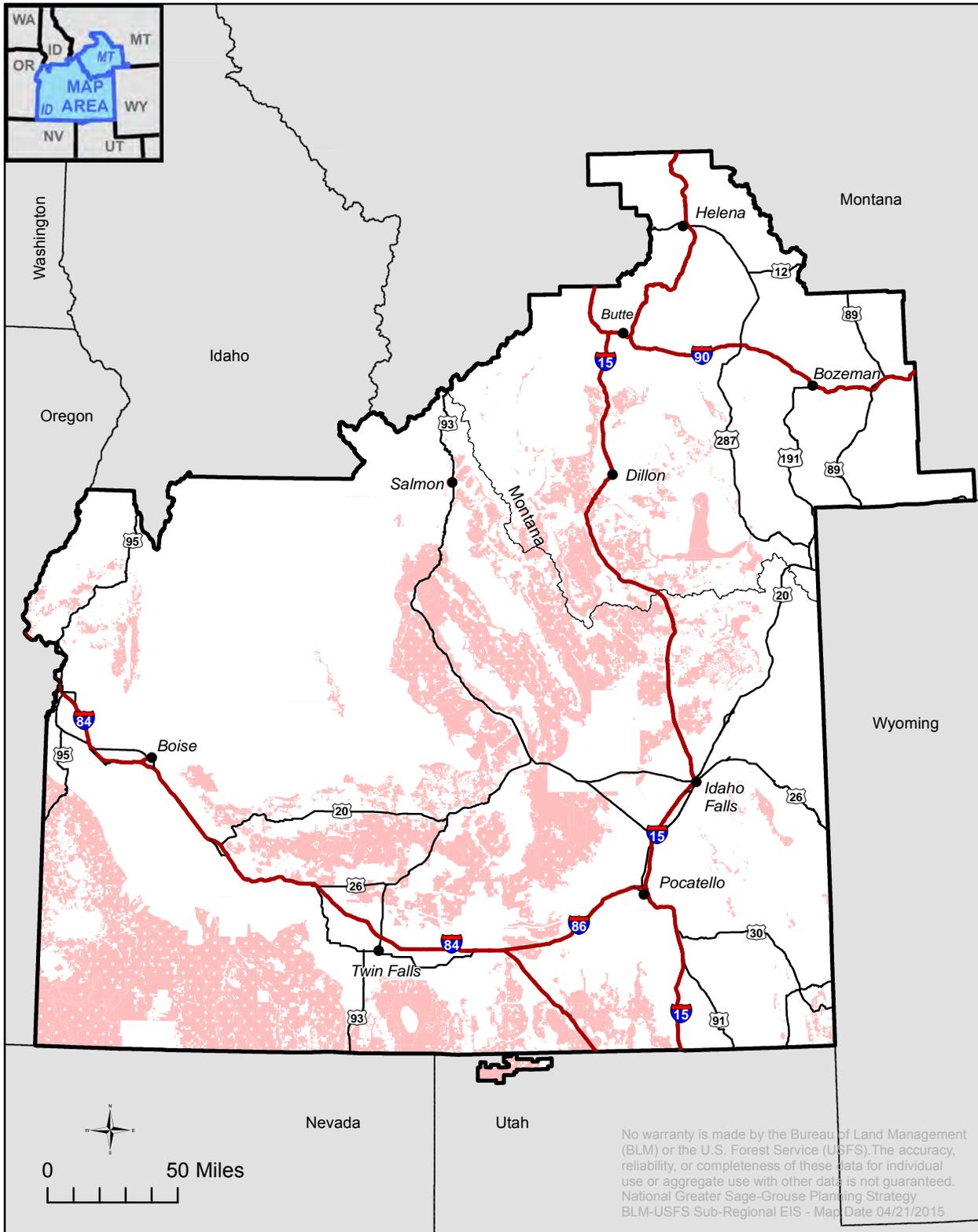
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-43
Alternative C: Wind and Solar Development Allocations

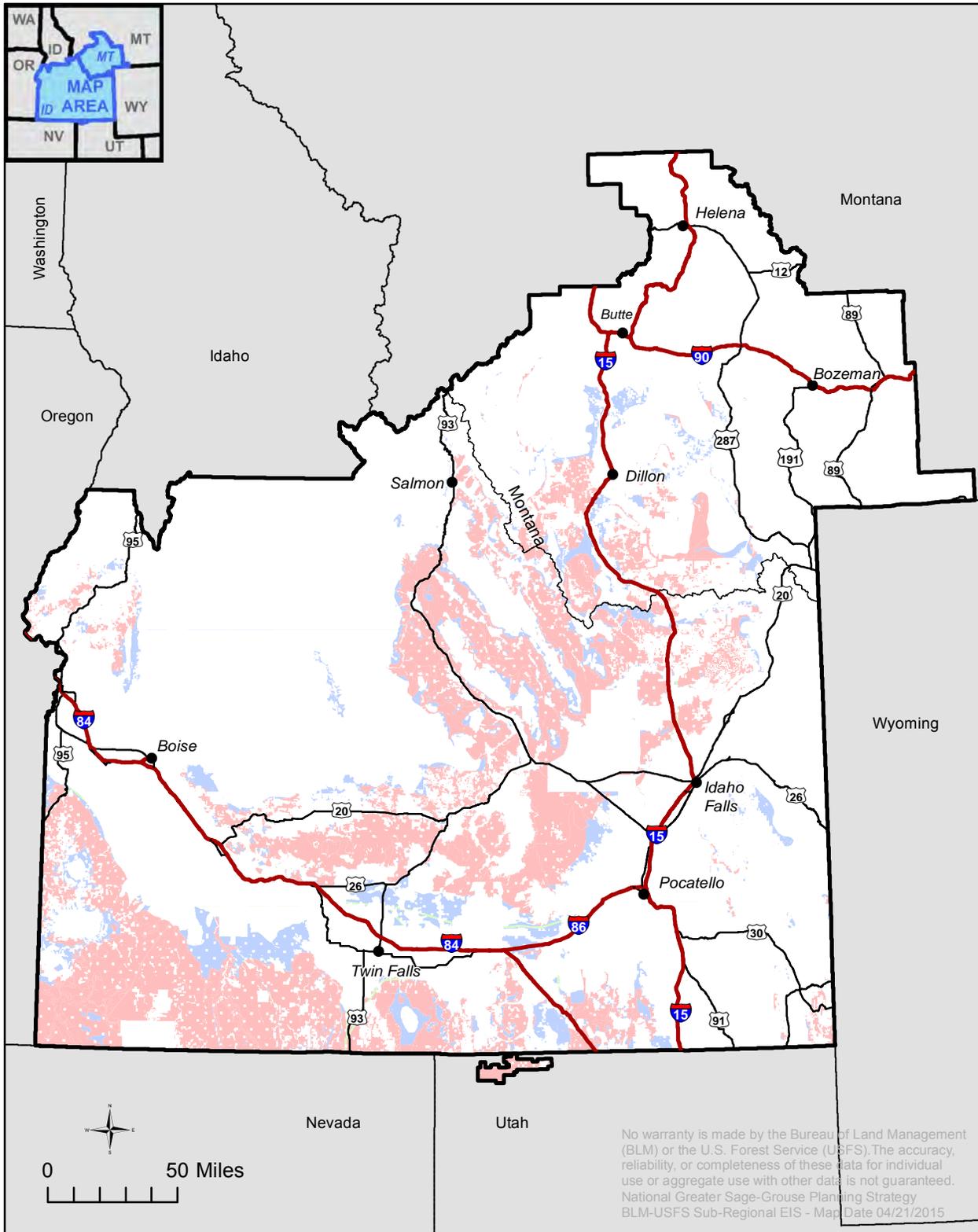


Constraint
 Exclusion

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-44
Alternative D: Wind and Solar Development Allocations



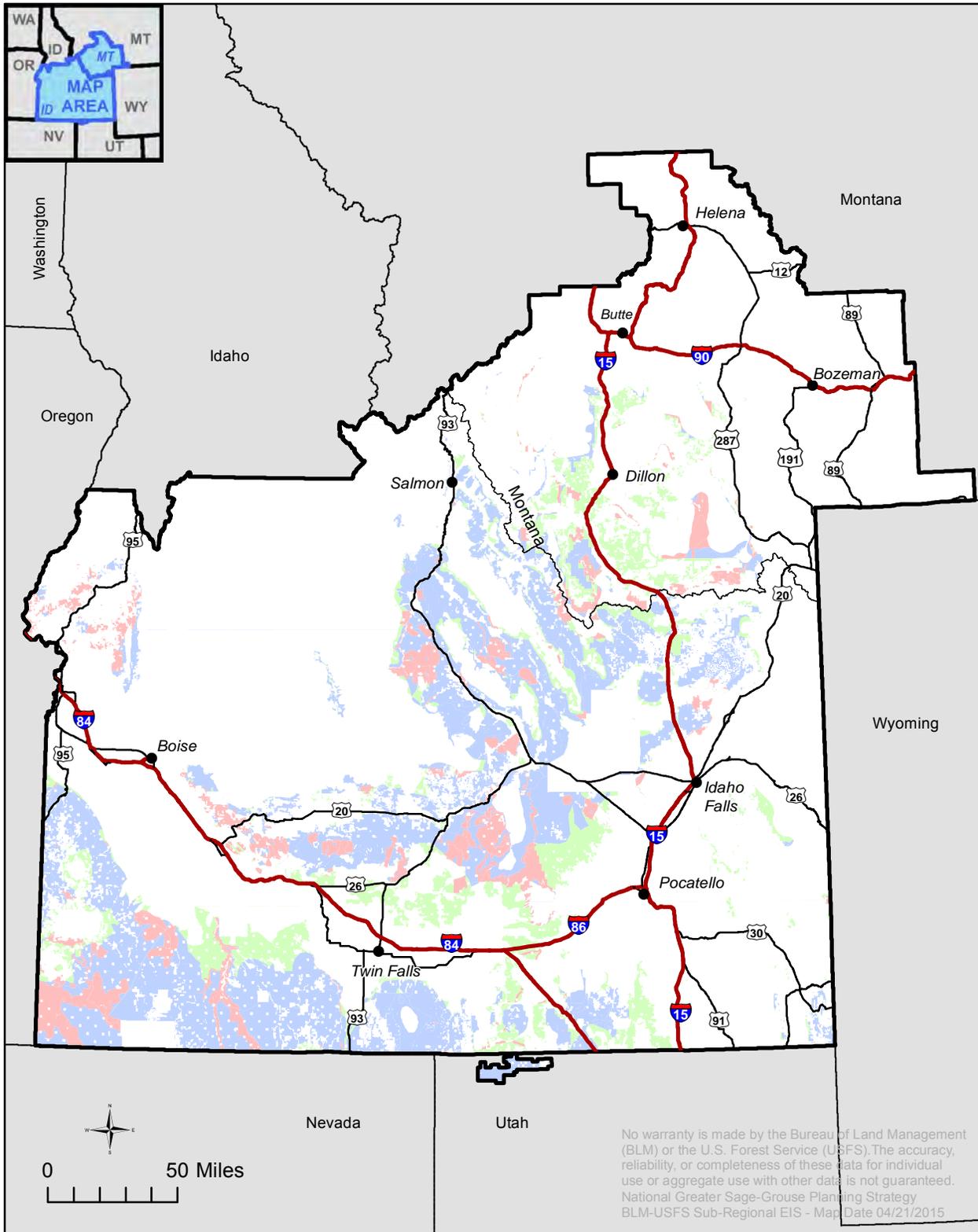
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-45
Alternative E: Wind and Solar Development Allocations



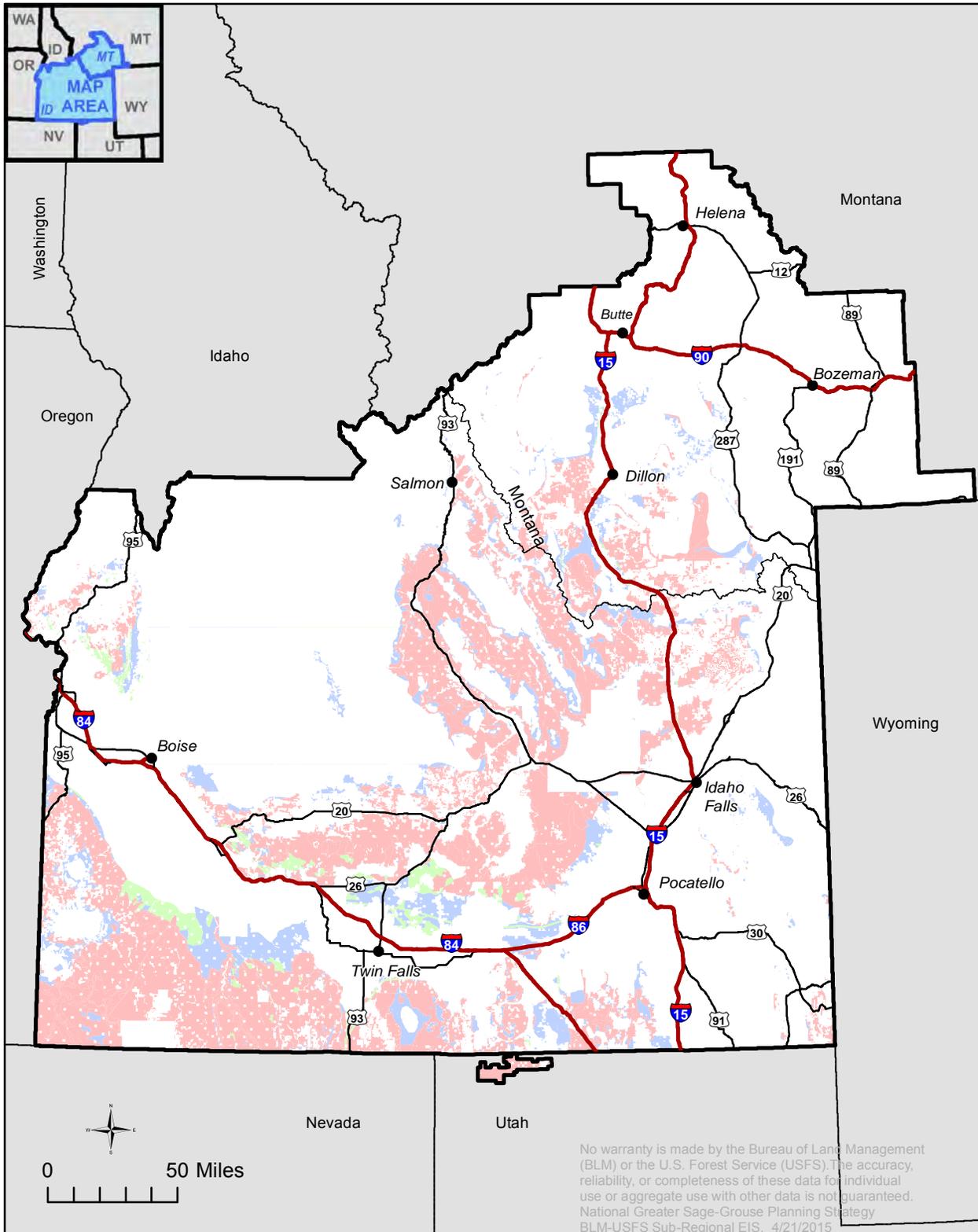
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-46
Alternative F: Wind and Solar Development Allocations



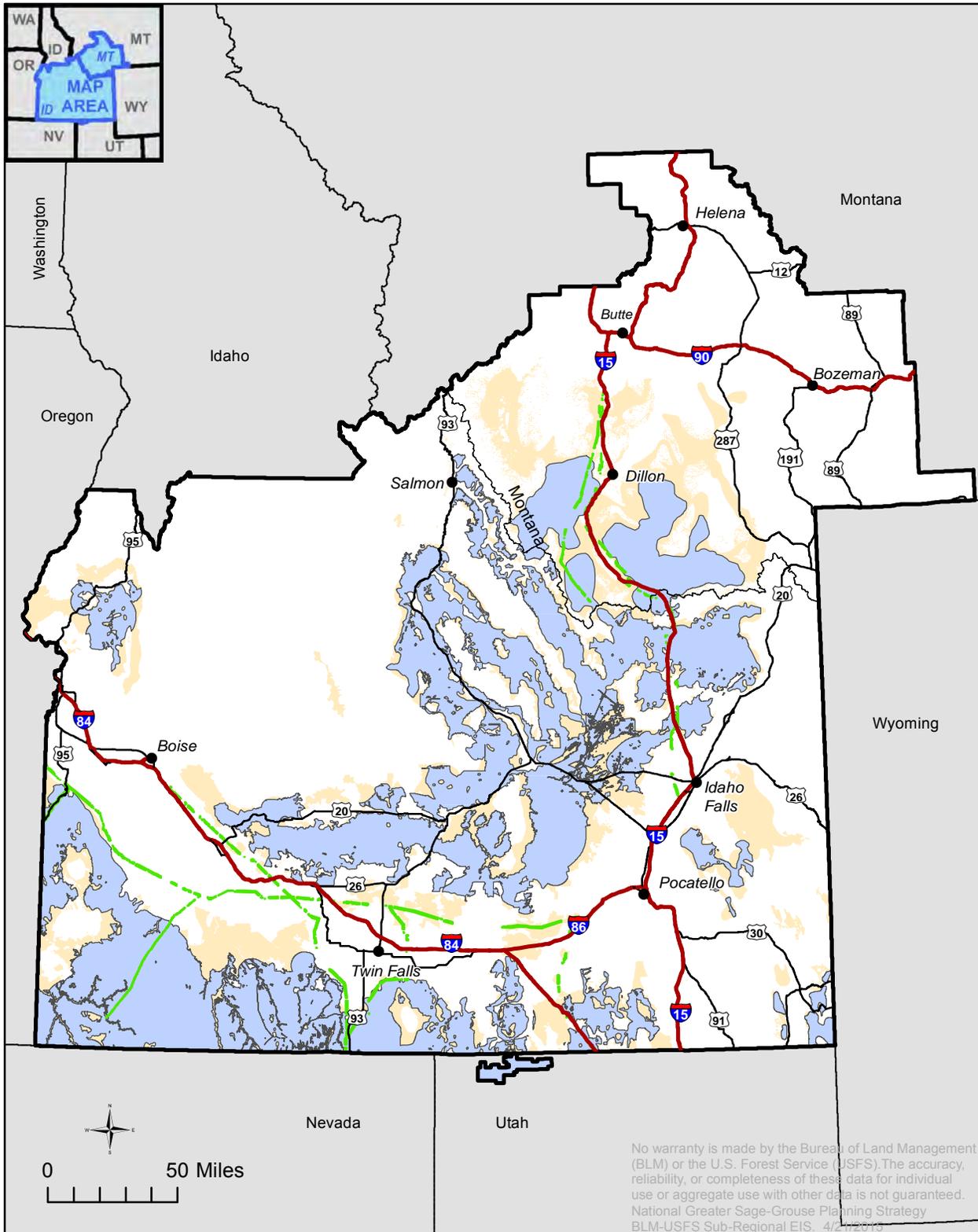
Constraint

- Exclusion
- Avoidance
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-47
Alternative A: Existing Designated Utility Corridors



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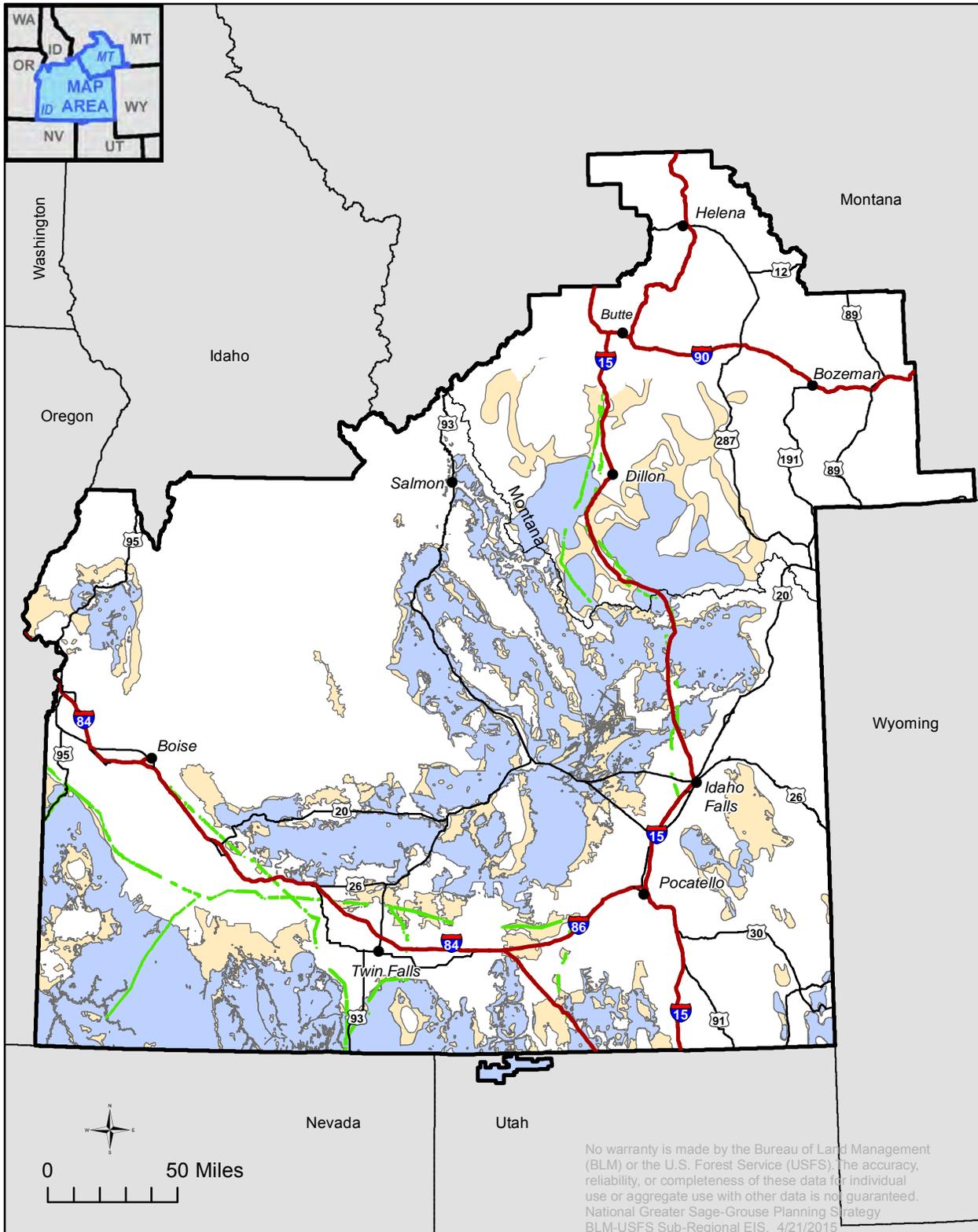
Preliminary Habitat Management Area

- Priority
- General

- Existing Utility Corridor
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-48
Alternative B: Existing Designated Utility Corridors



Habitat Management Area

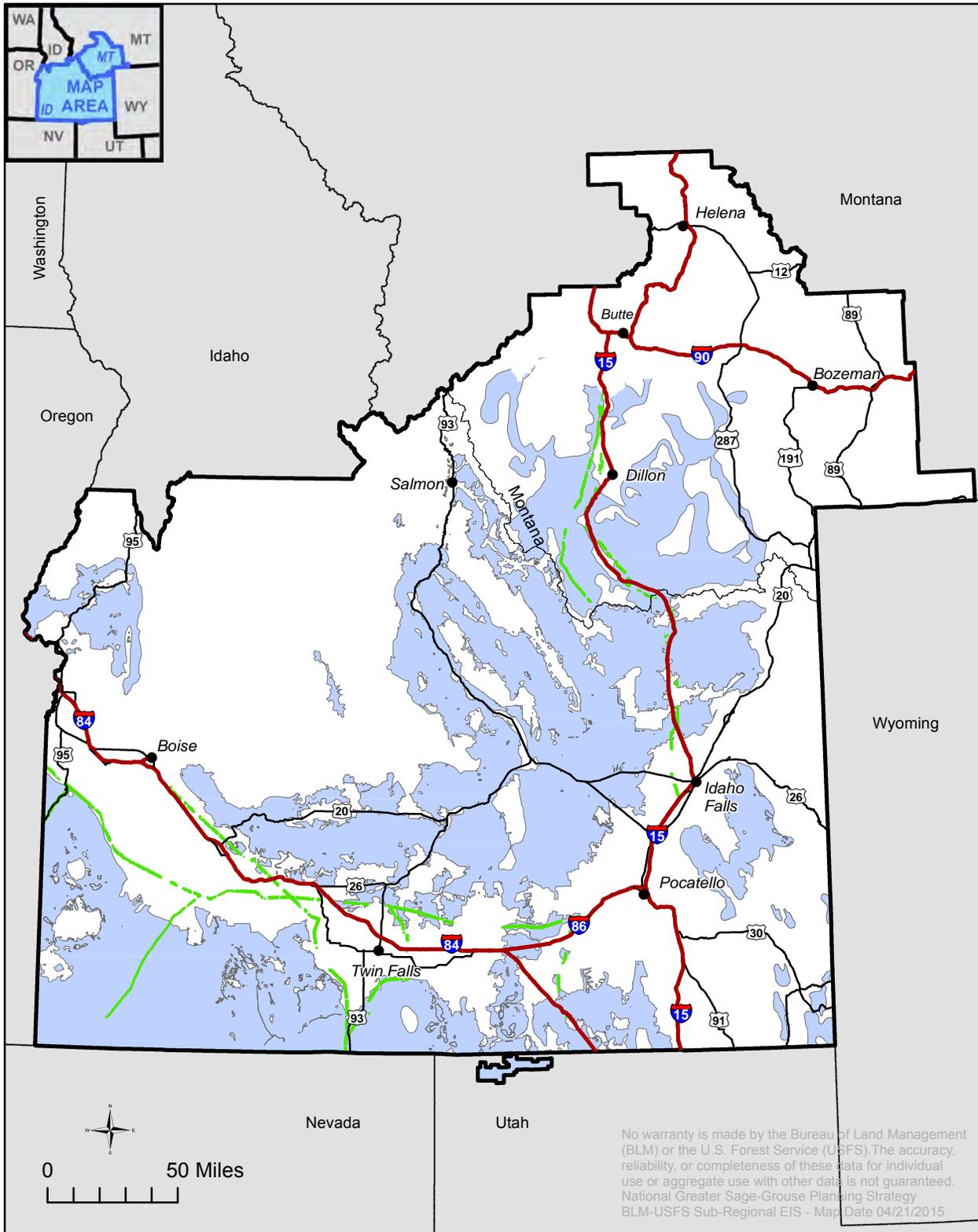
- PHMA
- GHMA

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-49
Alternative C: Existing Designated Utility Corridors



Habitat Management Area

Priority

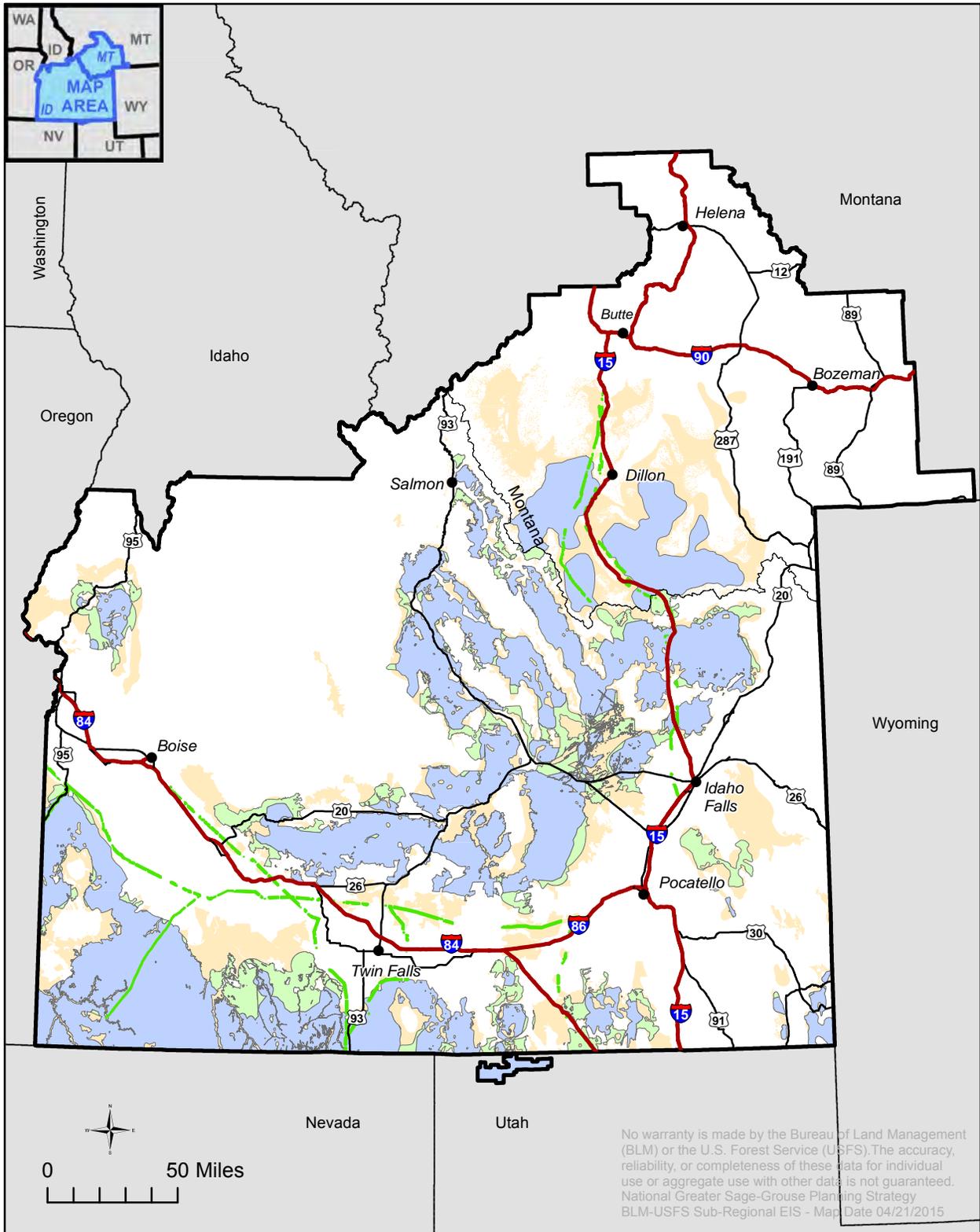
Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-50
Alternative D: Existing Designated Utility Corridors

IDMT_PUB_5550
6.3c
08/26/2015



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Habitat Management Area

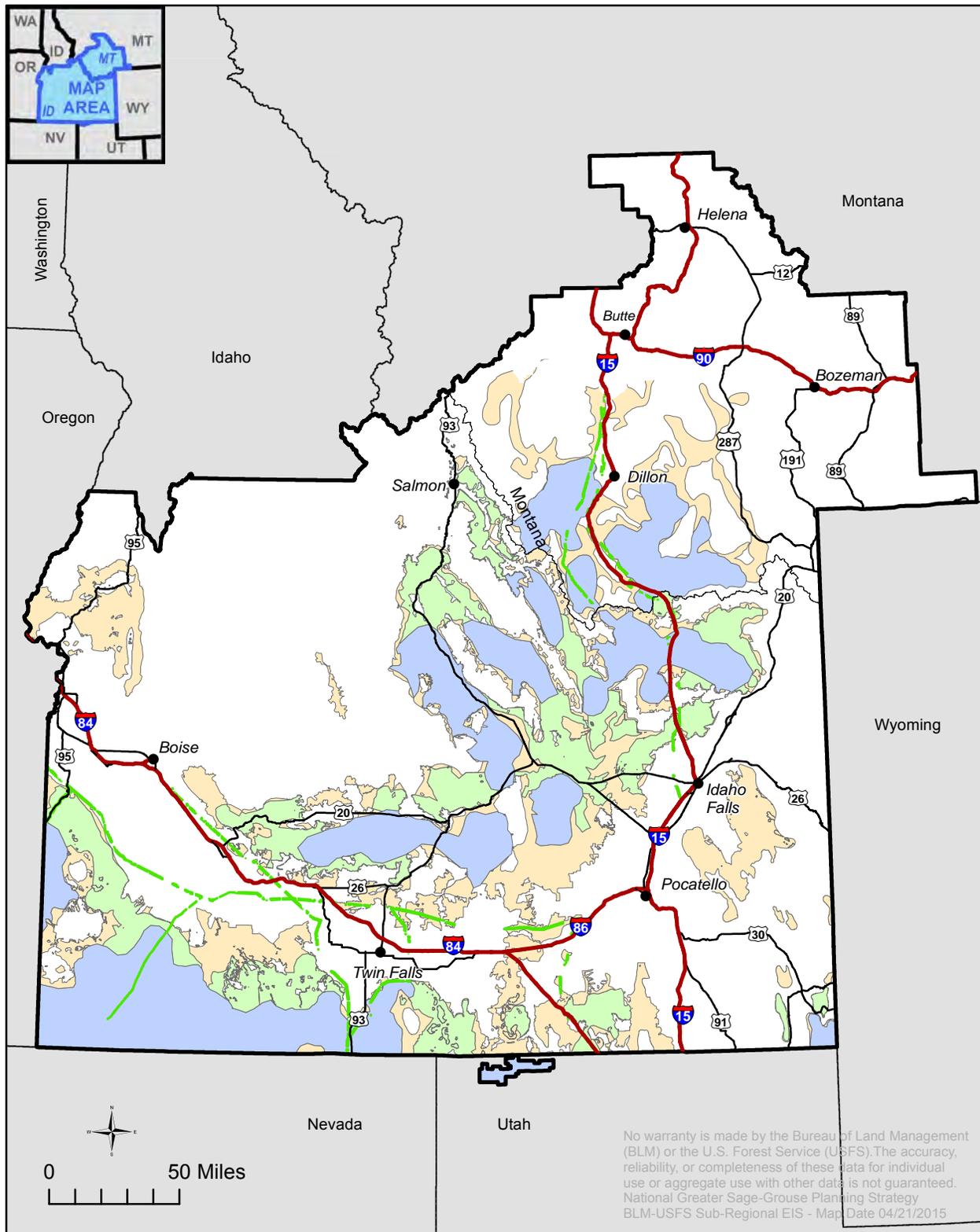
- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-51
Alternative E: Existing Designated Utility Corridors



Habitat Management Area

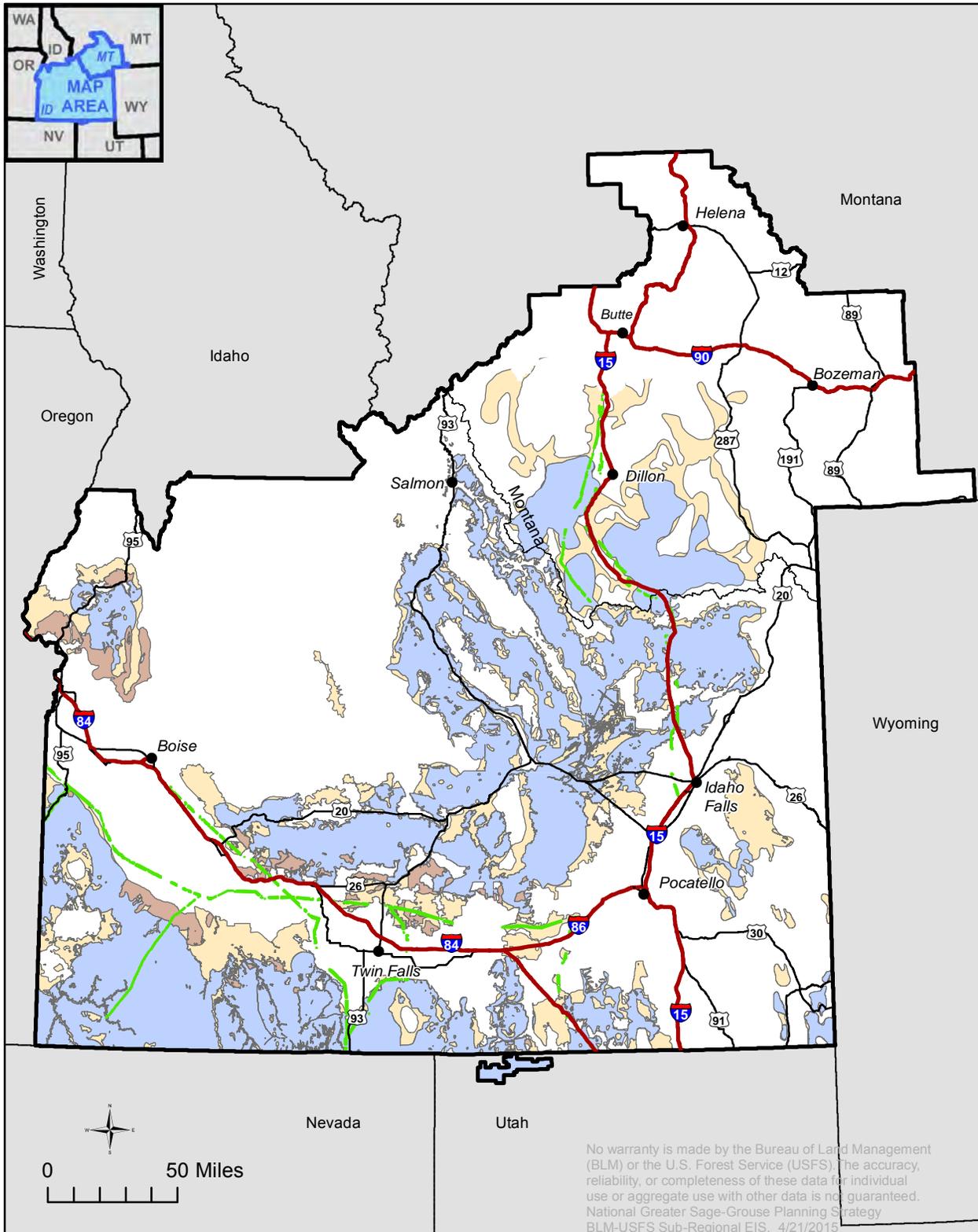
- PHMA
- IHMA
- GHMA

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-52
Alternative F: Existing Designated Utility Corridors



Habitat Management Area

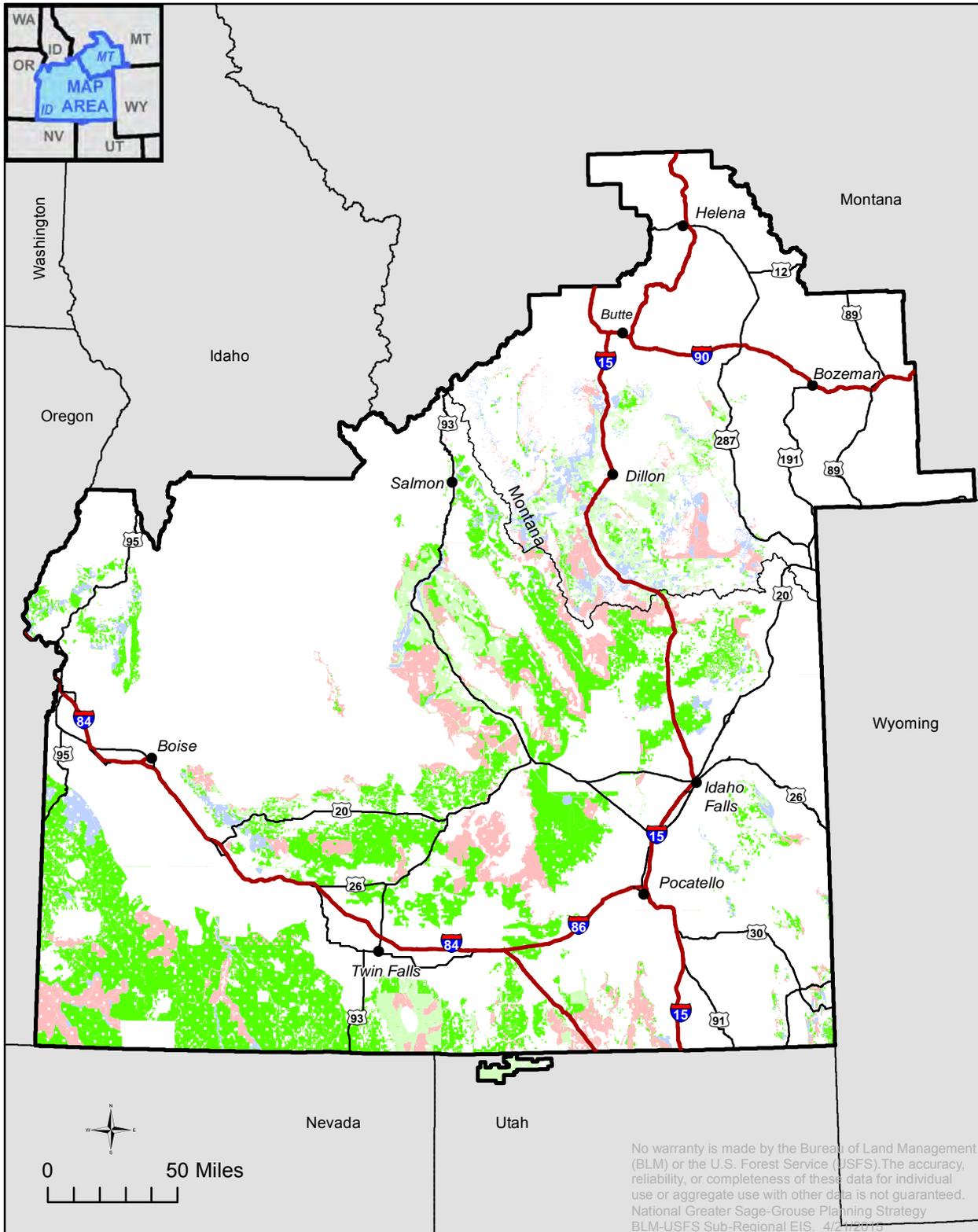
- PHMA
- GHMA
- RHMA

Existing Utility Corridor

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



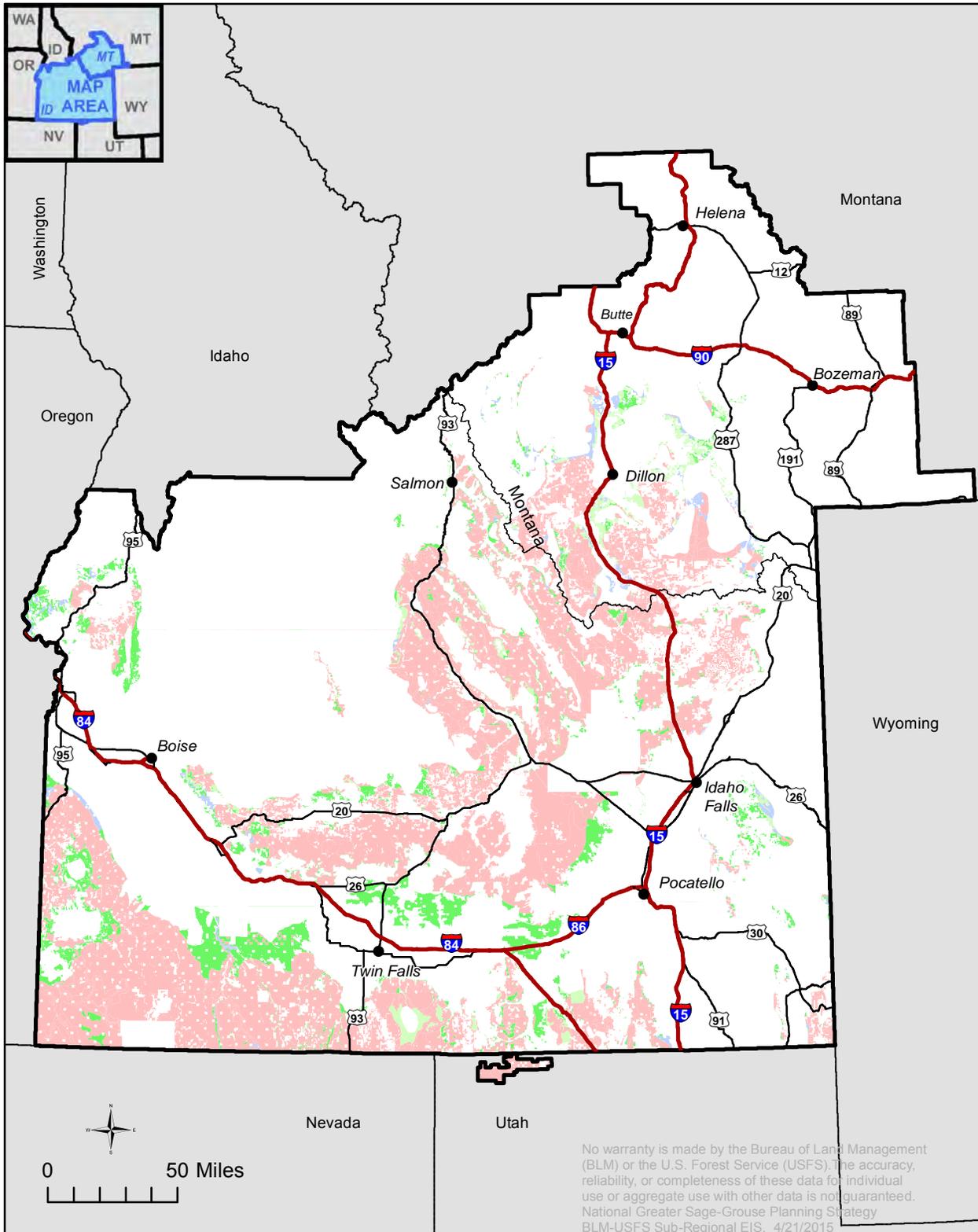
Figure 2-53
Alternative A: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas



- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Constraint | | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
| | | Open to leasing, standard lease strips |
| | | Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary |
| | | |



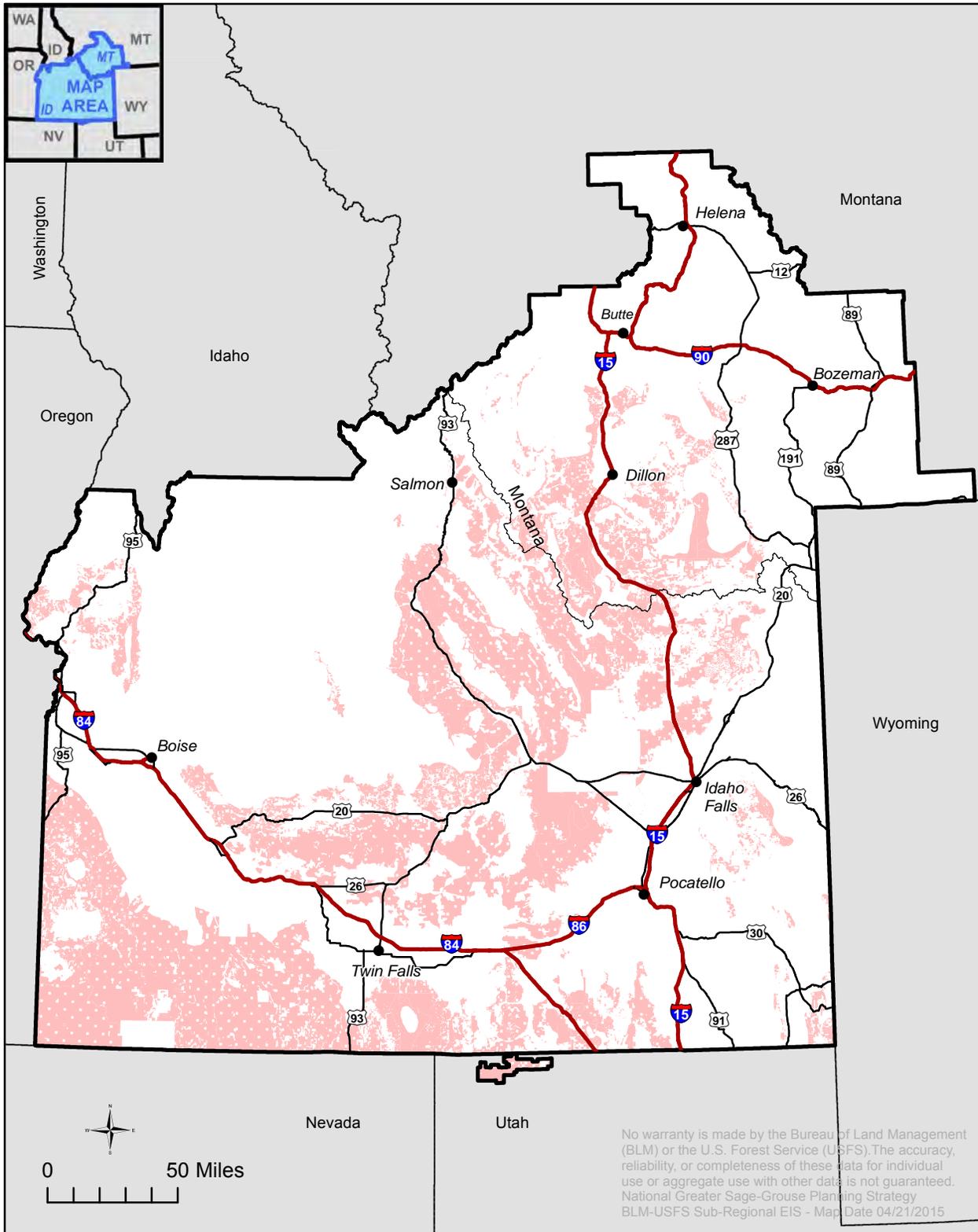
Figure 2-54
Alternative B: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Constraint |  | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
|  |  | Closed to leasing Open to leasing, standard lease strips |
|  |  | Open to leasing, NSO Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary |



Figure 2-55
Alternative C: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas

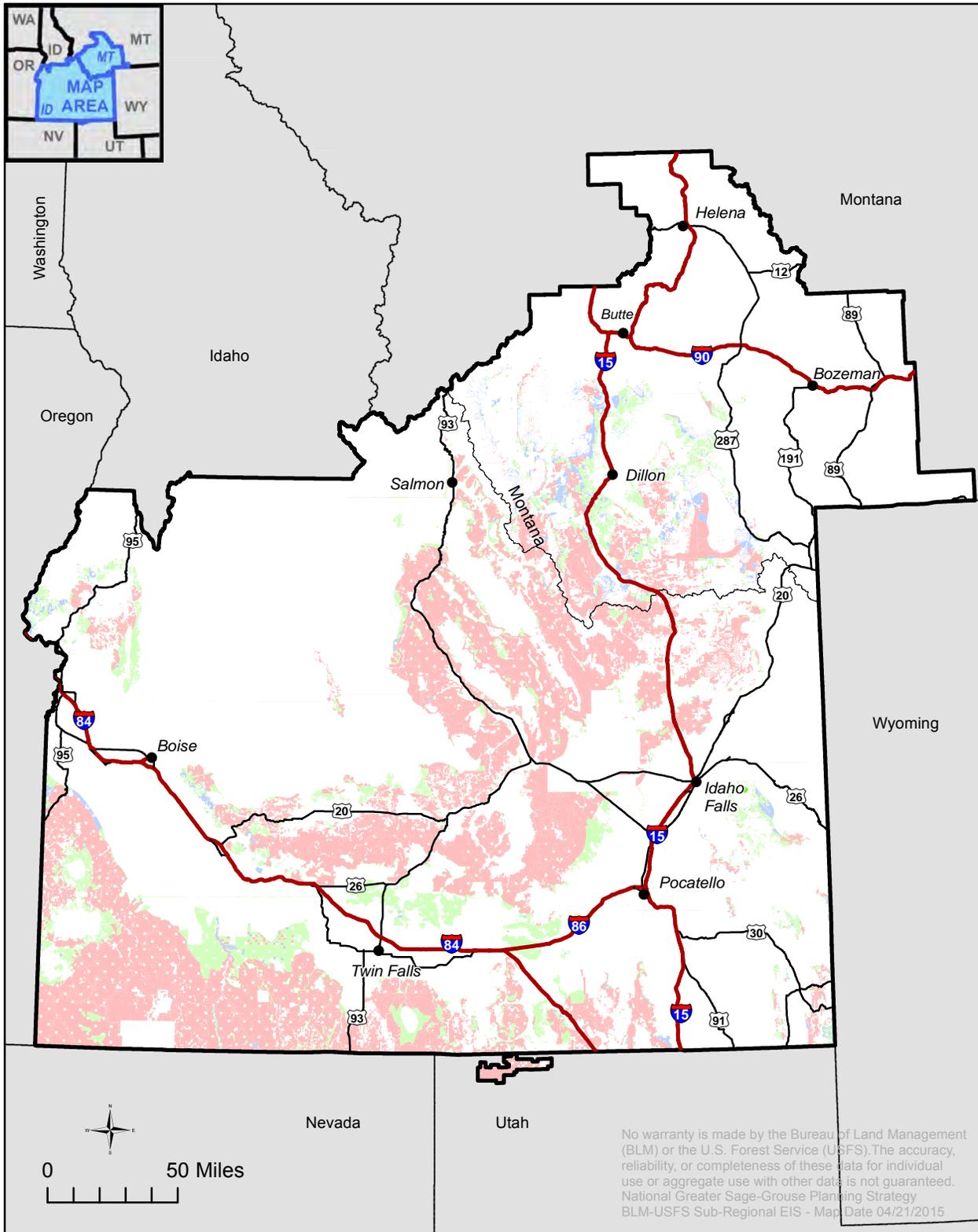


Constraint

- Closed to leasing
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



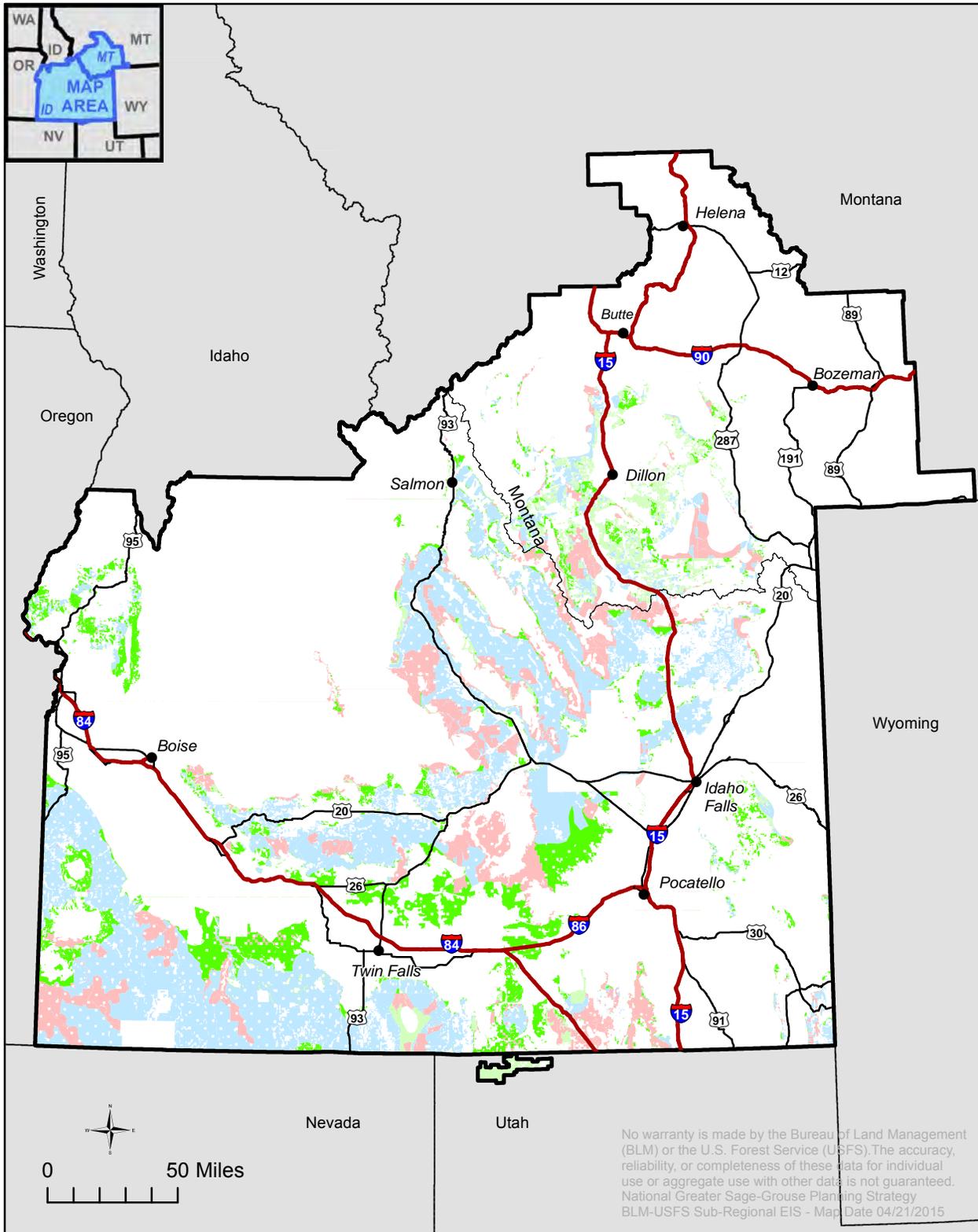
Figure 2-56
Alternative D: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Constraint |  | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
|  |  | Closed to leasing |
|  |  | Open to leasing, NSO |
| | | <i>Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary</i> |



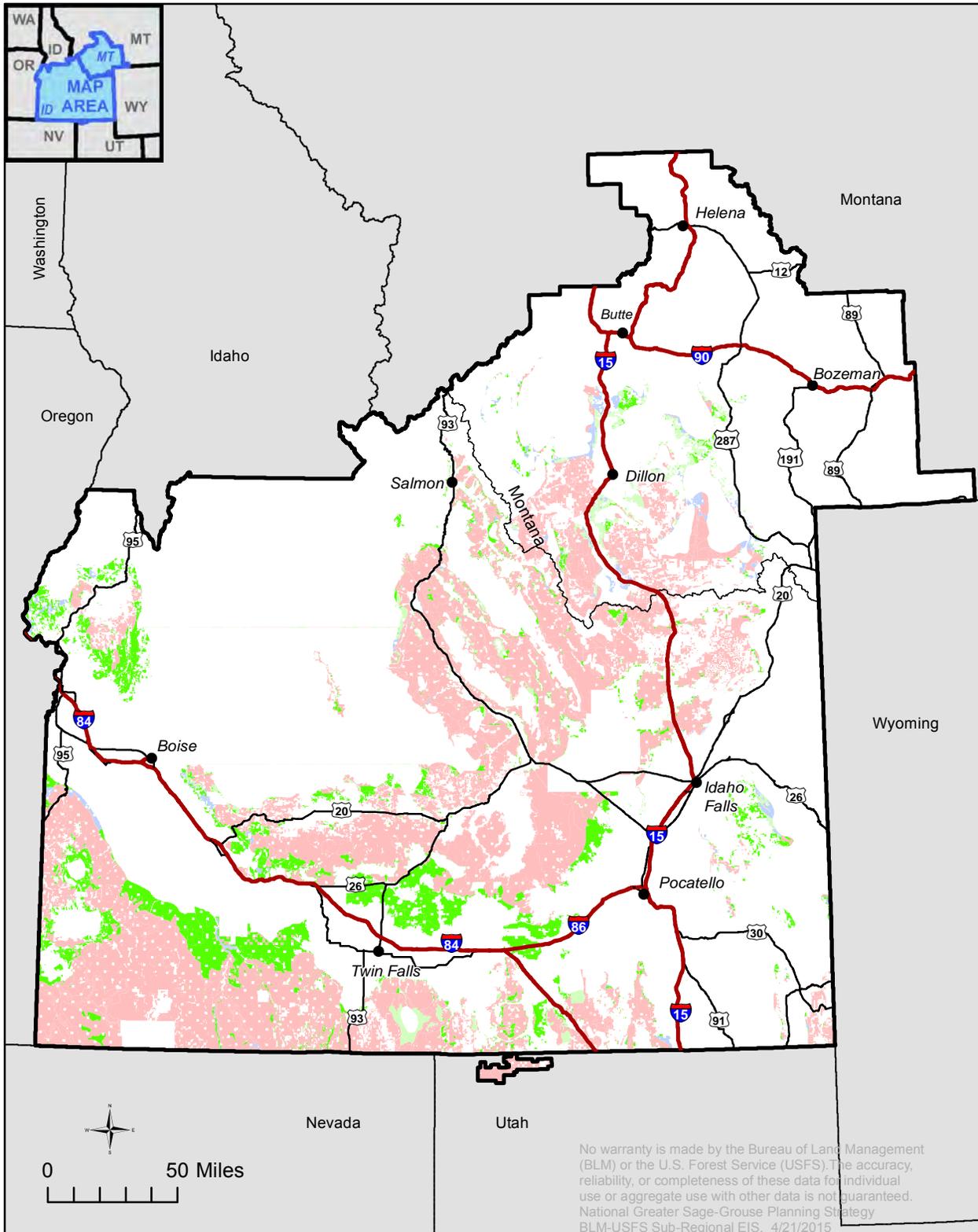
Figure 2-56
Alternative E: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas



- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Constraint | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
| Closed to leasing | Open to leasing, standard lease steps |
| Open to leasing, NSO | Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary |



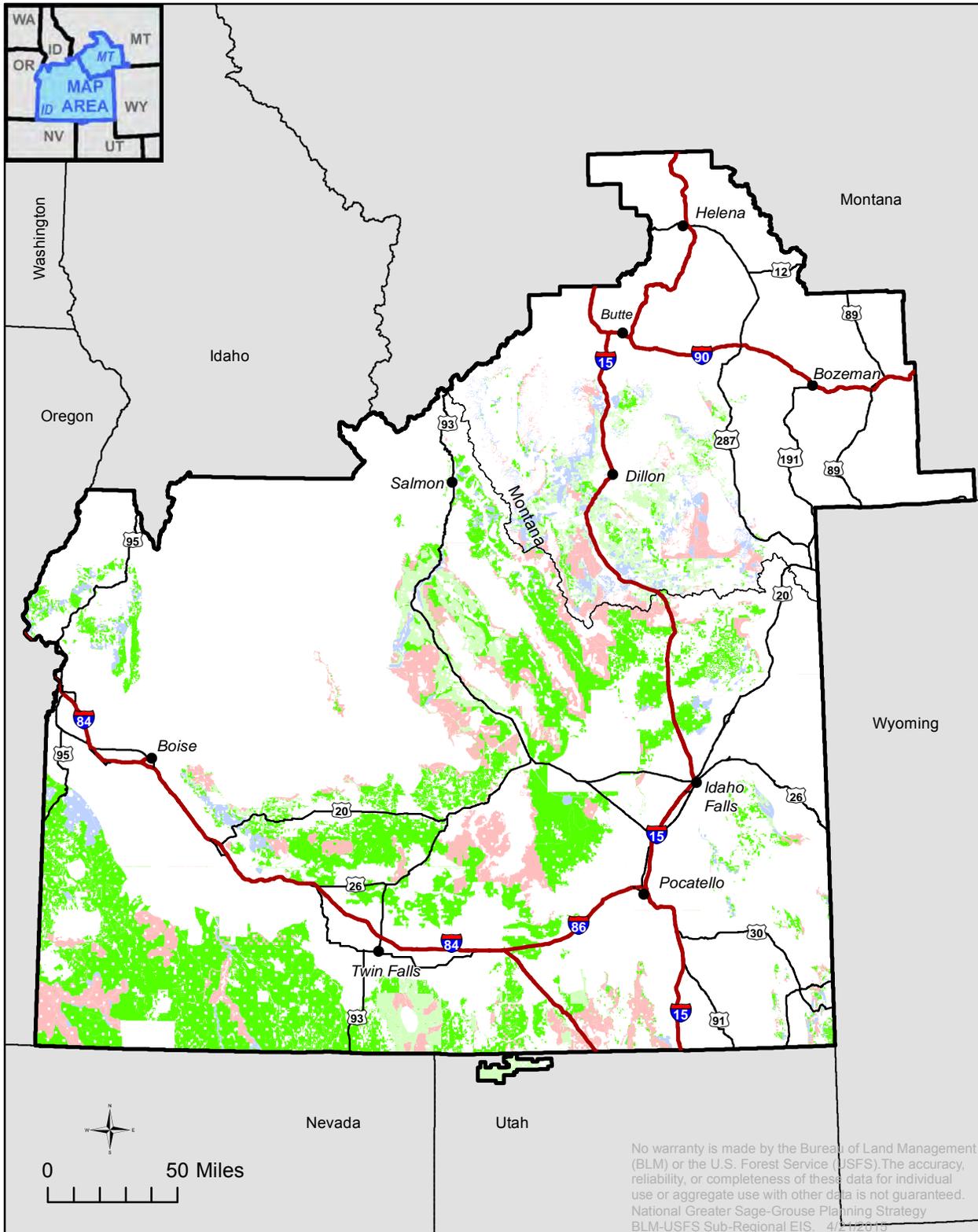
Figure 2-58
Alternative F: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Oil and Gas



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Constraint |  | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
|  |  | Open to leasing, standard lease strips |
|  |  | Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary |



Figure 2-59
Alternative A: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal



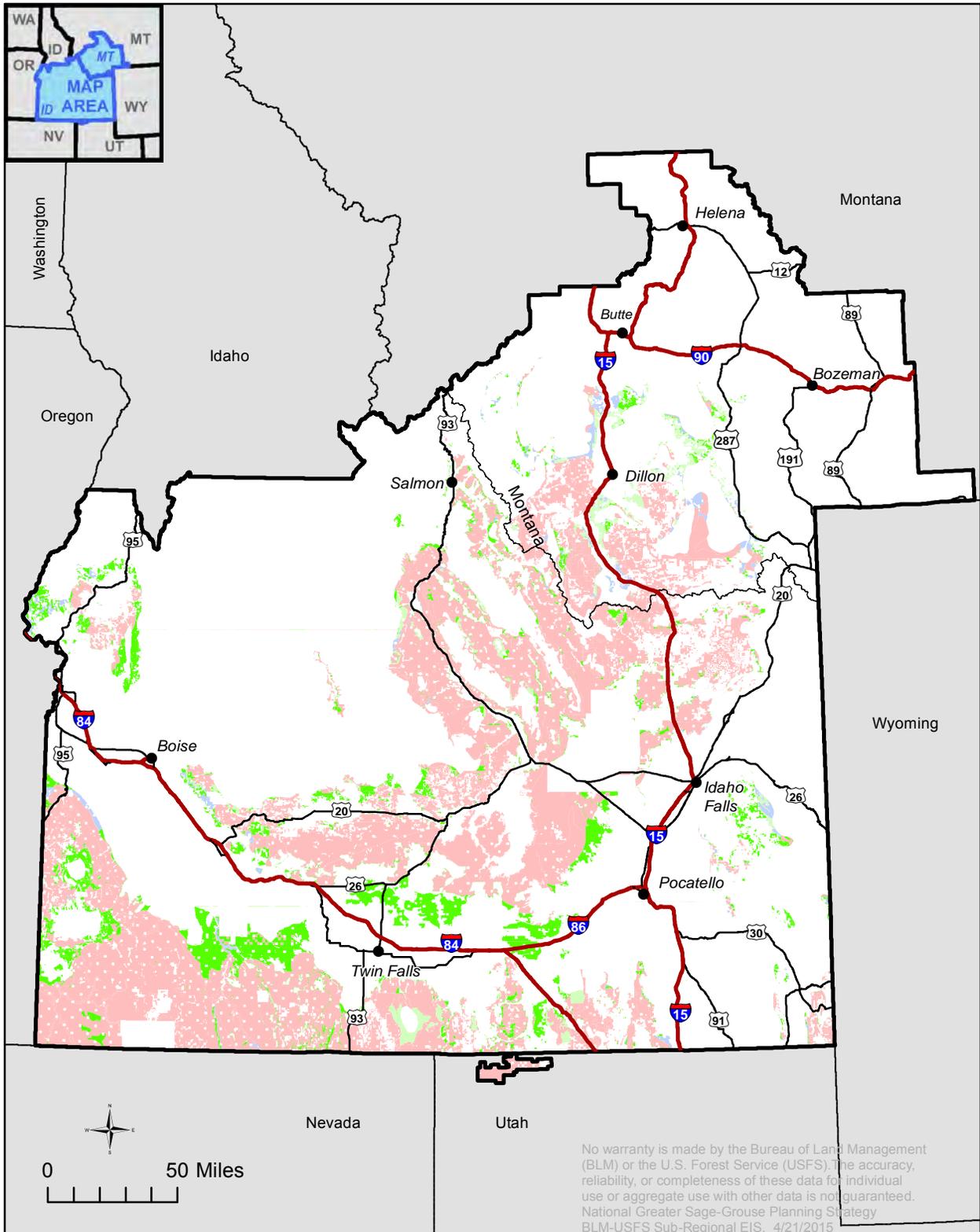
Constraint

- Closed to leasing
- Open to leasing, NSO
- Open to leasing, moderate constraints
- Open to leasing, standard lease stip

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-60
Alternative B: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal



Constraint

Closed to leasing

Open to leasing, NSO

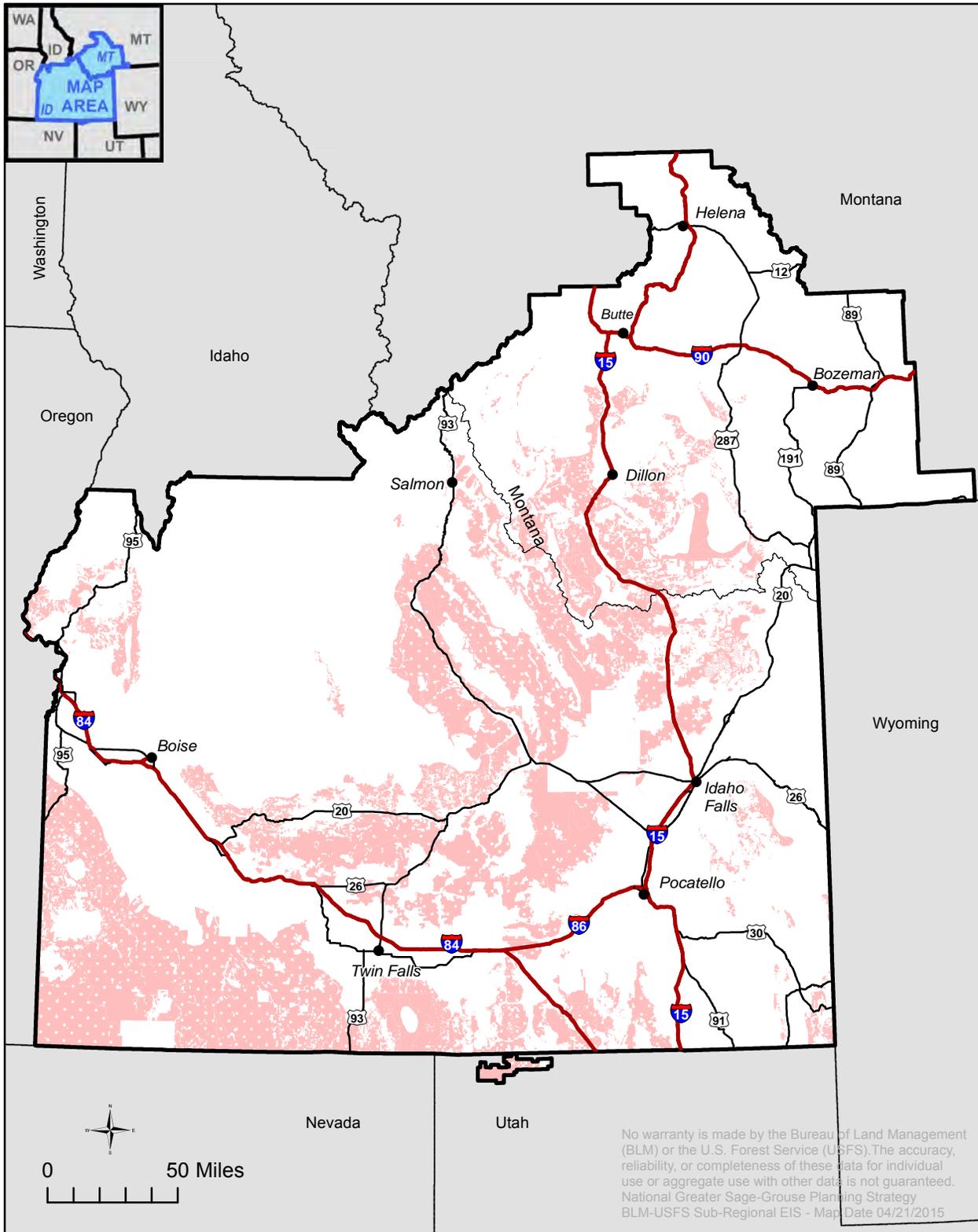
Open to leasing, moderate constraints

Open to leasing, standard lease strips

Idaho and SW Montana
Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-61
Alternative C: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal

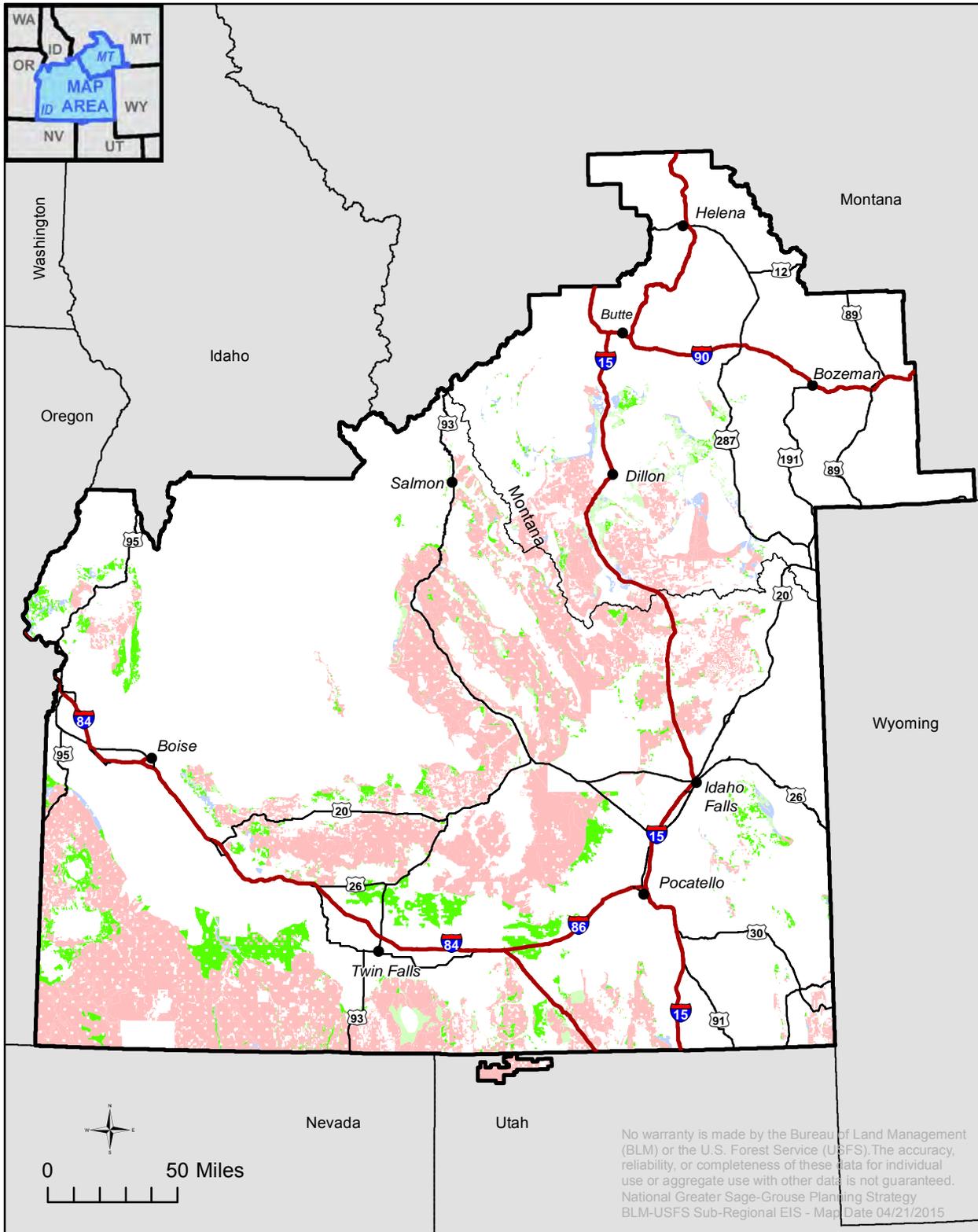


Constraint

- Closed to leasing
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-62
Alternative D: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal

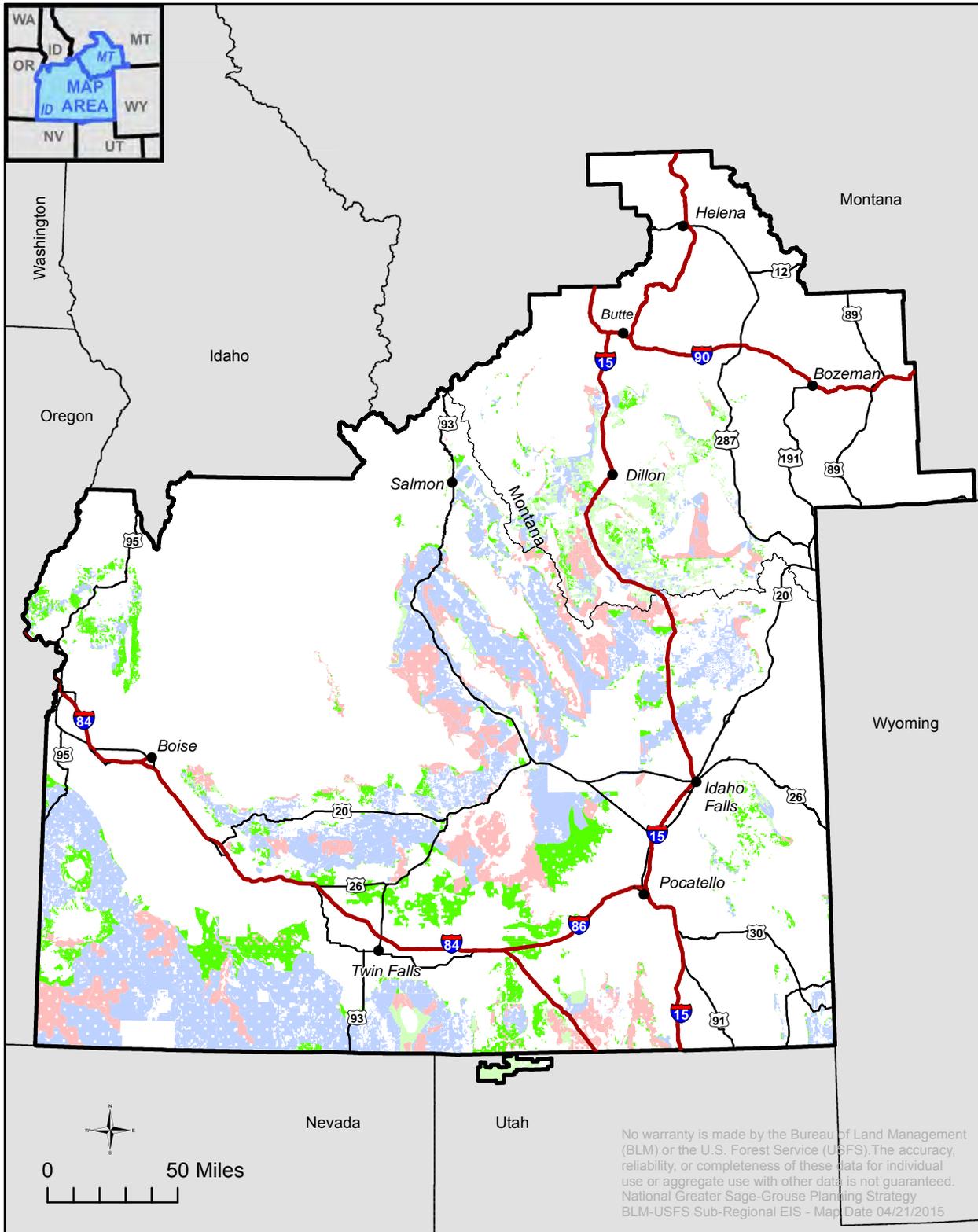


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 National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy
 BLM-USFS Sub-Regional EIS - Map Date 04/21/2015

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Constraint | Open to leasing, moderate constraints |
| Closed to leasing | Open to leasing, standard lease strips |
| Open to leasing, NSO | Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary |



Figure 2-63
Alternative E: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal



Constraint

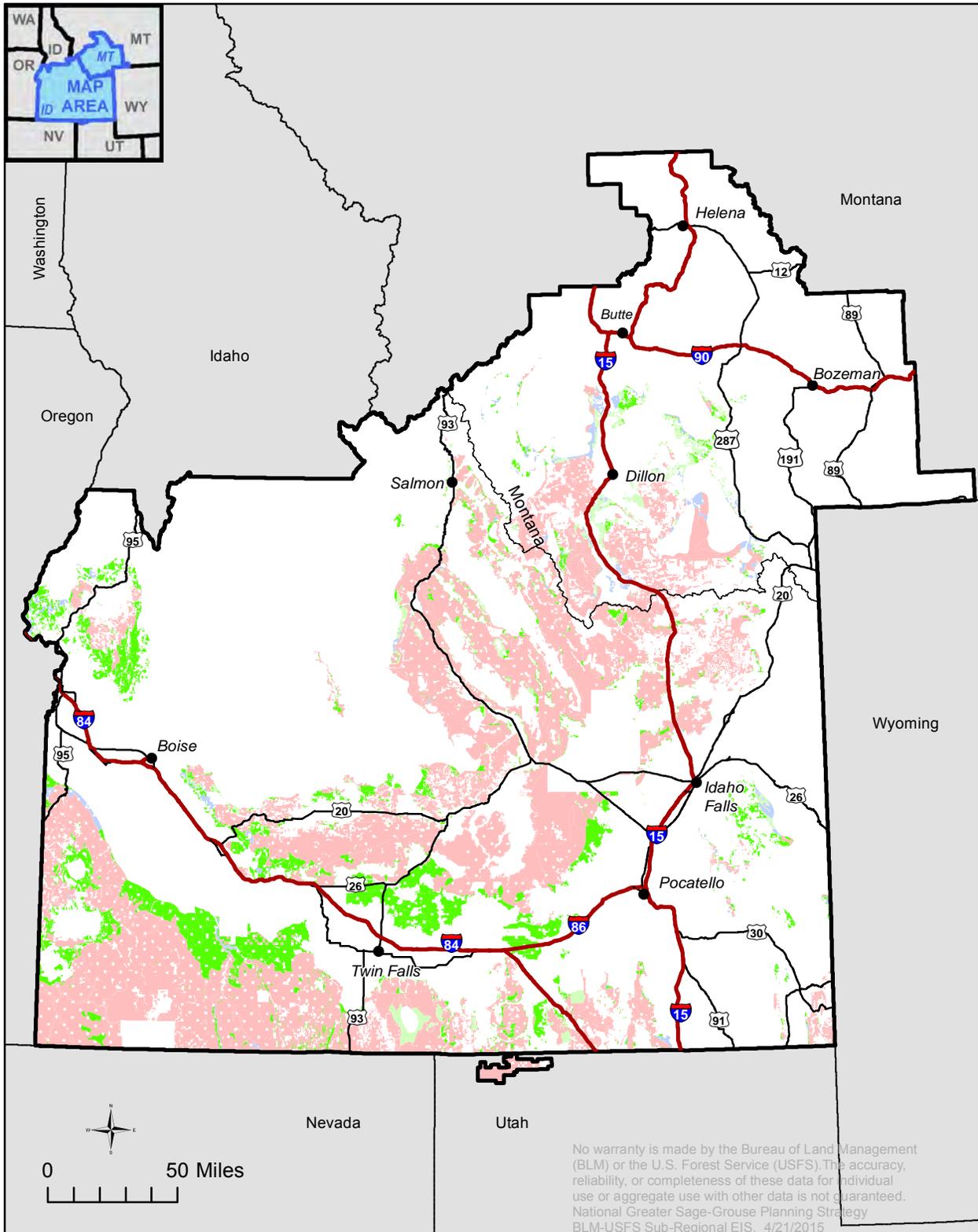
- Closed to leasing
- Open to leasing, NSO

- Open to leasing, moderate constraints
- Open to leasing, standard lease strips

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-64
Alternative F: Fluid Mineral Resource Allocations
Geothermal



Constraint

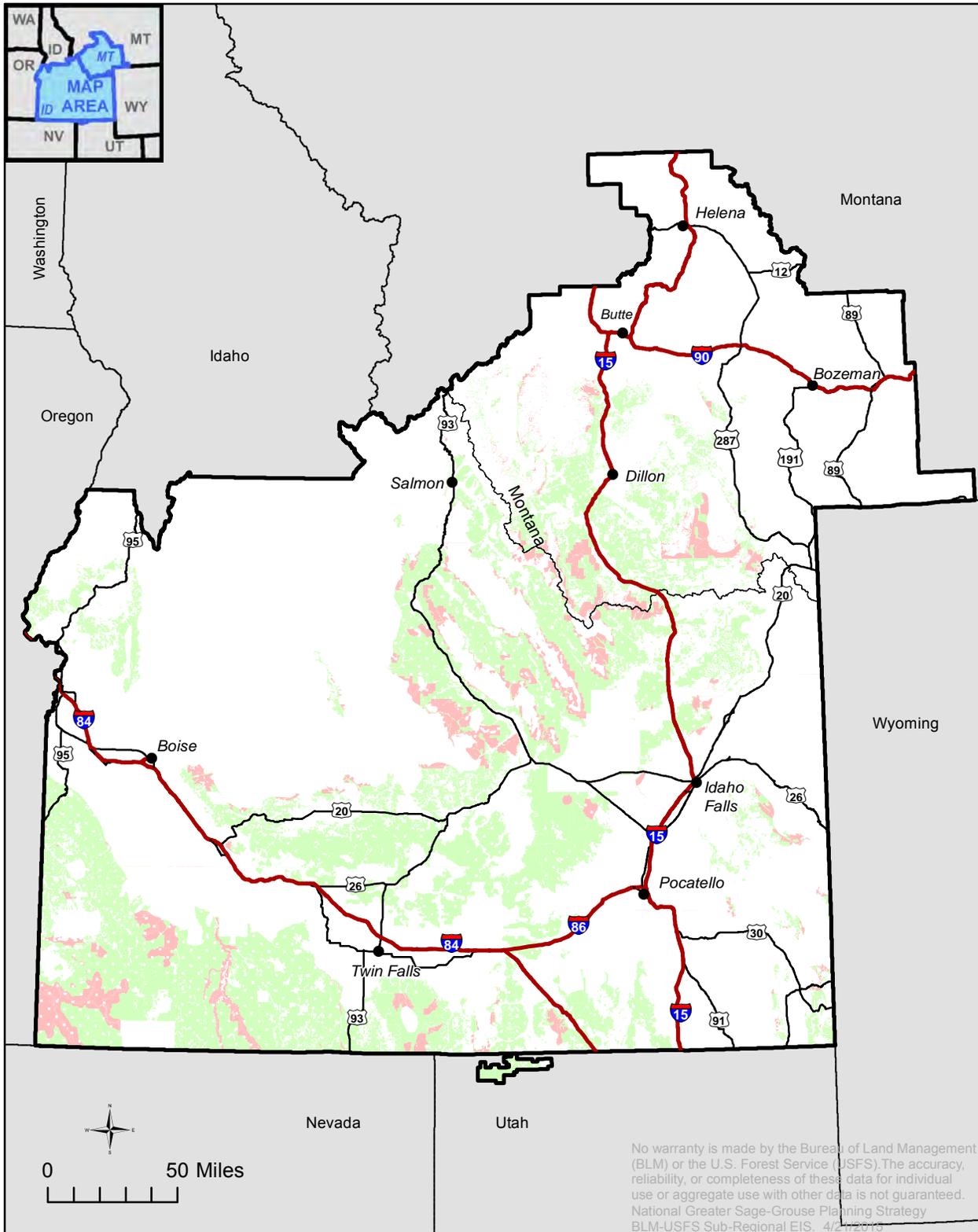
- Closed to leasing
- Open to leasing, NSO

- Open to leasing, moderate constraints
- Open to leasing, standard lease strips

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-65
Alternative A: Locatable Minerals Withdrawals



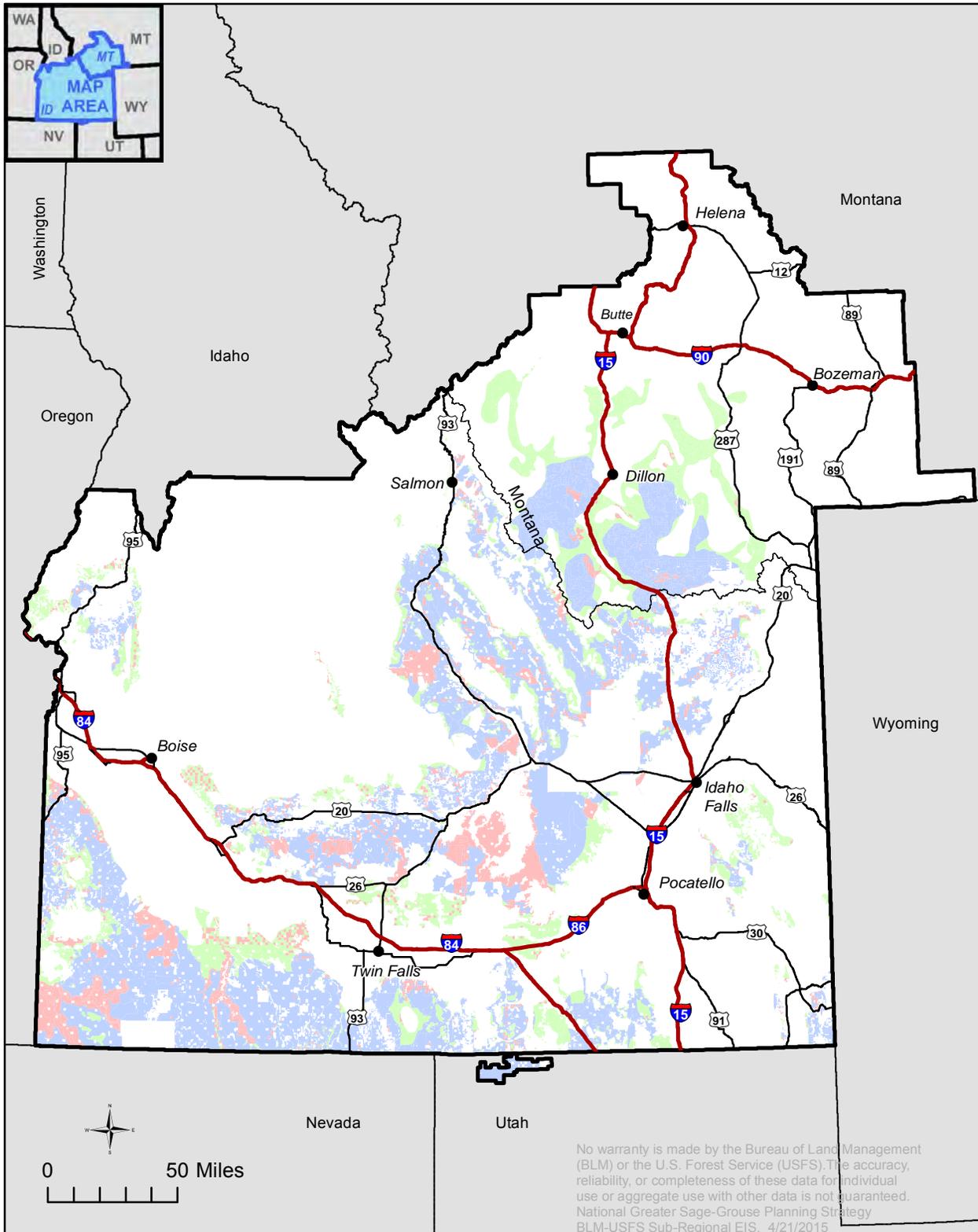
Constraint

- Withdrawn
- Open

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-66
Alternative B: Locatable Minerals Withdrawals



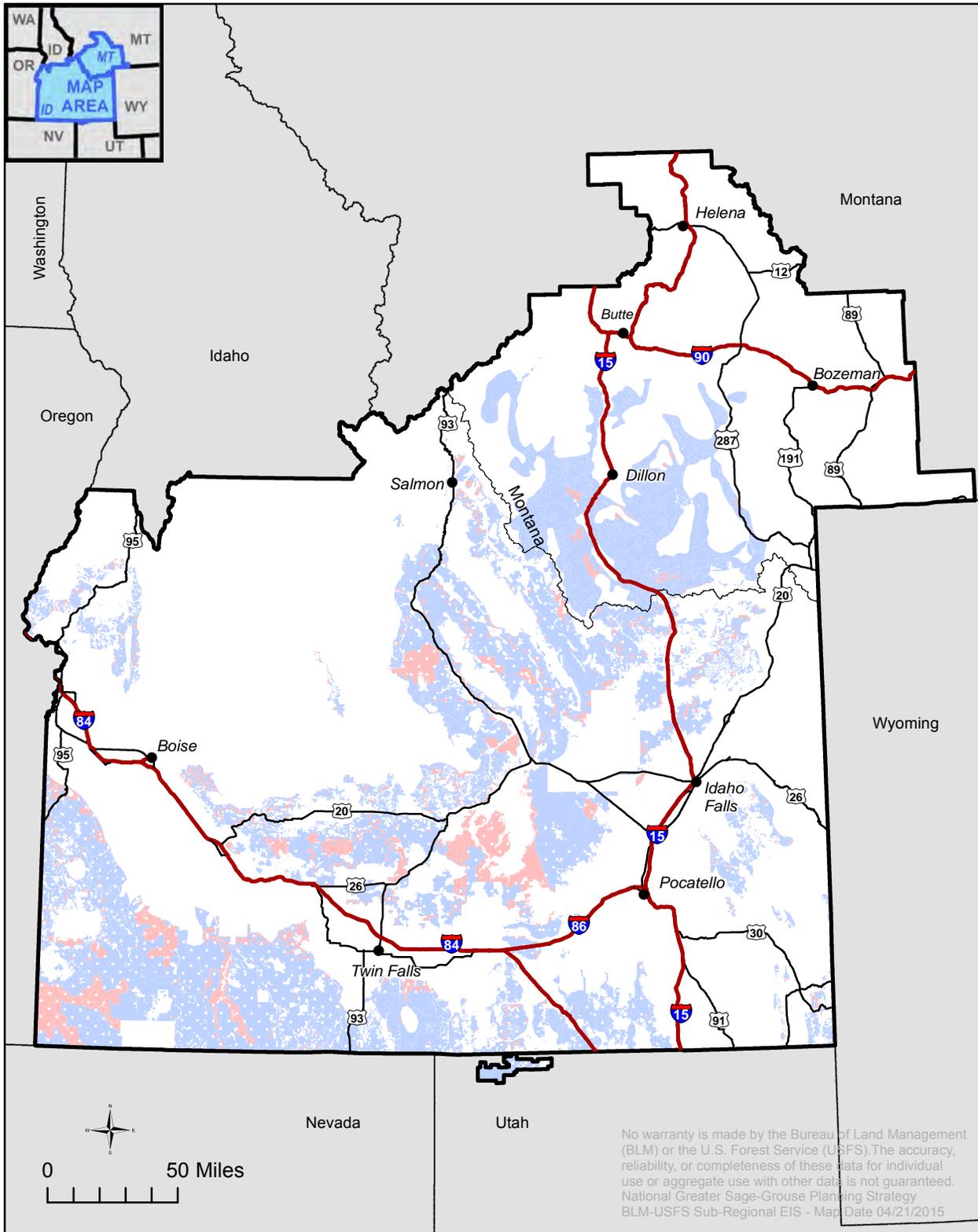
Constraint

- Withdrawn
- Open
- Recommended for withdrawal

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-67
Alternative C: Locatable Minerals Withdrawals

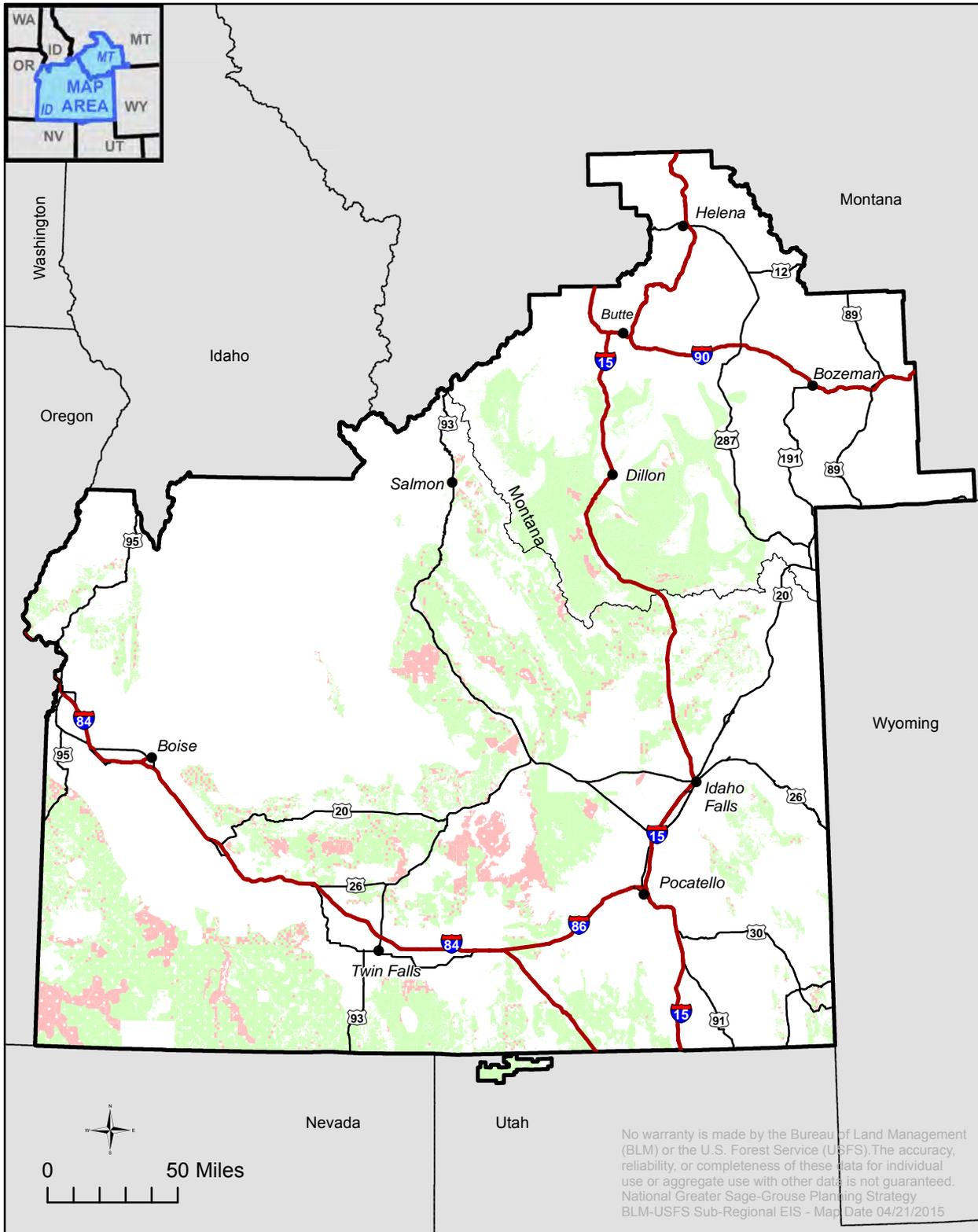


Constraint

- Withdrawn
- Recommended for withdrawal
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-68
Alternative D: Locatable Minerals Withdrawals

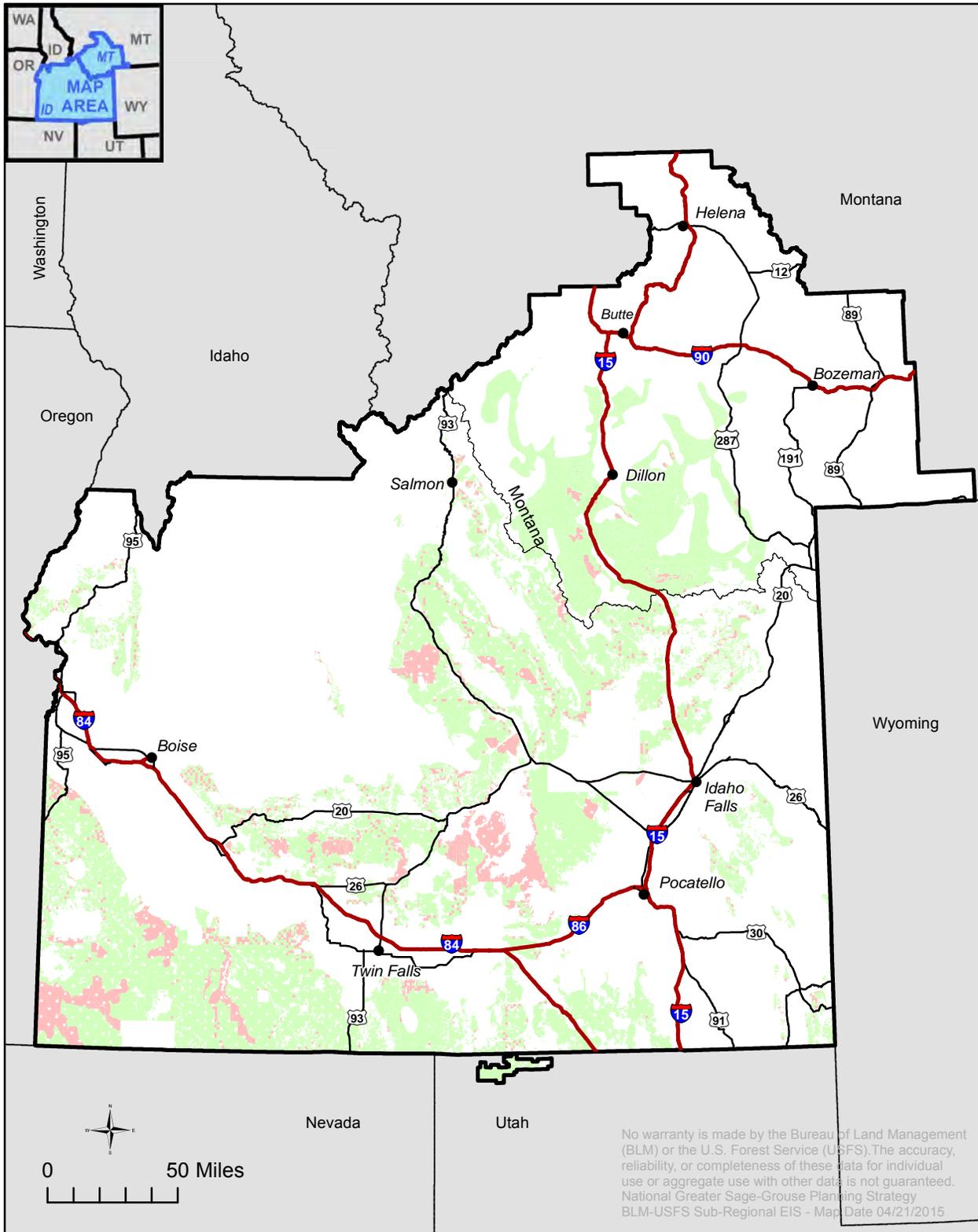


Constraint

- Withdrawn
- Open
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-69
Alternative E: Locatable Minerals Withdrawals

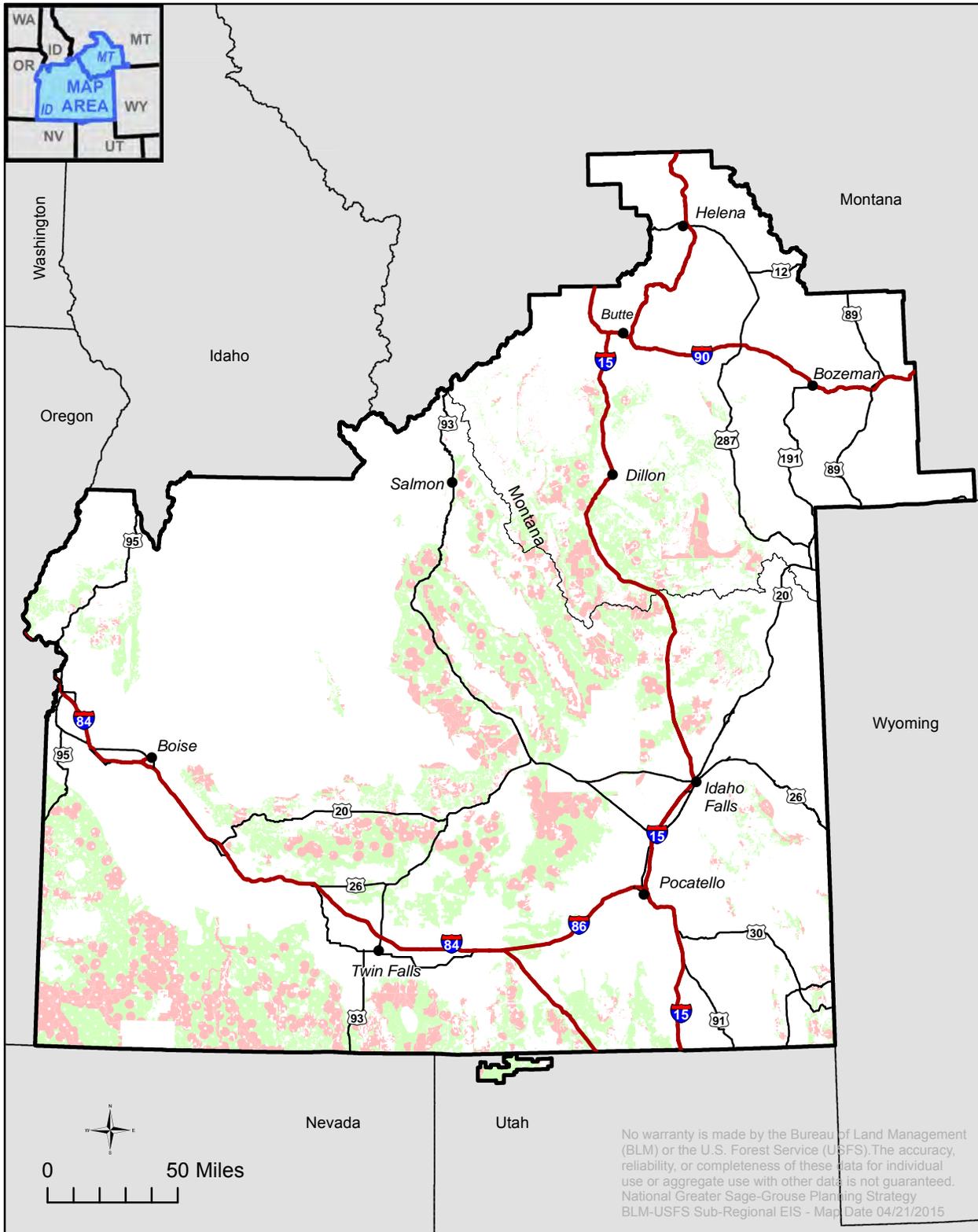


Constraint

- Withdrawn
- Open
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-80
Alternative D: Saleable (Mineral Materials) Allocations



Constraint

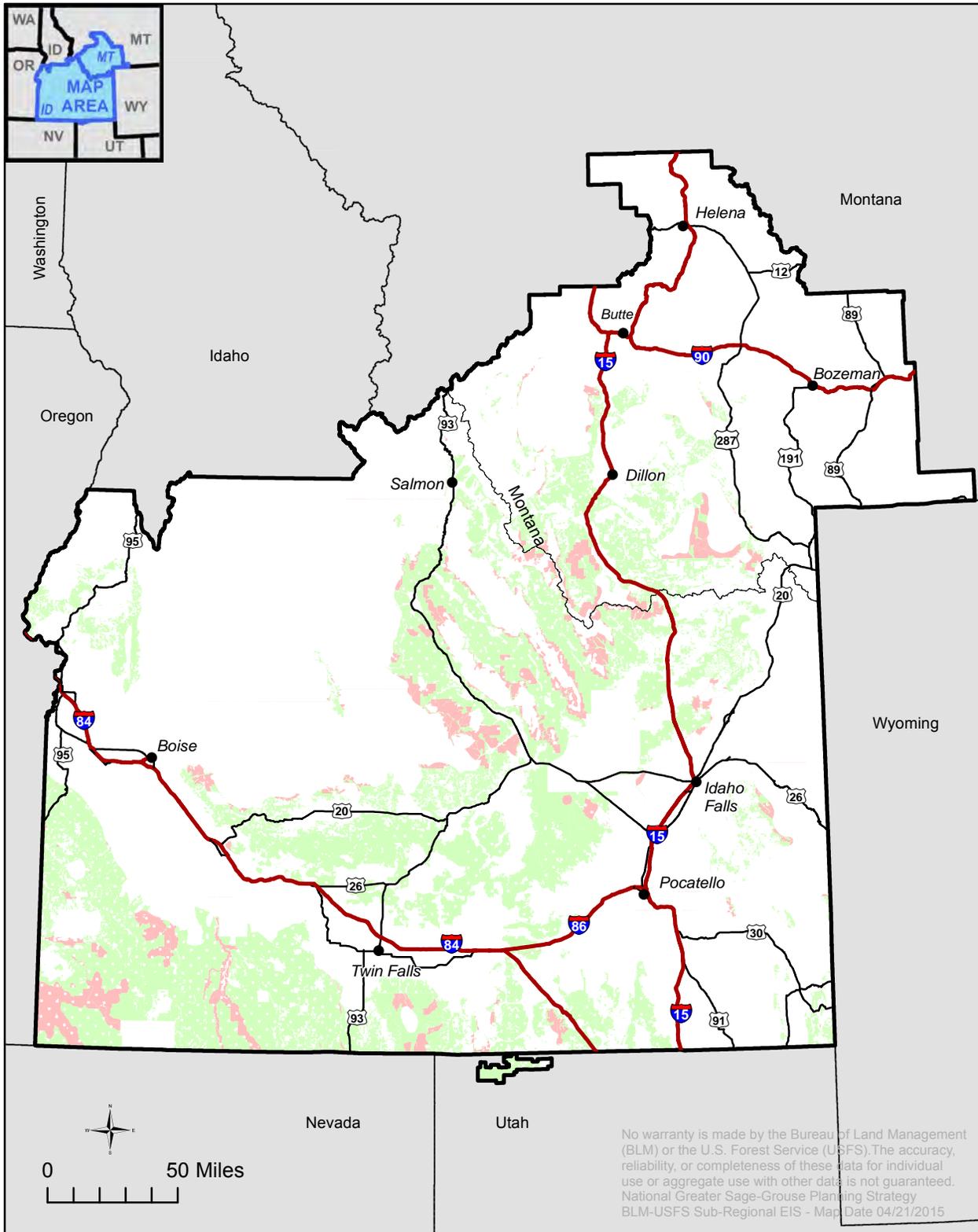
Closed to Saleable (Mineral Material Disposal)

Open

Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-81
Alternative E: Saleable (Mineral Materials) Allocations

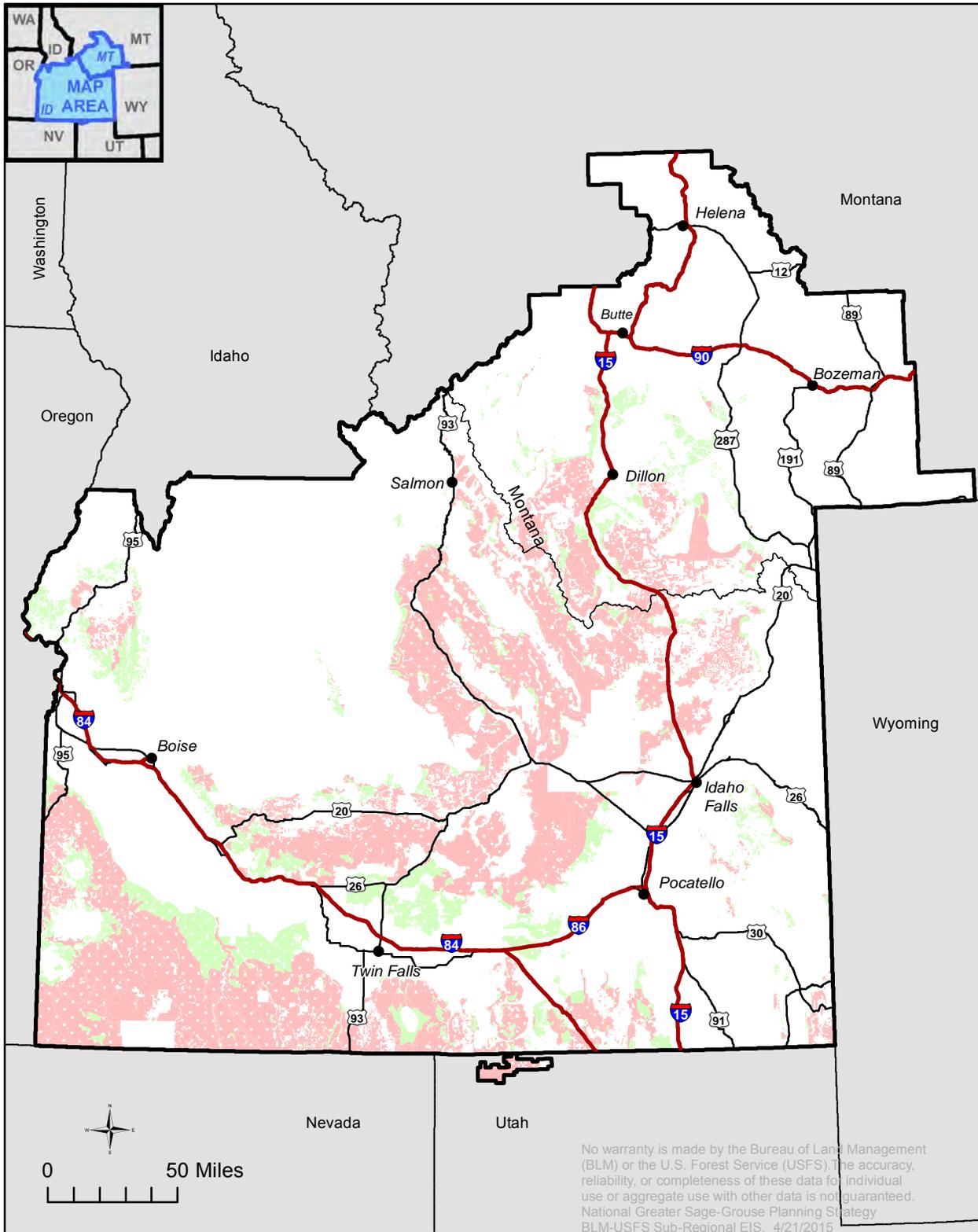


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- Constraint**
- Closed to Saleable (Mineral Material Disposal)
 - Open
 - Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-82
Alternative F: Saleable (Mineral Materials) Allocations

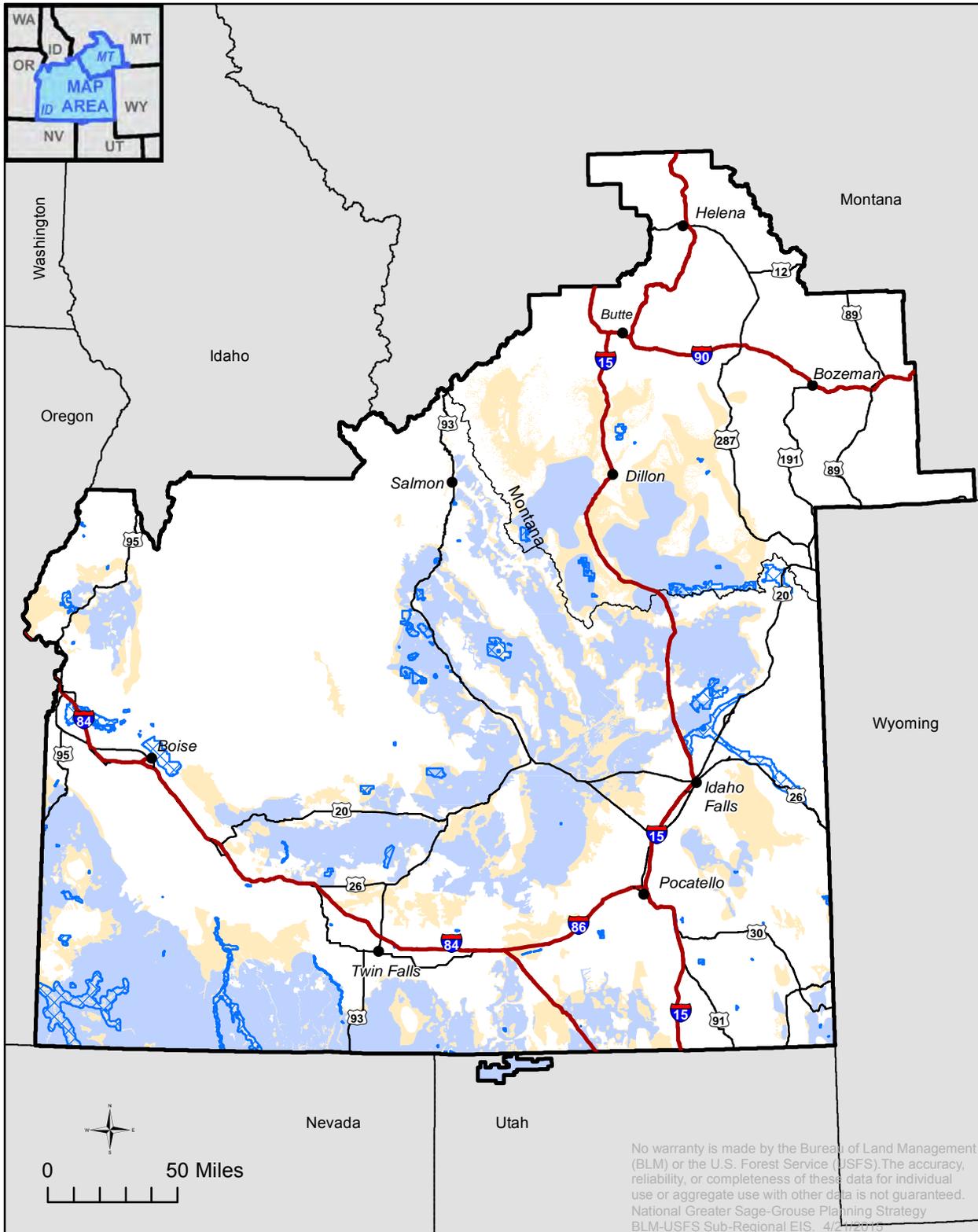


Constraint

- Closed to Saleable (Mineral Material Disposal)
- Open
- Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-83
Alternative A: BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern



 Existing ACEC

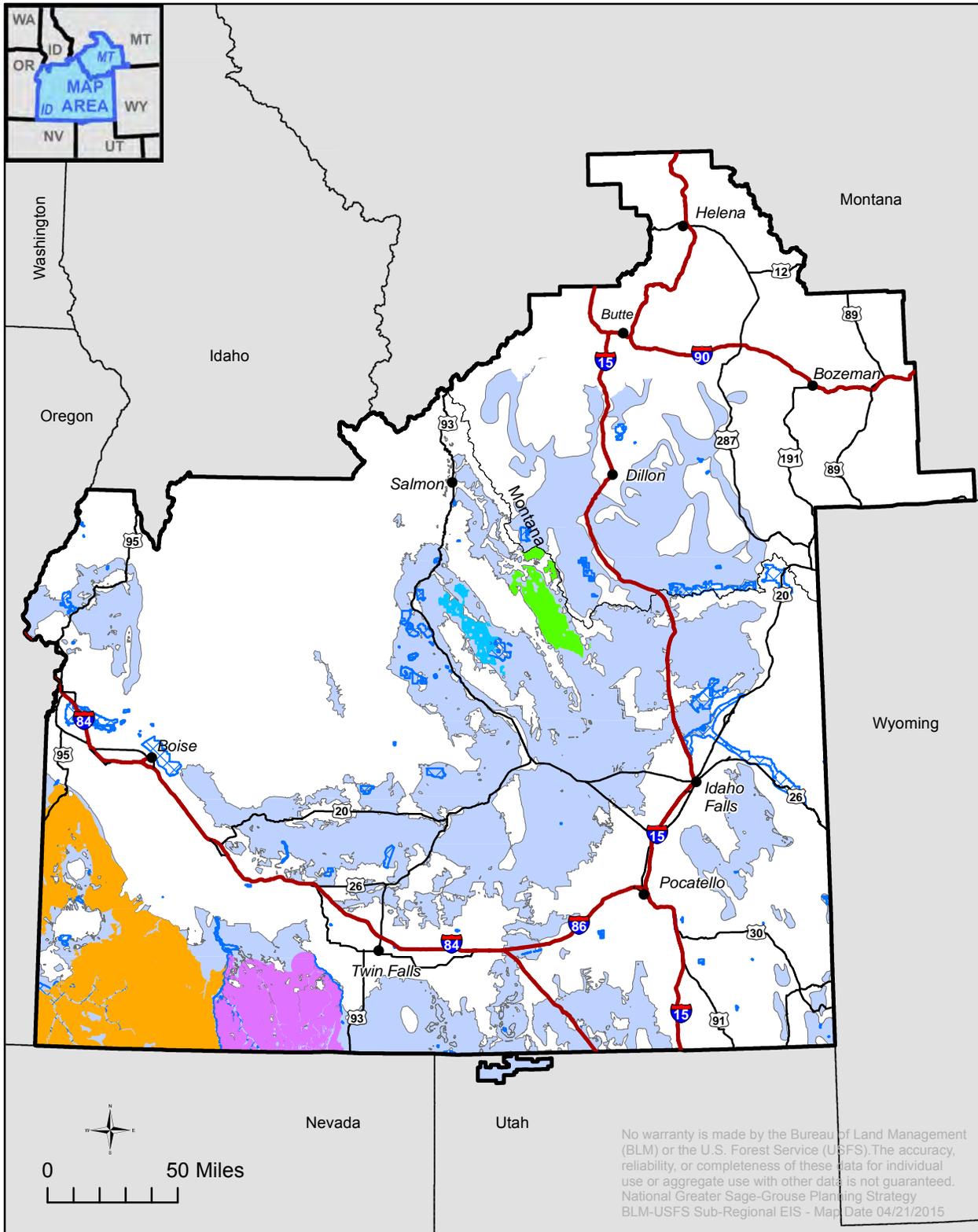
Preliminary Habitat Management Area

 Priority  General

 Idaho and SW Montana
 Sub-regional boundary



Figure 2-84
Alternative C: BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern



Proposed ACEC

-  Canyon\Big Timber Project & Birch Creek Watershed
-  ID-OR Borderlands and Owyhee Front

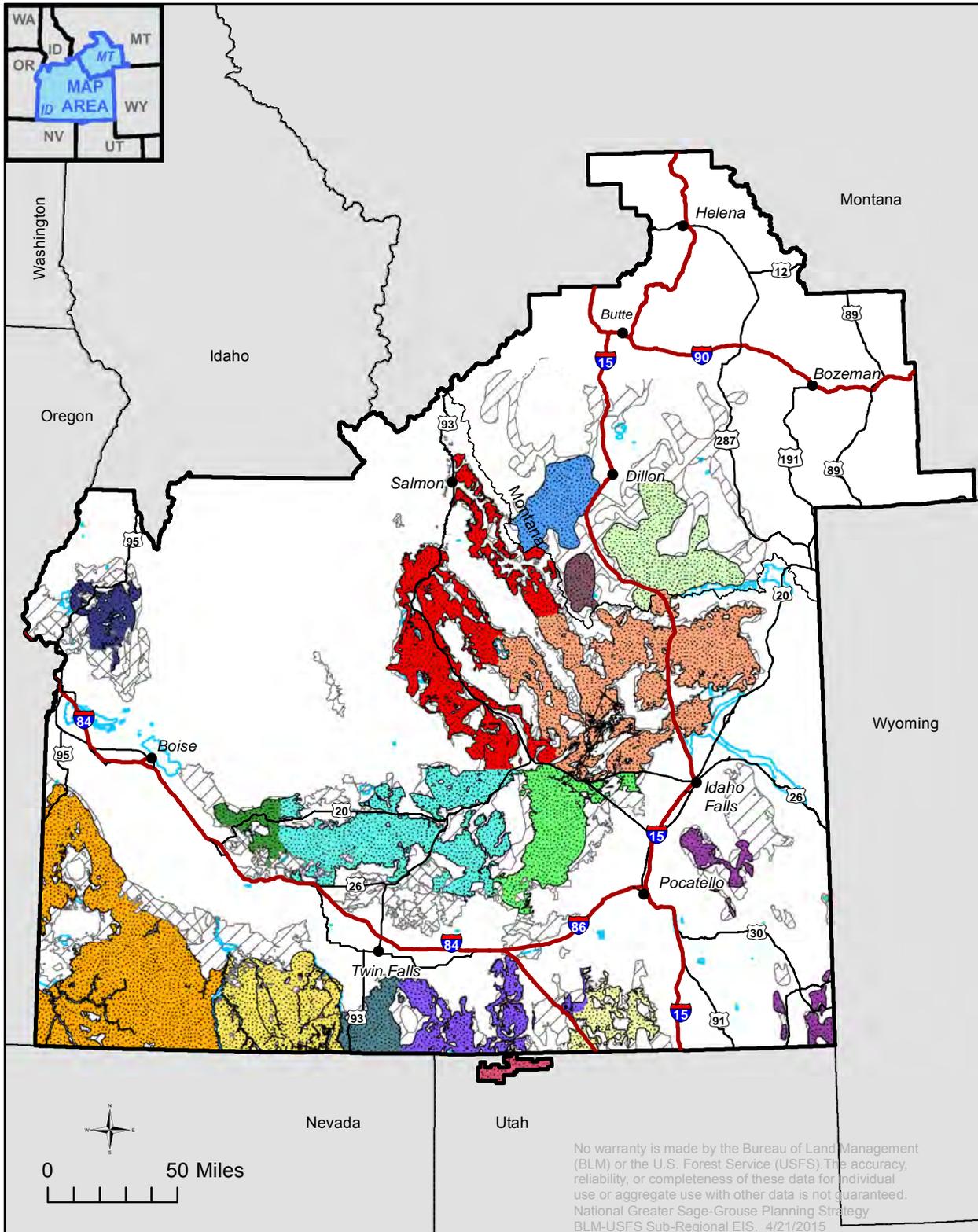
-  Pahsimeroi
-  Sagebrush Sea

-  Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary
-  Existing ACEC
-  PHMA



Figure 2-85

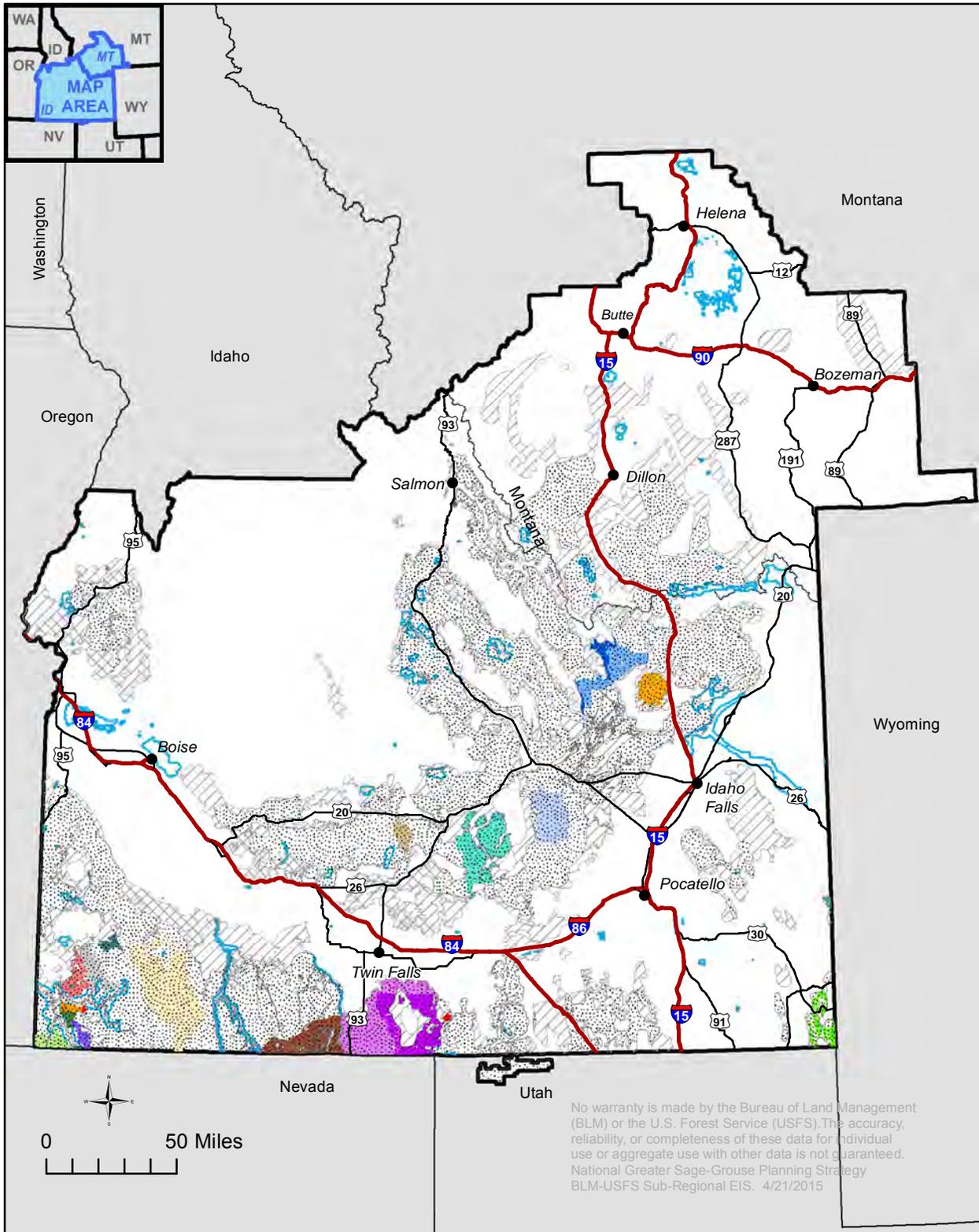
Alternative F1: BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and US Forest Service Zoological Areas



- | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Existing ACEC | Proposed ACEC and USFS Zoological Areas | ID-04 South Magic Valley | ID-08 Big Desert | MT-01 Clark Canyon |
| Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary | ID-01 Owyhee | ID-05 Curlew | ID-09 Upper Snake | MT-02 Lima |
| Habitat Management Area | ID-02 Jarbidge | ID-06 Mountain Home | ID-10 Challis | MT-03 Red Rock |
| Priority | ID-03 Shoshone Basin | ID-07 North Magic Valley | ID-11 West Central | UT-01 Sawtooth Zoological Area |
| General | | | ID-12 East Idaho Uplands | |
| Restoration | | | | |



Figure 2-86
Alternative F2: BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
and US Forest Service Zoological Areas



- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing ACEC Idaho and SW Montana Sub-regional boundary Habitat Management Area Priority General Restoration | <p>Proposed ACEC and USFS Zoological Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID-01 Tent Creek ID-02 Garat 4 ID-03 Garat 3 ID-04 Garat 2 ID-05 Garat 1 ID-06 Deep Cr. Owyhee ID-07 Deep Creek Bruneau ID-08 Bruneau ID-09 Big Springs ID-10 Jarbidge Foothills ID-11 Shoshone Basin/South Hills Shoshone Basin/South Hills Zoological Area ID-12 Sawmill Can. Sage-Grouse ID-13 Wedge Butte ID-14 Wildhorse ID-15 Quaking Aspen Butte ID-16 Bear Lake Bear Lake Zoological Area ID-17 Table Butte/Camas Butte ID-18 Medicine Lodge/Birch Cr. Medicine Lodge/Birch Creek Zoological Area |
|--|---|

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.
 National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy
 BLM-USFS Sub-Regional EIS. 4/21/2015

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Chapter 3

Affected Environment

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review



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Administrative Draft
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1 **Changes to Chapter 3 between Draft LUPA/EIS and Proposed LUPA/Final EIS**

- 2 • General corrections (e.g., typographical errors), clarifications, and acreage recalculations were
3 included. No update was available for the tables from “Summary of Science, Activities,
4 Programs and Policies that Influence the Range-Wide Conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse
5 (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)” (Manier et al. 2013).
6 • The special status species list was updated in Section 3.5.1.
7

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

1 **Chapter 3. Affected Environment**

2 **3.1 Introduction**

3 This chapter documents the existing conditions and trends of resources in the planning area
4 that may be affected by implementing any of the proposed alternatives described in **Chapter**
5 **2, Alternatives.** The affected environment provides the context for assessing potential
6 impacts, which are described in **Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences.**

7 For this LUPA/EIS, the planning area is the entire sub-region within Idaho, southwestern
8 Montana, and the portion of the Sawtooth National Forest within Utah. Specifically, the
9 planning area is the sum of the GRSG population areas within this sub-region, regardless of
10 landownership.

Table
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Surface Management

1-1

Surface Land Management	Acres PPH	Acres PGH	Acres Outside Habitat	Total Acres
BLM Total	7,272,100	1,971,800	3,205,100	12,449,000
BLM – Idaho	6,811,400	1,749,900	2,982,900	11,544,200
Bruneau Field Office	1,001,000	184,700	262,900	1,448,600
Burley Field Office	422,000	206,200	206,700	834,900
Challis Field Office	635,600	84,400	72,900	792,900
Four Rivers Field Office	162,200	190,800	901,400	1,254,400
Jarvis Field Office	765,100	251,900	305,100	1,322,200
Owyhee Field Office	794,600	242,700	222,500	1,259,900
Pocatello Field Office	233,700	87,500	278,800	599,900
Salmon Field Office	311,100	51,600	131,200	493,900
Shoshone Field Office	1,092,500	262,000	368,700	1,723,200
Upper Snake Field Office	1,393,800	187,900	232,600	1,814,300
BLM – Montana	460,600	222,000	222,200	904,800
Dillon Field Office	460,600	222,000	222,200	904,800
Forest Service Total	962,400	898,100	11,391,900	13,252,400
Forest Service - Idaho	728,200	664,100	9,718,800	11,111,100
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	110	30	980	1,120
Sawtooth National Forest	210,100	212,400	1,612,300	2,034,800
Boise National Forest	21,200	56,900	2,182,800	2,260,900
Caribou-Targhee National Forest	148,300	186,400	2,251,300	2,586,000
Salmon-Challis National Forest	348,700	208,300	3,672,400	4,229,400
Forest Service - Montana	162,300	234,000	1,673,100	2,069,400
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	162,300	234,000	1,673,100	2,069,400
Forest Service - Utah	71,900	0	0	71,900
Sawtooth National Forest	71,900	0	0	71,900
US Fish and Wildlife Service	39,700	11,700	30,000	81,400

Table
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Surface Management

Surface Land Management	Acres PPH	Acres PGH	Acres Outside Habitat	Total Acres
National Park Service	27,200	222,700	261,800	511,700
Department of Energy	378,000	182,500	1,670	562,200
Department of Defense	11,100	37,700	78,500	127,400
Bureau of Reclamation	3,250	3,260	109,800	116,300
Indian Tribe	143,900	10,700	189,000	343,600
Idaho State	642,400	377,500	804,500	1,824,400
Montana State	221,665	167,455	431,995	821,115
Utah State	630	0	0	630
Private	2,127,600	1,857,200	9,652,900	13,637,700
Other	87,800	32,200	294,400	414,400
Total Acres:	11,921,200	5,756,600	26,164,500	43,842,300

Source: BLM 2013

1 , **Error! Reference source not found.**, provides a detailed breakdown of landownership
2 status in the planning area. A map of the planning area is provided in **Chapter 1, Figure 1-3,**
3 **Planning Area.**

4 The decision area includes the portions of the planning area that are composed of BLM,
5 Forest Service, and Bankhead Jones surface estates, as well as the mineral estates
6 administered by the BLM or Forest Service. Though the planning area includes private lands,
7 direction provided in this LUPA only applies to BLM and Forest Service surface and
8 minerals. Management direction and actions outlined in this EIS apply only to these BLM-
9 administered and National Forest System lands in the planning area and to federal mineral
10 estate under BLM jurisdiction that may lie beneath other surface ownership. The federal
11 government does not always own every type of mineral in a given acre of federal mineral
12 estate. For example, in some areas, the federal government will only own the coal rights,
13 while a private or state entity might own the oil and gas rights. For this reason, the federal
14 mineral estate for any specific mineral type in the decision area is different than that for all
15 other mineral types in the decision area.

16 While not a part of the planning area in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG Sub-
17 Region, the Jarbidge and Bruneau Field Offices in Idaho will implement GRSG decisions on
18 77,800 acres of BLM-administered lands in Elko County, Nevada, located north of the
19 Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and south of the Idaho-Nevada state line adjacent to the
20 Bruneau and Jarbidge Field Offices in Idaho. For purposes of the GRSG plan amendments
21 in Idaho and in Nevada, planning for these lands will occur through the Nevada and
22 Northeastern California GRSG LUPA, and the regulatory measures and decisions that are
23 put in place for the GRSG through the ROD will be implemented and administered by the
24 Jarbidge and Bruneau Field Offices in Idaho. Due to their remoteness from other BLM-
25 administered lands in Nevada, and because they are contiguous with major blocks of BLM-
26 administered lands in Idaho, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BLM
27 Nevada and BLM Idaho transfers administration of those lands to BLM Idaho.

1 To augment this planning document at a biologically meaningful scale for GRSG, the BER
2 was produced by the USGS for the BLM and Forest Service (Manier et al. 2013). The BER
3 is a science support document that provides information to put planning units and issues
4

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Indian Tribe	143,900	10,700	189,000	343,600
Idaho State	642,400	377,500	804,500	1,824,400
Montana State	221,665	167,455	431,995	821,115
Utah State	630	0	0	630
Private	2,127,600	1,857,200	9,652,900	13,637,700

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Surface Land Management	Acres PPH	Acres PGH	Acres Outside Habitat	Total Acres
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Total Acres:	11,921,200	5,756,600	26,164,500	43,842,300

Source: BLM 2013

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Other	87,800	32,200	294,400	414,400
Total Acres:	11,921,200	5,756,600	26,164,500	43,842,300

Source: BLM GIS 2015

into the context of the larger WAFWA management zones. The BER examines each threat identified in USFWS' listing decision published on March 15, 2010. For each threat, the report summarizes the current scientific understanding of various impacts on GRSG populations and habitats. When available, patterns, thresholds, indicators, metrics, and measured responses that quantify the impacts of each specific threat are reported. Data from the BER are presented throughout this chapter to illuminate the location (e.g., PPH and PGH), magnitude, and extent of the threats within each WAFWA management zone that comprises the planning area.

Because the BER focuses on threats to GRSG at the WAFWA management zone (or range-wide) scale, it provides biologically meaningful data for larger-scale analyses, such as the cumulative effects analysis for GRSG in **Chapter 5**.

Chapter 3 also presents data that are available at a finer scale than used in the BER's larger-scale, WAFWA management zone focus. These fine-scale, local data are incorporated into the affected environment discussion to complement the BER's biologically meaningful data, characterize the relative contributions of threats in the planning area versus the WAFWA management zones, and to set the stage for the cumulative effects analysis for GRSG (**Chapter 4**). However, it should be noted that the tables presented in the Regional Context discussions of each Chapter 3 resource and resource use discussion are from the BER (Manier et al. 2013) and extend outside of the planning area to WAFWA management zone boundaries. Those tables present information for the WAFWA management zones that would be affected by the direction provided in this sub-regional EIS.

3.1.1 Organization of Chapter 3

Certain types of resources that may be present in the LUPA planning area, such as cave and karst resources, are not addressed in this LUPA because issues relating to the management of these resources were not identified during scoping by the public, or by the BLM or Forest Service as relevant to GRSG, or they are not included in the planning area (e.g., coal). Information from broad-scale assessments was used to help set the context for the planning area. The information and direction for BLM and Forest Service resources and resource uses has been further broken down into fine-scale assessments and information. The level of information presented in this chapter is commensurate with and sufficient to assess potential effects discussed in **Chapter 4**, based on the alternatives presented in **Chapter 2**.

1 The following resources and resource uses are specifically addressed in **Chapter 3** and
2 **Chapter 4**, of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse LUPA/EIS.

- 3 • Greater Sage-Grouse
- 4 • Vegetation (including noxious weeds; riparian and wetlands)
- 5 • Fish and wildlife
- 6 • Other special status species
- 7 • Wild horse and burro management
- 8 • Wildland fire ecology and management
- 9 • Livestock grazing
- 10 • Recreation
- 11 • Travel management
- 12 • Lands and realty
- 13 • Minerals
 - 14 – Leasable minerals
 - 15 – Locatable minerals
 - 16 – Salable minerals
 - 17 – Nonenergy leasable minerals
- 18 • Special Designations
 - 19 – Designated Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas
 - 20 – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
 - 21 – Research Natural Areas
 - 22 – Other special designations
- 23 • Soil resources
- 24 • Water resources
- 25 • Cultural resources and tribal interests
- 26 • Visual resources
- 27 • Lands with wilderness characteristics
- 28 • Air quality and climate change
- 29 • Social and economic conditions (including environmental justice)

1 Each resource section in this chapter contains a discussion of existing conditions, including
2 trends.

- 3 • Existing conditions describe the location, extent, and current condition of the
4 resource in the planning area in general, on BLM-administered and National
5 Forest System lands. Conditions for a resource can vary, depending on the
6 resource. The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region planning area
7 contains 18,147,500 acres, regardless of land status. Within the Idaho and
8 Southwestern Montana Sub-Region planning area, there are 15,260,200 acres of
9 BLM-administered lands and 1,861,100 acres of National Forest System lands
10 that are managed according to the BLM and Forest Service plans being amended
11 by this LUPA/EIS. For each resource, a general description of the existing
12 conditions is provided for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region
13 planning area, regardless of land status. This is done to provide a regional
14 context for the resource. More detailed discussion of the existing conditions on
15 various scales may be provided depending on the resource topic. This is done to
16 provide an area-specific description of the existing conditions for the resource.
17 When possible, greater emphasis is placed on describing the existing conditions
18 of the resource as it pertains to GRSG and their habitat.
- 19 • Trends identify the degree and direction of resource change between the present
20 and some point in the past. Not all resource topics will have trends. For example,
21 soil resources may not undergo notable resource change. If there is change, the
22 degree and direction of resource change is characterized as moving toward or
23 away from the current desired conditions, and the reasons for the change are
24 identified. Trends can also be described in quantitative or qualitative terms.
25 Identifying the trends is done to provide an understanding of how BLM and
26 Forest Service management influences the desired condition of the resource over
27 time. It can be difficult to analyze trends for certain resources, because changes
28 to the resource often occur due to factors beyond the control of the BLM and
29 Forest Service. For those resource topics that can be affected by climate change,
30 a discussion of the effects from climate change on the resource is provided.

31 The BLM and Forest Service reviewed the LUPs being amended under this LUPA/EIS and
32 other relevant information sources (such as other LUPAs, maps, and state GRSG
33 conservation assessments) for existing conditions and trends for the resources listed above
34 with respect to GRSG and their habitat. This affected environment information is
35 summarized below and, where appropriate, noted when the information is incorporated by
36 reference.

37 Acreage figures and other numbers used are approximate projections; readers should not
38 infer that they reflect exact measurements or precise calculations. Acreages were calculated
39 using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, and there may be slight variations
40 in total acres between resources.

1 **3.2 Special Status Species – Greater Sage-Grouse**

2 **3.2.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

3 In 2006, the WAFWA used floristic characteristics to organize the diverse sagebrush habitat
4 areas into seven GRSG management zones within the species' distribution (Stiver et al.
5 2006). The Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region contains portions of 2 of the 7
6 zones (MZs II and IV) (**Figure 3-1**, Western United States WAFWA Zones). The vast
7 majority of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region lies within WAFWA's GRSG
8 MZ IV (Stiver et al. 2006); a small portion of southeastern Idaho occurs within MZ II and is
9 associated with the Wyoming Basin population. Populations of GRSG in MZ IV are
10 projected to decline by 55 percent from 2007 to 2037 and by 66 percent in MZ II if current
11 trends in populations and habitat activities continue (USFWS 2010a; Garton et al. 2011).

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Figure 3-1 Western United States WAFWA Zones



1 Periods of decline in GRSG populations rangewide have occurred since the late 1800s
2 (USFWS 2010, p. 13921). More recently, Connelly et al. (2004) reported long-term declines
3 (1965-2004) for GRSG in MZs II and IV. WAFWA (2008) reported declines in MZs II and
4 IV from 1965-2007 of -2.7 percent and 3.8 percent, respectively; Garton et al. (2011)
5 reported annual rates of decline of -3.5 percent and -4 percent for MZs II and IV,
6 respectively.

7 Within the sub-region, GRSG occupy all or portions of ten populations and eight
8 subpopulations described in Connelly et al. (2004). Two large populations (Great Basin Core
9 and Wyoming Basin) encompass portions of Oregon, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming that
10 extend beyond the sub-regional boundary.

11 Population estimates are not available for all GRSG populations due to limited data in some
12 areas; however, Garton et al. (2011) estimated a minimum male GRSG population in 2007
13 of 9,114 for the Northern Great Basin population (analogous to the Great Basin Core
14 population and inclusive of habitats in Idaho and associated portions of Nevada, Oregon,
15 and Utah), and 5,457 for the Snake-Salmon-Beaverhead population. Estimates for the
16 Bannack and Red Rocks Montana populations were 304 and 448 males, respectively. GRSG
17 in southwestern Montana are migratory, moving between separate summer and winter areas.
18 Migratory movements of GRSG also have been documented between eastern Idaho and
19 southwestern Montana from the Bannack and Red Rock populations. Telemetry data from
20 1999 to 2012 show that seasonal movements (including both distance and duration) vary
21 significantly between groups of GRSG.

22 ***Availability of Sagebrush Habitat (Mid-Scale Indicator)***

23 The distribution of GRSG is closely aligned with the distribution of sagebrush-dominated
24 landscapes (Schroeder et al. 2004). Occupancy by GRSG is strongly associated with
25 measures of sagebrush abundance and distribution. Sagebrush area was the single best
26 discriminator between occupied and extirpated ranges among 22 variables evaluated by
27 Wisdom et al. (2011). In the sub-region, large expanses of sagebrush still occur in portions of
28 southwestern and south-central Idaho, in association with the Northern Great Basin
29 population shared with Nevada, Oregon, and Utah, as well as in portions of the Snake-
30 Salmon-Beaverhead population north of the Snake River.

31 In 2012, the BLM completed the range-wide delineation of PPH and PGH in cooperation
32 with respective state wildlife agencies (see **Figure 1-4**). The BLM national office Instruction
33 Memorandum 2012-043 defined PPH as GRSG habitat having the highest conservation
34 value to maintaining sustainable GRSG populations. PGH includes areas of occupied
35 seasonal or year-round habitat outside of priority habitat.

36 At finer scales, PPH and PGH encompass areas of intact sagebrush suitable for GRSG
37 habitat needs as well as areas of conifer encroachment and perennial grass-dominated areas,
38 generally occupied by GRSG or potentially suitable for future restoration.

39 In Idaho, PPH and PGH were identified by the BLM and Forest Service based on a model
40 incorporating GRSG breeding bird density and lek connectivity models, informed with

1 additional ancillary broad-scale habitat data, seasonal habitat maps, connectivity
2 information/expert opinion, population persistence model, local priority areas, and
3 agriculture/conifer filters (Makela and Major 2012).

4 In general, GRSG habitats in Idaho and the portion of the Sawtooth National Forest in
5 northern Utah are composed of a variety of species and subspecies of sagebrush, including
6 mountain big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, Great Basin big sagebrush, low sagebrush,
7 black sagebrush, three-tip sagebrush, and early sagebrush. Conifer encroachment into GRSG
8 habitats, mainly from Utah juniper and western juniper, occurs primarily in south-central and
9 southwestern Idaho and in northern Utah, although encroachment of Douglas-fir and other
10 conifers also occurs at higher elevations. Large areas of native, introduced, or mixed
11 native/introduced perennial grasslands as well as annual grasslands are also present in
12 portions of the Snake River Plain in southern Idaho as a result of recent wildfires and
13 associated rehabilitative efforts or from other rangeland seeding efforts during the 20th
14 century.

15 In Montana, PPH was delineated based on MFWP prior modeling of GRSG Core Areas
16 using a lek-centric model based on male lek attendance and refined with seasonal habitat,
17 telemetry, connectivity information, and field review. Documentation for the Montana Core
18 area analysis is summarized at:

19 [http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ecs/biology/sagegrouse/sagegrouse_strategy_attac](http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ecs/biology/sagegrouse/sagegrouse_strategy_attachments/appendix1.html)
20 [hments/appendix1.html](http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ecs/biology/sagegrouse/sagegrouse_strategy_attachments/appendix1.html).

21 Montana PGH was mapped based on the Schroeder et al. (2004) GRSG distribution map.

22 Sagebrush steppe habitat across southwest Montana consists of diverse species and multiple
23 successional stages, providing for all life stages. Species or subspecies composition consists
24 primarily of mountain big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, three-tip sagebrush, basin big
25 sagebrush, and low sagebrush, as well as multiple other species at lower densities. These
26 occur in mixed as well as pure stands throughout southwestern Montana. Tilling and aerial
27 spraying over 12,000 acres in the 1960s and early 1970s (about 1 percent of BLM-
28 administered lands in the Dillon Field Office) reduced sagebrush canopy on large areas of
29 BLM-administered, mostly in the area inhabited by the Bannack Population. These areas
30 were reseeded with nonnative herbaceous species that further altered natural communities.
31 Sagebrush canopy has recovered, but the herbaceous understory composition is a mix of
32 native species and nonnative wheat grasses. Large areas of sagebrush in the Dillon Field
33 Office appear to provide suitable habitat for GRSG but are unoccupied.

34 To facilitate analysis for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana LUPA/EIS, the GRSG
35 population areas were clipped to the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-regional
36 boundary to eliminate portions occurring outside the sub-region. Boundaries were then
37 adjusted to encompass associated PPH and PGH. Small populations within southwestern
38 Montana were combined into a single analysis area and, in portions of Idaho, some
39 subpopulations were delineated separately or grouped due to similarities in threats or



1 geography. The resulting population areas, used in the analysis below, reflect discrete
2 geographic portions of the sub-region.

3 Based on GIS analysis, there are approximately 18,114,000 acres of PPH and PGH, inclusive
4 of all landownerships, in the sub-regional analysis area (**Table 3-2**, Acres of GRSG Habitat
5 by Population Area within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area). This is
6 inclusive of habitats in Idaho, southwestern Montana, and a small portion of northern Utah
7

Table 3-2
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Population Area within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

GRSG Population Area and Landownership	Acres of Habitat		
	PPH Acres	PGH Acres	Total Acres
East-Central Idaho	141,500	475,800	617,300
All Other	129,200	381,000	510,200
BLM	12,300	23,500	35,800
Forest Service	0	71,300	71,300
Mountain Valleys	3,182,500	856,900	4,039,500
All Other	845,600	315,400	1,161,000
BLM	1,880,500	198,700	2,079,200
Forest Service	456,400	342,900	799,300
SW Montana	1,356,900	1,633,900	2,990,800
All Other	733,400	995,800	1,729,200
BLM	460,600	268,200	728,800
Forest Service	162,900	369,900	532,800
North Side Snake	2,494,700	1,315,300	3,810,000
All Other	788,000	735,500	1,523,500
BLM	1,678,100	493,889	2,171,600
Forest Service	28,600	85,900	114,500
Southwest Idaho	2,294,500	550,100	2,844,600
All Other	498,400	122,500	620,900
BLM	1,796,100	427,700	2,223,700
Forest Service	0	0	0
South Side Snake	2,081,000	921,400	3,002,500
All Other	442,900	285,200	728,800
BLM	1,323,700	466,500	1,790,200
Forest Service	314,400	169,700	484,100
Sawtooth	0	37,600	37,600
All Other	0	16,100	16,100
Forest Service	0	21,500	21,500
Bear Lake	118,700	63,900	182,600
All Other	73,500	36,000	109,500
BLM	43,500	4,690	48,200
Forest Service	1,620	23,100	24,800
Weiser	262,200	346,200	608,400

Table 3-2
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Population Area within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana
Planning Area

All Other	184,900	211,200	396,200
BLM	77,200	134,900	212,200
Forest Service	0	0	0
Total Acres	11,932,000	6,201,300	18,133,300

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Table 3-2
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Population Area within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Acres of Habitat by Ownership Totals	Habitat		
	Priority	General	Total Acres of Habitat
All Other	3,671,100	3,288,300	6,959,400
BLM	7,266,500	1,993,600	9,260,100
Forest Service	994,400	904,500	1,898,900
Total Acres of Habitat	11,931,900	6,186,400	18,118,300

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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administered by the Sawtooth National Forest. The BLM administers approximately 61 percent of PPH and 32 percent of PGH within the decision area. The Forest Service administers approximately 8 percent of PPH and 15 percent of PGH.

In addition, the USFWS has identified PACs in their 2013 COT report (USFWS 2013). The overlap between the USFWS PACs and the GRSG Population Areas presented in **Table 3-2** is shown in **Table 3-3**, Acres of GRSG Population Areas within PACs.

Table 3-3
Acres of GRSG Population Areas within PACs

GRSG Population Area	Within PAC (acres) ¹	Outside PAC (acres) ¹
East-Central Idaho	0	115,600
BLM	0	35,800
Forest Service	0	79,700
Mountain Valleys	2347,800	696,100
BLM	1,914,900	251,900
Forest Service	432,900	444,200
SW Montana	623,500	638,300
BLM	460,600	268,200
Forest Service	162,900	370,100
North Side Snake	1,297,500	1,391,900
BLM	1,269,500	89,100
Forest Service	28,000	89,100
Southwest Idaho	1,870,900	717,100
BLM	1,870,900	717,100
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	1,491,800	881,800
BLM	1,195,700	658,800
Forest Service	296,700	223,000
Sawtooth	0	21,500
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	21,500

Table 3-3
Acres of GRSG Population Areas within PACs

GRSG Population Area	Within PAC (acres) ¹	Outside PAC (acres) ¹
Bear Lake	42,900	33,100
BLM	41,600	9,700
Forest Service	1,300	23,400
Weiser	0	287,500
BLM	0	287,300
Forest Service	0	100
Outside Population Area	0	13,254,600
BLM	0	2,164,100
Forest Service	0	11,090,500
Total	7,674,400	18,037,400
BLM	6,753,200	5,695,800
Forest Service	921,200	12,341,600

Source: BLM GIS 2015

¹Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding convention

1

2 **Predation**

3 The GRSG is potential prey to a variety of predator species, such as the golden eagle (*Aquila*
4 *chrysaetos*), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), American badger
5 (*Taxidea taxus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), weasels (*Mustela* spp.), and others
6 (Schroeder et al. 1999; Coates 2007), but none of these species prey especially upon GRSG
7 (Hagen 2011). Adults are susceptible to predation while on leks or nests, and eggs are
8 vulnerable as well (Schroeder et al. 1999; Coates 2007; Hagen 2011). Predation is the most
9 commonly identified cause of direct mortality for GRSG during all life stages (Connelly et al.
10 2011; USFWS 2010a citing others), but studies suggest that predation is not limiting
11 populations (Hagen 2011). As a result, there is little scientific support for predator
12 management over broad geographic or temporal scales (Hagen 2011).

13 Information on the numbers of GRSG taken by specific predators is not readily available;
14 however, some studies report overall predation rates on age-classes, sex, and nests. Connelly
15 et al. (2000), in a review of long-term data, reported 83 percent of male GRSG deaths and 52
16 percent of female deaths were attributed to predation. Gregg et al. (2007), cited in USFWS
17 (2010a), reported mortality of GRSG chicks from predation during the first few weeks after
18 hatching was 82 percent. Coates and Delehanty (2010) monitored 87 GRSG nests, and 42.5
19 percent were preyed upon. Of these nests, an increase of 1 raven per 10 km (3.86 mi) of
20 survey transect monitored was associated with a 7.5 percent increase in the odds of nest
21 failure. Coates (2007) documented predation at 17 GRSG nests; ravens accounted for 10
22 nests (59 percent) and badgers 7 nests (41 percent).

23 In areas where habitat is not limited and of good quality, predation is not a threat to the
24 persistence of the species (USFWS 2010a). However, predation may limit population growth
25 in fragmented habitats or areas where predator populations have supplemental food sources,



1 such as where landfills or other human factors attract and concentrate scavengers (Coates
2 2007), or where electrical transmission or other human-made structures facilitate nesting and
3 perching by avian predators such as ravens (Howe 2012; Hagen 2011).

4 As land-management agencies, the primary role of the BLM and Forest Service is the
5 management of habitats, land uses, and associated authorizations. Therefore, the reduction
6 of predator effects on GRSG in this conservation strategy is best accomplished through the
7 appropriate management, improvement, or restoration of sagebrush habitats and the siting
8 and design of human-made structures in a way that eliminates or reduces risk from predators
9 that may utilize them to their advantage. Direct predator control would occur under the
10 purview of the states of Idaho and Montana and the USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, in
11 cooperation with the USFWS.

12 3.2.2 Habitat Conditions and Trends

13 The general condition and trend of habitats on BLM-administered and National Forest
14 System lands varies by geographic area within the sub-region and is a result of various
15 threats that are currently occurring or that have occurred historically.

16 In Idaho, threats to GRSG were ranked by an independent science panel and addressed in
17 the *Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho* (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee
18 2006). Highest ranking threats, in order of relative score, included wildfire, infrastructure,
19 annual grasslands, livestock impacts, human disturbance, and West Nile virus.

20 West Nile virus has acted as an important source of mortality for GRSG and the virus was
21 an important new source of mortality in low and mid-elevation GRSG populations range-
22 wide from 2003 to 2007 (Walker and Naugle 2011). The highest confirmed elevation at
23 which GRSG have been infected with WNV is approximately 7,500 feet (2,300 meters) in
24 the Lyon-Mono population of eastern California (Naugle et al. 2005). Individual GRSG in
25 populations exposed to the virus during July to August 2003 were 3.3 times more likely to
26 die than birds in uninfected populations (Naugle et al. 2004). West Nile virus mortality of
27 GRSG has been documented as ranging from 5 to 44 percent with most mortality occurring
28 in July and August (Walker and Naugle 2011, Kaczor, 2008). West Nile virus has been
29 documented in GRSG in Idaho and in 2006, the GRSG hunting season was closed in
30 western Owyhee County due to concerns of West Nile virus impacts (Idaho Sage-grouse
31 Advisory Committee, 2008).

32 Additional habitat-associated threats of concern in portions of southern Idaho included
33 conifer encroachment, seeded perennial grasslands, sagebrush control, urban and exurban
34 development, and mines, landfills and gravel pits. In 2012, the Idaho Governor's Sage-
35 Grouse Task force reiterated concerns about wildfire, invasive species and infrastructure, as
36 well as recreation, improper livestock grazing and West Nile virus (Idaho Governor's Sage-
37 grouse Task Force 2012). Landscape conditions and trend of BLM-administered and
38 National Forest System lands in the sub-region are summarized in **Table 3-4**, Habitat
39 Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern
40 Montana Planning Area.

1 **3.2.3 Regional Context**

2 As stated above, the majority of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana planning area is
3 within Management Zone IV; a small portion in the southeast is within MZ II.

4 ***Management Zone IV (Snake River Plain Management Zone)***

5 Management Zone IV covers nearly all of Idaho’s GRSG habitat, with the majority of
6 occupied habitat within the Northern Great Basin (South Side Snake) and Snake River Plain
7 population areas (Mountain Valleys, North Side Snake, and Southwest Idaho), as well as
8 southwestern Montana, on both BLM-administered and National Forest System lands. MZ
9 IV also includes eastern Oregon and northern Nevada, and the Box Elder population in
10 Utah, outside the planning area. This area supports the largest population of GRSG outside
11

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Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
East-Central Idaho	<p>96% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover.</p> <p>Habitat proportion in the 10 to 30% cover range by species or subspecies is as follows:</p> <p>Low Sagebrush 0%</p> <p>Mountain Big Sagebrush 97%</p> <p>Wyoming Big Sagebrush 92%</p>	<p>The BLM administers a small portion of the lands, which are isolated/patchy areas of sagebrush associated with mountain sides or valleys.</p>	<p>Primarily dominated by Wyoming sagebrush with mountain sagebrush in some of the higher elevations; bulbous bluegrass and crested wheatgrass present in understory at many of the lower elevation sites; many of the higher elevation sites have more native understory. Disturbance to the sagebrush canopy varies by site, with some sites having mature sagebrush and others having been burned in the last 10 years. In these burned areas, there is little sagebrush cover present.</p>	<p>Conversion of Conservation Reserve Program lands on private lands</p> <p>Human disturbance</p> <p>Infrastructure</p> <p>Isolated populations</p> <p>Lack of (or limited) information and data on GRSG</p> <p>Urban expansion and development.</p>
Mountain Valleys (Idaho)	<p>Northern valleys portion (e.g., Big Lost/, Little Lost/Pahsimeroi, Birch/Lemhi):</p> <p>99% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover, of mixed species or subspecies.</p>	<p>Sagebrush habitats at both lower and higher elevations are generally intact and at lower risk of invasive species and wildfire. In the northern portion (e.g., Challis, Salmon Field Offices), understories of Wyoming big sagebrush</p>	<p>Higher elevation lands are typically more resilient, and generally intact.</p> <p>Sagebrush habitats are generally composed of mountain big sagebrush and low sagebrush. Understories are generally intact and</p>	<p>Infrastructure development, mainly transmission, poses as risk. Habitats in the Challis/Salmon portion also tend to be more linear in configuration due to the orientation of associated mountain ranges and valleys. Impacts from</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
	<p>Sand Creek portion: 93% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover, of mixed species or subspecies.</p>	<p>habitats have shifted in some areas to predominance by Sandberg's bluegrass in past decades. Population growth is static in the absence of restoration seeding efforts. Higher elevation areas are generally intact, though these areas may be at risk of encroachment by Douglas-fir.</p> <p>In the eastern portion (Upper Snake area), mountain big sagebrush may be exceeding desired densities in some areas, although there is also concern to retain sagebrush due to losses elsewhere.</p> <p>In the western portion (Weiser area), there is a relatively isolated GRSG population facing threats from rapid exurban expansion, interest in gas and geothermal development, and wildfire.</p>	<p>include native grasses and forbs. These areas are resilient following to disturbance and resistant to annual grass invasion. Fire is less frequent than southern Idaho and is not a significant threat at this time.</p>	<p>infrastructure development, roads, and other surface disturbing activities could be more concentrated as a result.</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
<p>SW Montana (BLM Dillon Field Office and Beaverhead National Forest)</p>	<p>98% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover of mixed species or subspecies.</p>	<p>High and low elevation sagebrush habitats are largely intact and at low risk of wildfire and invasive species. Diverse habitat conditions are present and are widely interspersed across various ownerships. In the southwest portion of the field office, Wyoming big and mountain big sagebrush habitats were tilled, sprayed, and or seeded with nonnative wheat grasses in the 1960s and 1970s. Sagebrush canopy has recovered but the herbaceous understory composition is a mix of native species and nonnative wheat grasses.</p> <p>There has been little disturbance in sagebrush canopy cover in the last 40 years within the field office. Some loss of high elevation mountain big sagebrush habitat due to Douglas-fir</p>	<p>High and low elevation sagebrush habitats are largely intact and at low risk of wildfire and invasive species. Some habitat conversion has occurred on National Forest System lands but on a smaller scale. Likewise sagebrush canopy cover has recovered but the herbaceous understory composition is a mix of native species and nonnative wheat grasses.</p> <p>There has been little disturbance in sagebrush canopy cover in the last 40 years. Some loss of high elevation mountain big sagebrush habitat due to Douglas-Fir colonization occurring across all federal ownerships in</p>	<p>Wildfire (Acres lost to wildfire in the past 50 years has been minimal, but the threat is ever present.)</p> <p>Invasive plant species such as spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, hounds tongue, and some cheatgrass present a risk primarily along travel corridors.</p> <p>Conifer colonization in to sagebrush steppe habitat (primarily Douglas-fir) is a threat.</p> <p>Infrastructure/ human disturbances (fences, roads, power lines, pipelines) as well as improper grazing, habitat conversion for agricultural needs on private lands, and energy/mineral exploration and development also pose a threat to habitat.</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
		<p>colonization.</p> <p>Prescribed fire treatments in the past ten years have targeted Douglas-fir colonization to restore high elevation mountain big sagebrush habitats and create a mosaic of seral conditions.</p> <p>Overall riparian and upland habitat conditions are improving due to changes in livestock management in the past ten years.</p>	<p>southwestern Montana.</p> <p>Reduction in livestock over the last 10 to 15 years has also improved habitat conditions.</p>	
<p>North Side Snake</p>	<p>74% of habitat overall is 10-30% sagebrush cover.</p> <p>Habitat proportion in the 10-30% cover range by species or subspecies is as follows:</p> <p>Low Sagebrush 100%</p> <p>Mountain Big Sagebrush 86%</p>	<p>Substantial portions of the Big Desert and Minidoka Desert areas have burned in the past two decades due to large scale, fast-moving wildfires. Some large areas of sagebrush still exist in the western and northern portions but are at risk of wildfire.</p> <p>Most Wyoming big sagebrush habitats are at</p>	<p>N/A. Minimal National Forest System lands involved.</p>	<p>Wildfire poses a significant risk to all habitats in the area.</p> <p>Cheatgrass in lower elevation habitats is at risk of advancing or proliferating following wildfire.</p> <p>Infrastructure development, mainly from proposed transmission lines poses a</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
	Wyoming Big Sagebrush 59%	risk of cheatgrass expansion. The trend is for continued rapid loss of large acreages of sagebrush and recent restoration efforts due to continuing wildfires.		risk, generally near the fringe of PPH and PGH. There is some potential for geothermal development in portions of the Shoshone Field Office.
Southwest Idaho	56% of habitat overall is 10-30% sagebrush cover. Habitat proportion in the 10-30% cover range by species or subspecies is as follows: Low Sagebrush 84% Mountain Big Sagebrush 64% Wyoming Big Sagebrush 44%	Large, intact areas of native sagebrush are present, and contiguous with Nevada and Oregon Relatively low level of infrastructure development constitutes the largest remaining intact sagebrush area in the sub-region. Trend is that wildfires continue to impact sagebrush acreage but at a smaller scale and frequency than other areas. Juniper control efforts by BLM and others likely are not keeping pace with expansion.	N/A	Wildfire Juniper encroachment in the western portion Invasive species (cheatgrass, mainly) Infrastructure associated with proposed new transmission lines. Potential for wind energy development in higher elevations such as the Owyhee Mountains. Potential for geothermal energy development in the Bruneau Field Office.
South Side Snake	55% habitat overall is 10	Lower elevation, drier	Habitats are higher	Wildfire poses a substantial

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
(Includes the Sawtooth National Forest portion in Utah)	<p>to 30% sagebrush cover.</p> <p>Habitat proportion in the 10 to 30% cover range by species/ subspecies is as follows:</p> <p>Low Sagebrush 64%</p> <p>Mountain Big Sagebrush 55%</p> <p>Wyoming Big Sagebrush 55%</p>	<p>Wyoming big sagebrush habitats are fragmented heavily in many areas due to frequent large wildfires.</p> <p>Cheatgrass poses a risk in the lowest elevations.</p> <p>Higher elevation, mountain big sagebrush sites are generally in good condition.</p> <p>Portions contain large perennial grasslands pending recovery of sagebrush.</p> <p>Trend is toward continuing, rapid loss of sagebrush at relatively large scales in the western portion due to wildfire.</p> <p>Conifer encroachment (primarily Utah juniper) into sagebrush communities is of concern in the southern portion.</p>	<p>elevation mountain big sagebrush, in relatively good condition; however, they are smaller, fragmented fringes of sagebrush with steeper slopes interspersed between other habitat types. High to moderate risk of near term infrastructure development due to interest in wind energy.</p> <p>Trend in habitat condition (sagebrush) is relatively stable due to lower frequency and smaller scales of wildfires. Conifer encroachment (Utah juniper, mainly) in portions of southern Idaho and northern Utah.</p>	<p>threat. Significant acreages within the Jarbidge Field Office, in particular, have burned in the past two decades.</p> <p>High interest in wind development on higher elevation BLM-administered and National Forest System lands (e.g., Cotterel, South Hills, S. Twin Falls County, and Pocatello/American Falls).</p> <p>Urban expansion; potential for oil/gas development in the Bear Lake Plateau.</p> <p>Conifer encroachment, mainly Utah juniper, in the Burley Field Office and Utah portion of Sawtooth National Forest.</p> <p>Cheatgrass expansion in lower elevations (i.e., Wyoming big sagebrush).</p>
Sawtooth	98% of habitat overall is 10	N/A	Habitat is primarily higher	Little recent information

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
	to 30% sagebrush cover of mixed species or subspecies.		<p>elevation mountain big sagebrush, generally relatively good condition in the Sawtooth Valley/ headwaters of the Salmon River. Includes smaller areas of noxious weeds and/or low diversity of native forbs diversity. Long term trend in areas is downward due to encroachment by Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine.</p> <p>Sawtooth National Forest personnel occasionally observe GRSG. Last documented observation in fall 2010.</p>	<p>available on the population, which is apparently isolated from other populations. Last documentation of lek attendance was of 2 male GRSG in 1993 at 1 of the 3 known leks.</p> <p>Conifer encroachment (Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine).</p> <p>Potential concerns with domestic sheep grazing and native forb diversity.</p> <p>Noxious and invasive weeds.</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
Bear Lake (Idaho portion)	99% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover, of mixed species or subspecies.	Relatively small area of southeastern Idaho; Sagebrush is largely intact in many areas. Patchy landownership.	The Forest Service administers a limited amount of sagebrush habitat in the Idaho portion of the Bear Lake population area, totaling about 1,391 acres. The majority (1,037 acres) is over 30% canopy cover; the remainder is 10 to 30%. Wyoming sagebrush transitions to mountain big sagebrush at higher elevations. Sagebrush communities are largely intact with little to moderate amounts of cheatgrass in understory.	Some potential for oil/gas development; urban expansion, infrastructure
Weiser	72% of habitat overall is 10 to 30% sagebrush cover. Habitat proportion in the 10 to 30% cover range by species or subspecies is as follows:	Sagebrush is largely intact in portions. There are some annual and perennial grasslands in the periphery due to wildfires. Landownership is patchy.	N/A	Exurban development, infrastructure, wildfire; invasive annual grasses

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
	<p>Low Sagebrush 78%</p> <p>Mountain Big Sagebrush 71%</p> <p>Wyoming Big Sagebrush 71%</p>			
<p>Butte Field Office This area of BLM-administered land is within the sub-regional boundary but Land Use Plans are not being amended.</p>	<p>Not modeled</p>	<p>Historically, the species was present but breeding has not been documented since 1992. Habitat (sagebrush stands) is widely dispersed and separated, lacking the expansiveness or landscape extent needed for GRSG.</p> <p>The Big Belts are an isolated mountain range on the east side of the Missouri River adjacent to Canyon Ferry reservoir. Foothills are drier with scattered Rocky Mountain juniper and limber pine and a variety of shrubs on some sites. At the lowest elevations the habitat is dominated by grasslands and scattered big sagebrush.</p>	<p>Timber harvest has occurred throughout this area, particularly on the north end. There are high road densities in some locations.</p> <p>Fire suppression has led to an increase in forest density and high insect populations as well as colonization of shrublands by juniper and Douglas-fir.</p> <p>The area is dominated by livestock grazing.</p> <p>Many private ranches have sold and subdivided their land.</p>	<p>Habitat fragmentation from urban development and roads.</p> <p>Wildfire</p> <p>Douglas-fir and juniper colonization of sagebrush stands.</p> <p>Invasive species (mainly Dalmatian toadflax, spotted knapweed, and leafy spurge)</p> <p>Livestock grazing</p> <p>Fences</p> <p>Potential oil and gas development from Birch Creek to Deep Creek, in the Mount Baldy area and the</p>

Table 3-4
Habitat Conditions, Trends and Primary Threats to GRSG Habitat in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Planning Area

Population Area	Existing Condition Based on Modeled Vegetation ^a	Landscape Conditions and Trends on BLM-Administered Lands	Landscape Conditions and Trends on National Forest System Lands	Primary Threats ^a
		Many of these habitats have been converted to dry land grain production and irrigated cropland		Horseshoe Hills.

Source: BLM 2013j

^a See **Appendix X**

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1 of the Wyoming Basin and has high connectivity between populations, though small
2 populations such as Weiser and East-Central Idaho are at risk of fragmentation (USFWS
3 2013). This MZ population is moderately vulnerable, with a 10.5 percent chance of falling
4 below 200 males by 2037 (Garton et al. 2011). The area has a long history of agricultural land
5 use, which has left the residual sagebrush ecosystem drier than the historical condition
6 (Manier et al. 2013). Across this MZ, 63 percent of land is federally managed. Primary
7 threats include wildfire, infrastructure development, and invasive weeds (USFWS 2013). Fire
8 risk is high across 81 percent of the region, and cheatgrass high risk areas are widespread
9 (Manier et al. 2013). Though oil and gas development potential is low, geothermal energy
10 potential is high along with development of utility infrastructure in designated corridors,
11 such as Gateway West (Manier et al. 2013).

12 ***Management Zone II (Wyoming Basin Management Zone)***

13 Management Zone II in Idaho is located in the southeastern part of the state. It covers the
14 portion of the Wyoming Basin (Bear Lake) population area within Idaho. The Wyoming
15 Basin population area stretches into Colorado and Utah and has the highest abundance of
16 GRSG relative to other management zones across GRSG range (more than 20,000 males),
17 one of the largest areas of habitat, and the most highly connected GRSG lek network
18 (USFWS 2013). Although long-term trends are slightly downward, populations in the
19 Wyoming Basin are considered stable, with a 0.3 percent chance of declining below 200
20 males by 2037 (Garton et al. 2011). The northern portion of this MZ, including the Idaho
21 portion, has high connectivity between habitats across the Wyoming Basin (Knick and
22 Hanser 2011). Federal land comprises 54 percent of sagebrush habitat. The major threat to
23 GRSG in this MZ is energy development, primarily oil and gas, in Wyoming (USFWS 2013).
24 Impacts from infrastructure development, fire, cheatgrass spread, and improper grazing also
25 pose threats in this region (Manier et al. 2013).

26 ***Population Metrics***

27 GRSG population estimates for the sub-region or individual population areas are not
28 currently available, however the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Montana Department
29 of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources compile monitoring
30 data annually for hundreds of leks in the sub-region. Not all leks or geographic areas are
31 monitored or surveyed annually or with the same intensity due to logistical, financial,
32 weather, or staffing constraints, however the leks that are surveyed do provide useful
33 information that can help provide additional context for the description of the affected
34 environment. **Table 3-5, Occupied^a Leks by GRSG Population Area within the Idaho and**
35 **Southwestern Montana Sub-Region, shows the total number of occupied leks and**
36 **proportion by population area.**

Table 3-5
Occupied^a Leks by GRSG Population Area within the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region

Population Area	Number of Occupied Leks ^b	Proportion of Occupied Leks Within the Sub-region
East-Central Idaho	15	1.31%
Mountain Valleys	278	24.28%
SW Montana	82	7.16%
North Side Snake	344	30.04%
Southwest Idaho	169	14.76%
South Side Snake (Includes the Sawtooth National Forest in Utah)	229	20.0%
Sawtooth	0	0%
Bear Lake	15	1.31%
Weiser	13	1.14%
TOTAL	1,145	100%

^a Definitions for lek attributes vary by state wildlife agency protocols. For purposes of analysis here, an “occupied” lek is defined using the respective Idaho, Montana and Utah definitions to retain the integrity of the state wildlife agency data to the extent possible. In all cases, data shown are inclusive of all land ownerships.

Idaho (IDFG): “Occupied” is defined as a lek that has been active during at least one of the past 5 years. An active lek is one attended by more than 1 male GRSG during the breeding season (for a particular year). For this analysis, occupied leks encompass the timeframe 2010-2014.

Montana (MFWP): “Confirmed Active” is a lek that has been attended during the past 10 years. An active lek is one where there have been 2 or more males lekking on the site followed by evidence of lekking within 10 years of that observation. For consistency, the term “occupied” is used in this analysis as a synonym for the term “confirmed active.” Data shown encompass the timeframe 2005-2014.

Utah: “Occupied” is defined as a lek which has been active at least once within the last 10 years. An active lek is one that has been attended by 2 or more males during the annual strutting season. For this analysis, occupied leks encompass the timeframe 2004-2013.

^b Source: Latest IDFG (2014), MFWP (2014) and UDWR (2013) lek datasets

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In comparing lek occupancy information between population areas, it is important to recognize that population areas vary greatly in size, with some, such as the Southwest Idaho, South Snake, and North Snake, being quite large, while others, such as the Sawtooth, and Bear Lake areas, are considerably smaller. Large areas may inherently harbor a larger number of leks by virtue of their scale, and smaller areas may have fewer leks.

Within the sub-region’s population areas, there are a total of 1,145 occupied GRSG leks, inclusive of all landownerships. Of the nine population areas in the sub-region, the North Side Snake, South Side Snake and Mountain Valleys population areas encompassed the

1 largest number of occupied leks, collectively harboring approximately about 74 percent of
2 the occupied leks in the subregion.

3 **3.3 Vegetation**

4 The composition and distribution of plant communities in the planning area are influenced
5 by many factors, including climate, elevation, topography, soils, drought, insects, fire,
6 cultivation, invasive plants, and livestock grazing. As a result, a wide variety of plant
7 communities occur, many of which play a role in providing seasonal or year-round habitat
8 for GRSG. The major plant communities providing GRSG habitat are further detailed
9 below. These plant communities vary greatly in their relative ecological health as a result of
10 stressors that influence the distribution and abundance of the plant components within the
11 general community. GRSG are a sagebrush obligate species and rely on a variety of
12 sagebrush dominated communities to meet various needs throughout their lifecycle (Miller et
13 al. 2011). In winter, GRSG feed almost exclusively on sagebrush leaves (Patterson 1952;
14 Wallestad et al. 1975). A healthy vegetative understory complete with perennial grasses and a
15 variety of forbs provide important components of nesting and brood rearing habitat (Barnett
16 and Crawford 1994; Gregg et al. 1994). These vegetative communities also support a wide
17 variety of insects which provide additional food sources for rearing habitat. Some plant
18 communities play a role in seasonal habitat such as riparian areas, or in the case of annual
19 grasses, or conifer stands, may influence the quality and abundance of habitat over time.

20 **3.3.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

21 ***Northern Sagebrush-Steppe***

22 Two major sagebrush communities that provide GRSG habitat occur within the planning
23 area: the Snake River Plain and Wyoming Basin. The Snake River Plain sagebrush
24 community makes up the vast majority of the habitat with a small portion of the Wyoming
25 Basin community on the eastern side of the planning area. These communities are
26 considered part of the northern sagebrush-steppe where sagebrush typically co-dominates
27 with perennial bunchgrasses (Miller et al. 2011). Human alterations, uses, and impacts
28 coupled with natural stressors (e.g., drought and fire) have changed the extent, condition,
29 and distribution of sagebrush-steppe and the ecosystem services these communities provide
30 (Meinke et al. 2009); current GRSG range is estimated to be 56 percent of distribution prior
31 to Euro-American contact (Schroeder et al. 2004). Three of the fundamental characteristics
32 of the sagebrush community that have been altered from prior to European contact
33 conditions include: (1) the total area of sagebrush shrublands has been reduced; (2) the
34 composition and structure of sagebrush communities has been changed, with increased
35 abundance and vigor of invasive species and decreased abundance and vigor of native
36 species; and (3) fragmentation created by roads, power-lines, fences, energy developments,
37 urbanization, and other anthropogenic features (Connelly et al. 2004). Much of the
38 sagebrush-steppe occurring on private lands with deeper soils has been converted to
39 agricultural croplands (Connelly et al. 2004). Intense, historic land use in the late 19th and
40 early 20th centuries reduced the dominance of native grasses, trampled microbiotic crusts,
41 and encouraged expansion of Eurasian grasses (Anderson and Inouye 2001; Ponzetti et al.
42 2007; Root and McCune 2012). These changes are most intense at low elevations near valley

1 floors and may have disproportionate effects on GRSG populations reliant on these habitats
2 during critical portions of the year (Leu and Hanser 2011).

3 Some portions of the planning area contain relatively intact sagebrush-steppe communities.
4 Plant communities such as these are in good to excellent ecological condition and maintain
5 adequate forb and perennial grass in the understory to supply habitat requirements for
6 GRSG.

7 Data available for analysis in this effort are limited to general overstory vegetation classes of
8 tall shrub (e.g., basin big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, and mountain big sagebrush)
9 and low shrub (e.g., black sagebrush and low sagebrush). This information can be further
10 stratified based upon landscape characteristics to approximate the relative proportion of the
11 various types of sagebrush plant communities. Data are not widely available concerning the
12 relative ecological health of the plant communities within the project area.

13 ***Riparian and Wetlands***

14 Riparian vegetation includes plants that require higher amounts of available water supply
15 then those found in adjacent upland areas and are generally associated with water courses
16 and wet meadow areas. Riparian areas, wetlands, and wet meadows provide valuable GRSG
17 late summer brood rearing habitat because these areas provide succulent forbs and insects
18 later in the summer when most forbs in upland habitats have dried out and are senescent.
19 These communities make up a small percentage of the vegetation in relation to other types
20 but are quite important in providing the seasonal habitat mentioned.

21 ***Forest and Woodland***

22 The conversion of sagebrush-steppe communities into conifer woodlands is a factor
23 contributing to GRSG habitat decline in portions of the planning area. Trees increase raptor
24 perch and nest sites, potentially making GRSG more vulnerable to predation. Conifer
25 expansion is generally attributed to fire suppression reducing fire frequency and allowing
26 conifers to expand into riparian areas, shrublands, and grasslands. This conversion is mostly
27 an issue in the mountain big sagebrush types where reduced fire frequency has allowed the
28 invasion of juniper (Utah, Rocky Mountain, or Western) and in some areas Douglas-fir and
29 pine may be expanding into shrub habitats.

30 ***Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species***

31 Noxious weeds and invasive species include plants listed as “noxious” by state laws and also
32 those plants known to be altering the dynamics of native plant communities by replacing
33 native plants through competition or altering some ecological process to the detriment of the
34 native plant community such as in the case of annual bromes increasing fire frequency.

35 Specific noxious weeds causing localized impacts within the planning area include rush
36 skeletonweed, leafy spurge, diffuse knapweed, and spotted knapweed. Although not yet well
37 established in the planning area, yellow starthistle is known to have a similar range as
38 cheatgrass, and many of the areas currently supporting annual grass communities could
39 support this noxious weed. Other weeds listed as noxious occur within the planning area but
40 are not as widespread or detrimental as those listed.



1 Invasion by exotic annual grass species has resulted in dramatic increases in number and
2 frequency of fires with widespread, detrimental effects on habitat conditions (Young and
3 Evans 1978; West and Young 2000; West and Yorks 2002; Connelly et al. 2004). Increased
4 fire frequency typically results in removal of the sagebrush canopy in affected areas with
5 replacement by annual species that provide little to no habitat value (Knapp 1996; Epanchin-
6 Niell et al. 2009; Rowland et al. 2010; Baker 2011; Condon et al. 2011). Invasive annuals
7 include numerous species of annual bromes, most notably cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) as well
8 as medusahead rye (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*). An annual species that may be a threat in
9 higher elevation communities providing GRSG habitat is ventenata (*Ventenata dubia*).
10 Wyoming sagebrush plant communities are particularly susceptible to conversion to annual
11 grasslands after fire when the understory contains higher densities of annual grass.

12 Once converted to exotic annual grasses, these plant communities have crossed a threshold
13 that precludes their returning to traditional plant community composition through normal
14 plant succession processes. These areas are essentially lost in their ability to provide GRSG
15 habitat unless significant investment in restoration inputs are undertaken. Even then, these
16 projects may fail if conditions do not exist for successful establishment of desired species.
17 The potential for cheatgrass occurrence has been modeled, which can help discern locations
18 and habitats that have the greatest risk of cheatgrass dominance after disturbance events
19 such as fire.

20 ***Modified Grasslands***

21 Some portions of the planning area formerly composed of sagebrush plant communities
22 currently support introduced perennial bunchgrasses, or in some cases a mixture of
23 introduced and native bunch grasses. These communities can include common native forbs
24 and over time may develop a sagebrush overstory. Introduced bunchgrasses that may inhabit
25 these areas include a numerous crested wheatgrass varieties (e.g., Fairway, Ephraim, Douglas,
26 Nordan, and Hycrest) as well as Siberian wheatgrass and, in the case of higher precipitation
27 zones, pubescent or intermediate wheatgrass. In some cases, nonnative grasses were seeded
28 to increase livestock forage, but were also be better adapted in competing with and
29 suppressing invasive annual grasses. These plant communities also provide habitat for
30 GRSG once the overstory of sagebrush is re-established.

31 ***Permanent Conversion***

32 Within the planning area, portions have been permanently converted to uses that preclude
33 them from providing GRSG habitat. This includes conversion to agricultural lands as well as
34 development or urbanization. In much of the Snake River Plain, these lands were at one
35 time supporting sagebrush plant communities.

36 **3.3.2 Conditions on BLM-Administered Lands**

37 The habitat most important to BLM-administered lands in this planning effort is the
38 overstory vegetation component. As described above, GRSG are a sagebrush obligate
39 species, so an overstory component of sagebrush is a good indicator of potential habitat.
40 Perennial grasslands are also an important component to track as they are still capable of
41 providing habitat if the overstory of sagebrush is returned. Tracking the relative expansion
42 or reduction in annual grass dominated lands is also a potential indicator of our success in

1 protecting GRSG habitat. These broad-scale vegetation types are currently being tracked
2 through various efforts.

3 **Table 3-6**, Acres of Vegetation Communities within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered
4 and National Forest System Lands within the Planning Area, details the acreages in each
5 cover type for BLM-administered and National Forest System lands within the
6

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Table 3-6
Acres of Vegetation Communities within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System Lands within the Planning Area

Vegetation Type	PGH (Forest Service)	PGH (BLM)	PGH (Total)	PPH (Forest Service)	PPH (BLM)	PPH (Total)
Sagebrush	441,600	952,500	1,394,100	658,300	5,561,700	6,220,000
Low Sagebrush	6,690	55,200	61,900	15,500	751,700	767,200
Mixed Sagebrush	301,900	291,200	593,100	455,400	1,871,100	2,326,400
Tall Sagebrush	133,000	606,200	739,100	187,400	2,939,000	3,126,400
Perennial Grass	17,400	420,600	438,000	22,100	855,900	878,100
Annual Grass	190	21,100	21,300	310	51,400	51,700
Conifer Encroachment	15,100	117,800	133,000	41,200	178,700	219,900
Crested Wheatgrass	2,580	63,300	65,900	2,590	65,200	67,800

Source: BLM GIS 2015

Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

1 planning area. In addition, **Table 3-6**, Acres of Vegetation Communities within PPH and
 2 PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System Lands within the Planning Area,
 3 through **Table 3-13**, Acres of Conifer Encroachment within PPH and PGH on BLM-
 4 Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis
 5 Area, show the acres of vegetation communities by GRSG analysis area; these numbers were
 6 used to support the vegetation modeling effort (**Section 4.2** and **Appendix X**).

Table 3-7
Acres of Low Sagebrush within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	30	10
BLM	30	10
Forest Service	0	0
North Side Snake	3,760	66,000
BLM	740	65,700
Forest Service	3,020	270
Southwest Idaho	33,600	354,200
BLM	33,600	354,200
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	1,920	45,100
BLM	1,590	43,400
Forest Service	330	1,660
Southwest Montana	1,730	4,230
BLM	1,570	4,130
Forest Service	160	100
Bear Lake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	7,910	280,200
BLM	4,730	266,700
Forest Service	3,180	13,500
Weiser	12,900	17,500
BLM	12,900	17,500
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Total	61,900	767,200
BLM	55,200	751,700
Forest Service	6,690	15,500

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-8
Acres of Mixed Sagebrush within PPH and PGH on BLM-
Administered and National Forest System lands within the
Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
North Side Snake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Southwest Idaho	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Southwest Montana	254,800	489,300
BLM	156,000	400,200
Forest Service	98,800	89,100
Bear Lake	4,420	41,200
BLM	4,060	40,000
Forest Service	360	1,200
Mountain Valleys	319,400	1,795,900
BLM	131,200	1,430,800
Forest Service	188,300	365,100
Weiser	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	14,500	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	14,500	0
Total	593,100	2,326,400
BLM	291,200	1,871,100
Forest Service	301,900	455,400

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-9
Acres of Tall Sagebrush within PPH and PGH on BLM-
Administered and National Forest System lands within the
Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	28,200	8,660
BLM	13,500	8,660
Forest Service	14,700	0

Table 3-9
Acres of Tall Sagebrush within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
North Side Snake	267,800	1,135,500
BLM	212,300	1,114,100
Forest Service	55,500	21,400
Southwest Idaho	159,900	1,146,500
BLM	159,900	1,146,500
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	226,700	795,000
BLM	163,900	628,900
Forest Service	62,800	166,100
Southwest Montana	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Bear Lake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Weiser	56,600	40,700
BLM	56,600	40,700
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Total	739,100	3,126,400
BLM	606,200	2,939,000
Forest Service	133,000	187,400

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-10
Acres of Annual Grass within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	80	30
BLM	80	30
Forest Service	0	0
North Side Snake	7,150	6,860
BLM	7,070	6,860
Forest Service	80	0

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Table 3-10
Acres of Annual Grass within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
Southwest Idaho	6,540	19,200
BLM	6,540	19,200
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	4,830	24,600
BLM	4,720	24,300
Forest Service	110	310
Southwest Montana	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Bear Lake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Weiser	2,720	1,050
BLM	2,720	1,050
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Total	21,300	51,700
BLM	21,100	51,400
Forest Service	190	310

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-11
Acres of Perennial Grass within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	490	10
BLM	430	10
Forest Service	50	0
North Side Snake	158,900	346,000
BLM	156,900	344,100
Forest Service	1,980	1,930
Southwest Idaho	53,100	78,900
BLM	53,100	78,900
Forest Service	0	0

Table 3-11
Acres of Perennial Grass within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
South Side Snake	191,300	418,000
BLM	178,700	400,200
Forest Service	12,700	17,800
Southwest Montana	3,470	590
BLM	1,750	530
Forest Service	1,720	60
Bear Lake	0	520
BLM	0	520
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	2,390	29,600
BLM	1,390	27,300
Forest Service	1,000	2,350
Weiser	28,300	4,460
BLM	28,300	4,460
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	20	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	20	0
Total	438,000	878,100
BLM	420,600	855,900
Forest Service	17,400	22,100

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-12
Acres of Crested Wheatgrass within PPH and PGH on BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	190	10
BLM	30	10
Forest Service	160	0
North Side Snake	42,800	36,900
BLM	40,800	36,900
Forest Service	2,000	90
Southwest Idaho	2,540	950
BLM	2,540	950
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	16,000	27,900
BLM	15,500	25,400
Forest Service	410	2,500

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Table 3-12
Acres of Crested Wheatgrass within PPH and PGH on
BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands
within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
Southwest Montana	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Bear Lake	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Weiser	4,480	2,020
BLM	4,480	2,020
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	0	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	0	0
Total	65,900	67,800
BLM	63,300	65,200
Forest Service	2,580	2,590

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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Table 3-13
Acres of Conifer Encroachment within PPH and PGH on
BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands
within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
East-Central Idaho	270	10
BLM	170	10
Forest Service	100	0
North Side Snake	1,260	2,120
BLM	510	1,870
Forest Service	750	260
Southwest Idaho	99,100	108,400
BLM	99,100	108,400
Forest Service	0	0
South Side Snake	28,100	105,400
BLM	16,200	65,700
Forest Service	11,900	39,700
Southwest Montana	900	440
BLM	370	230
Forest Service	520	200

Table 3-13
Acres of Conifer Encroachment within PPH and PGH on
BLM-Administered and National Forest System lands
within the Planning Area by GRSG Analysis Area

GRSG Analysis Area	PGH	PPH
Bear Lake	0	10
BLM	0	10
Forest Service	0	0
Mountain Valleys	2,380	3,390
BLM	840	2,380
Forest Service	1,540	1,010
Weiser	740	110
BLM	740	110
Forest Service	0	0
Sawtooth	320	0
BLM	0	0
Forest Service	320	0
Total	133,000	219,900
BLM	117,800	178,700
Forest Service	15,100	41,200

Source: BLM GIS 2015

3.3.3 Conditions on National Forest System Lands

In general the plant communities and disturbance factors that influence them are the same on National Forest System lands as on BLM-administered lands. As a general rule, the National Forest System lands with GRSG habitat in the planning area tend to be on the higher end of the precipitation and elevation gradient. Therefore, the relative proportion of sagebrush plant communities on National Forest System lands would be higher for the mountain big sagebrush plant communities, at the higher elevation and precipitation gradient, and lower for Wyoming big sagebrush plant communities which occur at the lower end of the precipitation range for big sagebrush. Due to the more resilient nature of mountain big sagebrush communities after disturbance, it is less likely they will be impacted by invasive annual grass and convert to annual grass plant communities.

3.3.4 Trends

The main disturbance factors with the potential to alter vegetation providing GRSG habitat over a majority of the planning area include conversion to annual grassland following fire disturbance, modification of plant communities due to livestock grazing, and the potential impacts of climate change. To a lesser extent, some permanent conversion to agriculture or urbanization may occur, but typically these areas are already highly disturbed and not likely to be providing high-quality GRSG habitat.



3.3.5 Regional Context

Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found., through Error! Reference source not found., **Error! Reference source not found.**, display acreages for different kinds of vegetative cover in the planning area (Manier et al. 2013).

Table 3-14
Acres of Conifer and Pinyon-Juniper Land Cover within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	174,700	595,500	311,300	397,300	499,700	938,700
Forest Service	191,200	62,300	228,100	150,900	18,200	248,200
Tribal and Other Federal	10,400	88,400	11,100	7,700	77,100	10,000
Private	143,700	545,800	295,200	157,400	373,000	427,500
State	40,700	97,800	69,600	56,100	106,600	67,700
Other	2,900	700	2,900	6,400	1,700	6,400

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Includes acres of pinyon-juniper or conifer land cover within 120 meters of GRSG habitat.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

Table 3-15
Acres of Cheatgrass Potential within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	3,053,600	6,325,000	6,234,900	8,022,500	7,091,200	13,995,500
Forest Service	885,700	407,400	1,086,900	927,100	124,100	1,521,600
Tribal and Other Federal	687,800	1,252,100	740,200	946,800	701,900	974,100
Private	2,003,400	6,202,500	4,257,400	2,045,100	5,631,600	5,643,800
State	645,800	861,400	945,500	853,200	1,135,900	1,022,900
Other	54,900	6,000	54,900	93,700	30,100	93,800

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Acreage comprised of areas with a high potential for cheatgrass occurrence.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

Table 3-16
Acres of Cropland within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	14,200	3,200	14,500	11,800	2,100	14,800
Forest Service	1,800	300	1,800	600	0	900

Table 3-16
Acres of Cropland within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
Tribal and Other Federal	1,700	5,200	1,800	500	1,400	500
Private	165,500	385,900	233,600	19,400	106,100	55,200
State	2,700	7,700	4,400	700	3,300	800
Other	1,300	0	1,300	200	100	200

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Based on data provided by the National Agricultural Statistics Service

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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The BLM-administered and National Forest System lands in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana planning area provide a variety of habitats. Landownership ranges from mostly sagebrush habitats in Owyhee County, Idaho, to scattered BLM-administered and National Forest System lands with intermingled private and state lands composed of sagebrush habitats in southwestern Montana. On BLM-administered and National Forest System lands, these habitats can be segregated into four major habitats groups: sagebrush steppe, riparian/wetlands, nonnative grasslands, and conifer woodlands/forests. These habitats serve as a basis, to the extent practical, for describing existing conditions, and for developing and comparing management alternatives throughout the planning effort.

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Sagebrush Steppe Habitats

Sagebrush steppe habitats in the planning area are found in the Snake River Plain and minor portions in the Wyoming Basins floristic provinces identified by West (1983). These sagebrush habitats are the dominant habitat within the planning area. Riparian and wetland habitats, nonnative grasslands, and conifer/woodland forest habitats are interspersed within and adjacent to sagebrush habitats.

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Sagebrush habitats occur from lower elevation (2,500 feet) drier salt desert shrub communities to mountain shrub communities at 10,100 feet in elevation. Sagebrush habitats support a wide diversity of generalist wildlife species, as well as sagebrush-dependent wildlife species.

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At mid- to lower elevations, Wyoming big and basin sagebrush are the dominant habitat types that provide important winter habitat for wildlife species such as mule deer, pronghorn, and GRSG, and localized yearlong habitat by sagebrush-obligate species such as pygmy rabbit. Much of the basin big sagebrush habitats are limited to deeper soils near ephemeral drainages. Intermingled occurrences of basin big sagebrush, mountain big sagebrush, tall three-tip sagebrush, and several low sagebrush's such as low (little) and black sagebrush add to the diversity of vegetation and habitat structure. At higher elevations, moist mountain big sagebrush communities provide elk calving and GRSG brood-rearing habitat along with dispersed spring, summer, and fall habitat for numerous other species, often in



1 association with conifer woodland/forested habitat. Mixed sagebrush communities and
2 localized dominance by other sagebrush species on specific sites within the broader
3 sagebrush types often support uniquely dependent wildlife uses, such as pygmy rabbits.

4 Many sagebrush steppe habitats have been modified or disturbed throughout the planning
5 area during the past 150 years; therefore the species dependent upon them have usually been
6 negatively affected. Primary factors causing change in sagebrush steppe habitats are wildfire
7 and changes in fire regimes, invasive species, anthropogenic development, and livestock
8 grazing (Miller et al. 2011, Knick et al. 2011). Wildfire and changes in fire regimes effects
9 xeric sagebrush steppe and is highly influenced by the spread of invasive species, especially
10 exotic annual grasses such as cheatgrass or medusahead. In these lower elevation habitats,
11 fire return intervals are greatly shortened and prevent the reestablishment of sagebrush.
12 Large areas of the Snake River Plain in southern Idaho have undergone these habitat
13 changes, thus making habitats less suitable for wildlife.

14 Past management activities that reduce sagebrush habitats include herbicide application,
15 plowing, or other techniques followed by seeding of nonnative perennial grasses. These land
16 treatments or burned areas following wildfire have historically been seeded to highly
17 competitive introduced species such as crested wheatgrass, desert wheatgrass, and Siberian
18 wheatgrass. The characteristics that made these introduced species effective for seeding
19 establishment also created communities dominated by near monocultures, which resulted in
20 poor quality habitats for wildlife lacking sagebrush or forbs (Pyke 2011). Recent policies
21 have encouraged native seed mixes, but many times native seed supplies are limited or not
22 affordable within current budgets. Seed in some seed mixes used in these treatments may
23 have been selected for other wildlife species and not specifically for GRSG (Knick et al.
24 2011).

25 In higher elevations of sagebrush steppe, conifer woodlands/forests have encroached into
26 sagebrush habitats. Miller and Rose (1999) identified that the encroachment of conifer
27 woodlands/forests was the result of longer fire return intervals that permitted woodland
28 expansion to occur into sagebrush steppe. Conifers greater than 50 years old on productive
29 sites and greater than 90 years on nonproductive sites results in reduced fire frequency,
30 permitting the establishment of conifers on the site (Burkhardt and Tisdale 1976; Bunting
31 1984; Miller and Rose 1999). A number of studies identified a widespread decline in fires at
32 the sagebrush/conifer interface with the coincidence of large numbers of livestock in the late
33 1800s (Miller and Rose 1999; Heyerdahl et al. 2006; Swetnam et al. 2001). These large
34 numbers of cattle may have reduced the current year's fuel loads and changed the structure
35 and abundance of fuels, thus reducing the frequency of wildfires (Miller et al. 2011).
36 Increased tree dominance by conifers results in a decline of cover by sagebrush and other
37 shrubs.

38 Anthropogenic development has reduced the amount and quality of sagebrush steppe
39 habitat across much of the planning area. The activities have occurred on private lands but
40 infrastructure to support urbanization and agriculture along the Snake River Plain and other
41 waterways has occurred on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands. Many of
42 these types of facilities or uses include railroads, roads, power lines, pipelines, irrigation

1 canals, communication towers, military training, and off-highway vehicle use (Knick et al.
2 2011).

3 Livestock grazing is the most widespread land use across sagebrush steppe habitats from the
4 1880s to present. Livestock numbers and use of these habitats was greatest from the late
5 1880s through the 1930s. During this period the greatest change occurred to these habitats
6 as a result of heavy livestock use and drought that resulted in loss of soil and depleted native
7 vegetation communities that greatly impacted these habitats (Knick et al. 2011). From the
8 1940s until the 1980s, plowing, herbicides, and burning followed by seeding nonnative
9 perennial grasses to increase forage for livestock production occurred, thus impacting many
10 sagebrush habitats in southern Idaho.

11 In recent decades, management emphasis has shifted towards maintaining healthy,
12 functioning native ecosystems and reducing the spread of nonnative species. Grazing
13 regulations enacted in 1995 mandated that public land grazing allotments conform to the
14 Fundamentals of Rangeland Health, as well as subsequent Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs),
15 and that changes to grazing management be made if livestock management is determined to
16 be a significant causal factor in failing to meet Fundamentals of Rangeland Health or S&Gs.
17 Since that time, the BLM has been reviewing rangeland health conditions and modifying
18 livestock grazing management as necessary to conform to the Fundamentals of Rangeland
19 Health and S&Gs. In addition, vegetation treatments have occurred on many allotments in
20 an effort to restore functionality of impacted sagebrush steppe habitats. For more
21 information about livestock grazing, see **Section 3.8**, Livestock Grazing.

22 *Riparian/Wetland Habitats*

23 Riparian habitats are regarded as one of the most important habitats for wildlife due the
24 availability of water and the structural diversity of the vegetation communities.
25 Approximately 75 percent of all wildlife species utilize riparian habitats for at least some
26 portion of their annual life cycle (USEPA 1990). Riparian habitats are estimated to make up
27 approximately 1 percent of all habitats in the planning area. The riparian habitats in the
28 planning area are composed of lotic systems that are associated with running water or
29 lentic/wetland habitats associated with standing water.

30 Riparian habitats in the planning area have been subject to many activities that have affected
31 their functionality and their ability to support wildlife. These activities include dewatering for
32 irrigation, domestic cattle grazing, road construction, dam construction, and land treatments.
33 The impacts from these activities include changes in plant species composition and structure,
34 vegetative cover, sedimentation, changes in water quality and temperature, streambank
35 alteration, and duration of available water.

36 Wildlife habitat values are degraded on riparian habitats with functional-at-risk or
37 nonfunctional conditions. Information on proper functioning condition is not available at
38 the sub-regional planning scale.



1 *Big Game*

2 The planning area hosts a wide variety of big game species including mule deer, pronghorn,
3 and elk that use habitats associated with sagebrush steppe and riparian habitats. Other big
4 game species that are found in these habitats but in lesser amounts include bighorn sheep,
5 moose, and white-tailed deer. The planning area provides habitat for all seasonal use periods
6 for mule deer, pronghorn, elk, bighorn sheep, and other species. These species are generally
7 widespread across the entire planning area.

8 Mule deer are the most abundant and widely distributed big game animal. Mule deer
9 populations and mule deer habitat have changed greatly during the past 100 years. Loss of
10 shrub-steppe habitats, conversion of native landscapes to agriculture or residential
11 development, and past and current grazing management are key management issues for mule
12 deer populations throughout the planning area (Cox et al. 2009).

13 Within the planning area mule deer populations vary greatly from current population
14 objectives. In southeast Idaho populations have undergone declines following the winters of
15 1992-1993 and have been slow to respond to changes in management activities (IDFG
16 2011a). This has resulted in IDFG developing an initiative to target this area of the state to
17 modify management strategies and improve habitat conditions for mule deer. In other
18 portions of the planning area, including south-central Idaho and southwestern Montana,
19 populations appear to be stable or increasing but are below levels observed in the late 1980s
20 and early 1990s (IDFG 2011a; MFWP 2012).

21 Mule deer are primarily browsers and their diet is composed mostly of leaves and twigs of
22 shrubs, especially during the winter. Grasses and forbs are also crucial components of their
23 diet in the spring and summer. The quality and quantity of nutritious forage in spring (April
24 through July) has major implications on the production and survival of fawns. Summer and
25 fall ranges are important because this is where deer produce fat reserves that will allow
26 survival through winter. The quality of summer-fall forage also directly influences pregnancy
27 and ovulation rates and, therefore, fawn production (Cook et al. 2001; Tollefson et al. 2010;
28 Vavra 1992). Much of Idaho's historic mule deer winter range has been developed for other
29 uses and is now occupied by man. Residential, commercial, and industrial developments
30 located in the foothills and at lower elevations have eliminated winter range (IDFG 2011a).

31 Pronghorn distribution has changed relatively little since the early 1980s but numbers have
32 trended downward since the winters of 1993-1994 (IDFG 2011b). Pronghorn are typically
33 associated with sagebrush habitats but readily use grasslands if there are adequate amounts of
34 forbs (Yoakum 2004a). In sagebrush habitats, pronghorn diets consist of sagebrush and
35 other shrubs during all seasons, but particularly in the fall and winter (Yoakum 2004a). Forbs
36 are preferred by pronghorn when available (Yoakum 2004b). The availability of forbs in
37 sagebrush habitats may have important implications for pronghorn because they are rich in
38 nutritional values required for reproduction (Pyrah 1987; Yoakum 2004b). Large landscape
39 level fires have reduced the availability of sagebrush in parts of their range. In portions of
40 the planning area, extensive fencing has contributed to the inability of some populations to
41 access otherwise suitable habitats. Noxious weeds, livestock grazing, and drought has also
42 impacted current pronghorn populations and their habitat.

1 Elk are found throughout the planning area in sagebrush steppe and associated
2 conifer/forested woodlands. Elk are considered generalists and are not totally dependent
3 upon sagebrush steppe, but they do require food, water, and where hunted, hiding cover and
4 security areas. The combination of the resources determines the distribution and number of
5 elk within sagebrush steppe. Elk populations in the planning area are generally at or above
6 state wildlife management agencies objectives (IDFG 2011c; MFWP 2004).

7 Other big game species, such as moose, bighorn sheep, and white-tailed deer are also found
8 in the planning area. Moose and white-tailed deer are generally associated with
9 riparian/wetland habitats. Bighorn sheep usually are found near escape terrain composed of
10 steep rugged slopes and make use of sagebrush steppe year round in southwest Idaho. In
11 east-central Idaho and southwestern Montana, bighorn sheep generally make use of
12 sagebrush steppe near escape terrain during the winter and spring.

13 *Migratory Birds*

14 There are numerous species of migratory birds that use the planning area during part of the
15 year, including over 40 species of greatest conservation need in Idaho and in Montana
16 (IDFG 2005; BLM 2006a). These birds are as diverse as the Calliope hummingbird, green-
17 tailed towhee, Brewer's sparrow, ferruginous hawk, mallard, and sandhill crane. Most of
18 these birds are summer residents that use habitats ranging from low elevation wetlands to
19 high elevation forests for breeding and raising young. Some species such as American robin
20 and mallard are migratory, but small populations may be present yearlong depending on
21 seasonal conditions. Winter residents such as the rough-legged hawk, snow buntings, and
22 rosy-crowned gray finches arrive from arctic breeding grounds, or high elevation alpine areas
23 to utilize winter habitats in sagebrush steppe, seasonally replacing summer residents.

24 The 1988 amendment to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act mandates the USFWS to
25 "identify species, sub species, and populations of all migratory nongame birds that, without
26 additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the
27 Endangered Species Act of 1973." Birds of Conservation Concern 2008 (USFWS 2008) is
28 the most recent effort to carry out that mandate and identifies those species in greatest need
29 of conservation action in specific geographic bird conservation regions. The planning area
30 overlaps three bird conservation regions. These regions include the Great Basin, Northern
31 Rockies, and a very small portion of the Southern Rockies/Colorado Plateau. The list of
32 species likely to inhabit sagebrush steppe and riparian/wetlands of this planning area for
33 these three conservation regions can be found in **Appendix O**. This mandate was
34 emphasized with the issuance of Executive Order 13186, which directs federal land
35 management agencies to develop cooperative plans to protect and manage habitat for all
36 migratory birds. Expansion of funding opportunities under the North American Wetlands
37 Conservation Act and other partnership opportunities through the North American Bird
38 Conservation Initiative will support increased management consideration for these species.

39 *Furbearers/Upland Game/Non-Game*

40 A large variety of other wildlife species use sagebrush steppe, riparian/wetland habitats, and
41 nonnative grasslands and conifer woodland/forests habitats within and adjacent to
42 sagebrush steppe in the planning area. Furbearers commonly found in these habitats include



1 red fox, bobcat, muskrat, beaver, and mink. River otter may be present, but the species is
2 generally associated with larger river riparian systems. Cottontail and pygmy rabbits are
3 found throughout the planning area and their numbers are variable as populations are cyclic
4 (USFWS 2010b). Pygmy rabbits, a species of greatest conservation need in Idaho and
5 southwestern Montana, are found in sagebrush habitats with relatively deep, loose soils that
6 provide food and shelter. Upland game birds common or locally abundant in the planning
7 area include Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, pheasant, mourning dove, chukar, gray
8 partridge, California quail, dusky (blue) grouse, and ruffed grouse.

9 Many other species of nongame wildlife have limited information on their distribution or life
10 history requirements. Information on these species is maintained by the Idaho, Montana,
11 Utah, and Nevada Natural History Programs within each state. Site-specific inventories have
12 not been conducted for many of the species but information about species distribution and
13 relative abundance continues to be modified as funding becomes available.

14 *Amphibians/Reptiles*

15 Amphibians, specifically frogs and toads, have been recognized as important indicators of
16 ecosystem health, as many populations are declining in the western US. Amphibians are
17 generally found near some form of water. There are eight species of salamanders, frogs, and
18 toads found in the planning area, including three species of greatest conservation need in
19 Idaho; there are three amphibian species on the BLM special status species list in Montana
20 (IDFG 2005; Montana Natural Heritage Program 2013).

21 There are 16 species of reptiles occurring in sagebrush habitats and riparian/wetland habitat
22 in the planning area. These include seven lizard species, one turtle species, and eight snake
23 species. The sagebrush lizard and short-horned lizard are two of the most common species
24 associated with sagebrush habitats. Two snake and two reptile species found in the planning
25 area are species of greatest conservation need in Idaho (IDFG 2005). There are no BLM
26 special status reptile species in the southwestern Montana portion of the sub-region
27 (Montana Natural Heritage Program 2013).

28 *Insects*

29 Insect occurrence and distribution are not generally specifically considered in land
30 management activities. Three species of insects that are identified as sensitive species due to
31 their limited distribution occur in or immediately adjacent to sagebrush habitats. These
32 species include Idaho pointheaded grasshopper, St. Anthony Sand Dunes tiger beetle, and
33 Bruneau Dunes tiger beetle (See **Section 3.5**, Other Special Status Species).

34 Insects provide important food sources for many species of wildlife including adult and
35 juvenile GRSG. Although there are thousands of species of insects occurring in sagebrush
36 and riparian and wetland habitats, species in the *Scarabeidae* and *Tenebrionidae* (beetle) families,
37 *Formicidae* (thatch ants) family, and *Orthoptera* (grasshopper) family play a crucial role in the
38 diet of many wildlife species (including GRSG) as a high protein food source (Klebenow and
39 Gray 1968; Peterson 1970; Johnson and Boyce 1990; Pyle 1993; Fischer 1994; Drut et al.
40 1994).

1 **3.4 Fish and Wildlife**

2 **3.4.1 Terrestrial Wildlife**

3 ***Conditions within the Planning Area***

4 The BLM and Forest Service manage wildlife habitat, and the state wildlife management
5 agencies manage wildlife populations. These habitats reflect the influence of a variety of past
6 and ongoing human activities and disturbances, resulting in increases in some species
7 populations, declines in others, and the modification of large blocks of habitat. These
8 habitats and the wildlife species that rely on them rarely exist solely on BLM-administered or
9 National Forest System lands, and often extend across administrative boundaries to other
10 federal, state, and private lands. Further information regarding wildlife on National Forest
11 System lands is provided in **Appendix CC**.

12 **3.4.2 Aquatic Wildlife**

13 ***Conditions within the Planning Area***

14 Fish of interest within the planning area consist primarily of cold-water species. The
15 condition of aquatic habitat is influenced by upland and riparian processes. Uplands
16 influence aquatic habitat primarily through hydrologic processes. For example, the arid
17 nature of the planning area makes the influence of groundwater on surface water particularly
18 important. Therefore, impacts on uplands, such as compaction, that reduce water infiltration
19 have the potential to reduce the amount of groundwater being released into streams. Water
20 in compacted areas can pond on the surface and be lost into the atmosphere through
21 evaporation or be delivered rapidly to channels during high flows. The amount of water and
22 whether it enters stream channels via surface flow or subsurface flow have a significant
23 effect on sediment delivery and deposition, streamside vegetation, and water quality.
24 Riparian areas influence aquatic habitat more directly due to their proximity to water. For
25 example, riparian vegetation shades streams from solar radiation which reduces increases in
26 water temperature, and provides organic material to streams which act as a food source for
27 aquatic macroinvertebrates. Well-vegetated floodplains dissipate energy of flood flows,
28 provide velocity refugia for juvenile and adult fish during flood events, filter sediment during
29 floods, and store water for release during lower flows. Fine sediment deposition within the
30 substrate; and water quality, including, temperature, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen affect
31 fish and fish habitat.

32 Aquatic habitat within the planning area includes perennial and intermittent streams, springs,
33 lakes, and reservoirs that support fish during at least a portion of the year.

34 The majority of the planning area within Idaho is within the Snake River basin, while the
35 portion of the planning area within Montana is within the Missouri River basin. The portion
36 of the southeast corner of Idaho is located within the Bear River basin which flows into the
37 Great Salt Lake.

38 The climate throughout the planning area is generally arid, with runoff being dominated by
39 spring snowmelt. Summer flows are provided by snowmelt, subsurface storage, and



1 thunderstorm events. Native fish species consist primarily of salmonids, sculpin, and
2 minnows, and suckers.

3 ***Conditions on BLM-Administered and National Forest System Lands***

4 Fish-bearing streams, and lakes, ponds, and reservoirs within the planning area provide
5 habitat for a variety of native and nonnative game and nongame fish species. **Table 3-17,**
6 **Native and Nonnative Fish Species Found within the Planning Area and their Status,**
7 displays the various fish species that occur within the planning area.

Table 3-17
Native and Nonnative Fish Species Found within the Planning Area and their Status

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Native Fish Species		
Sockeye salmon	<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>	ESA Endangered
Chinook salmon	<i>O. tshawytscha</i>	ESA Threatened
Steelhead	<i>O. mykiss</i>	ESA Threatened
Bull trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	ESA Threatened
Redband trout	<i>O. mykiss gairdneri</i>	BLM Sensitive
Westslope cutthroat	<i>O. clarki lewisi</i>	BLM Sensitive
Yellowstone cutthroat	<i>O. clarki bouvieri</i>	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive
Bonneville cutthroat	<i>O. clarki utah</i>	BLM Sensitive
Bear Lake whitefish	<i>Prosopium abyssiicola</i>	BLM Sensitive
Bonneville whitefish	<i>P. spilonotus</i>	BLM Sensitive
Bonneville cisco	<i>P. gemmiferum</i>	BLM Sensitive
Big Lost River whitefish	<i>P. williamsoni</i>	Forest Service Sensitive
Mountain whitefish	<i>P. williamsoni</i>	No status
White sturgeon	<i>Acipenser transmontanus</i>	BLM Sensitive
Bear Lake sculpin	<i>Cottus extensis</i>	BLM Sensitive
Shoshone sculpin	<i>C. greenei</i>	BLM Sensitive
Wood River sculpin	<i>C. leiopomus</i>	BLM Sensitive
Paiute sculpin	<i>C. beldingii</i>	No status
Shorthead sculpin	<i>C. confusus</i>	No status
Mottled sculpin	<i>C. bairdii</i>	No status
Northern leatherside chub	<i>Lepidomeda copei</i>	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive
Utah chub	<i>Gila atraria</i>	No status
Chiselmouth	<i>Acrocheilus alutaceus</i>	No status
Redside shiner	<i>Richardsonius balteatus</i>	No status
Speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i>	No status
Utah sucker	<i>C. ardens</i>	No status
Bluehead sucker	<i>Catostomus discobulus</i>	No status
Bridgelip sucker	<i>C. columbianus</i>	No status
Largescale sucker	<i>C. macrocheilus</i>	No status
Mountain sucker	<i>C. platyrhynchus</i>	No status
Nonnative Fish Species		
Brook trout	<i>S. fontinalis</i>	No status
Brown trout	<i>Salmo trutta</i>	No status
Tadpole madtom	<i>Noturus gyrinus</i>	No status

Table 3-17
Native and Nonnative Fish Species Found within the Planning Area and their Status

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Black bullhead	<i>Ameiurus melas</i>	No status
Brown bullhead	<i>A. nebulosus</i>	No status
Blue catfish	<i>Ictalurus furcatus</i>	No status
Channel catfish	<i>I. punctatus</i>	No status
Flathead catfish	<i>Pylodictis olivaris</i>	No status
Common carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	No status
Grass carp	<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella</i>	No status
Goldfish	<i>Carassius auratus</i>	No status
Eastern mosquitofish	<i>Gambusia holbrooki</i>	No status
Western mosquitofish	<i>G. affinis</i>	No status
Fathead minnow	<i>Pimephales promelas</i>	No status
Spottail shiner	<i>Notropis hudsonius</i>	No status
Green swordtail	<i>Xiphophorus hellerii</i>	No status
Guppy	<i>Poecilia reticulata</i>	No status
Black crappie	<i>Pomoxis nigromaculatus</i>	No status
White crappie	<i>P. annularis</i>	No status
Yellow perch	<i>Perca flavescens</i>	No status
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>	No status
Green sunfish	<i>L. cyanellus</i>	No status
Pumpkinseed	<i>L. gibbosus</i>	No status
Largemouth bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	No status
Smallmouth bass	<i>M. dolomieu</i>	No status
Walleye	<i>Sander vitreus</i>	No status
Muskellunge	<i>Esox masquinongy</i>	No status
Northern pike	<i>E. lucius</i>	No status
Tiger musky	<i>E. masquinongy</i> × <i>E. lucius</i>	No status
Convict cichlid	<i>Archocentrus nigrofasciatus</i>	No status
Mozambique tilapia	<i>Tilapia mossambica</i>	No status
Redbelly tilapia	<i>T. zilli</i>	No status
Oriental weatherfish	<i>Misgurnus anguillicaudatus</i>	No status

1

2 ***Status of Aquatic Species in the Planning Area***

3 The following discussion on status of aquatic species focuses on native species and
 4 particularly special status species. Twelve of the seventeen special status species are
 5 salmonids, three are sculpin, one is the white sturgeon, and one is the northern leatherside
 6 chub. None of the special status species are ubiquitous across the planning area. Each
 7 species is found in a particular portion of the planning area with some of the species being
 8 endemic to a particular water body or portion of a water body.

9 Three of the 12 salmonids are anadromous fish found in the BLM Challis and Salmon field
 10 offices and the Payette, Salmon-Challis, and Sawtooth national forests, and each is listed

1 under the ESA. Snake River Basin steelhead and Snake River spring/summer-run Chinook
2 salmon are listed as threatened under the ESA and Snake River sockeye salmon are listed as
3 endangered under the ESA. Adults passing Lower Granite dam on the Snake River are
4 counted for all three of these species (Columbia Basin Research 2013). The 10-year average
5 number of adults passing Lower Granite dam from 2003 through 2012 for steelhead is
6 190,535, for spring/summer-run Chinook salmon is 67,241, and for sockeye salmon is 610.

7 Bull trout within the planning area are found in the BLM Salmon, Challis, Jarbidge, and
8 Upper Snake field offices and the Boise, Payette, Salmon-Challis, and Sawtooth national
9 forests, and are listed as threatened under the ESA. Bull trout in the planning area largely
10 occupy higher elevation areas with cold water temperatures.

11 The native range of redband trout within the planning area is the Snake River and its
12 tributaries up to Shoshone Falls and the upper Salmon River basin. The current distribution
13 of redband trout has been significantly reduced relative to the historical distribution, and it is
14 likely that across its range slightly more than 44 percent of the occupied stream miles contain
15 redband that have been genetically altered due to extensive stocking of hatchery fish (Wild
16 Trout Enterprises 2012). Conditions for occupied redband trout habitat across its range was
17 rated as part of the 2012 redband trout status assessment (Wild Trout Enterprises 2012).
18 Approximately 5 percent of habitats were judged to be in excellent condition, 27 percent
19 were judged to be in good condition, 34 percent in fair condition, 18 percent in poor
20 condition, and 16 percent of the occupied habitats were not rated.

21 Three cutthroat trout species occur within the planning area: Westslope cutthroat,
22 Yellowstone cutthroat, and Bonneville cutthroat. In Idaho, Westslope cutthroat only occur
23 in the Salmon River portion of the planning area, while they occur in the entire portion of
24 the planning area within Montana. Wild Trout Enterprises (2009) estimated that Westslope
25 cutthroat currently occupy 58 percent of the stream miles they historically occupied across
26 their range. Conditions for occupied Westslope cutthroat habitat across its range were rated
27 as part of the 2009 Westslope cutthroat status assessment (Wild Trout Enterprises 2009).
28 Approximately 18 percent of habitats were judged to be in excellent condition, 41 percent
29 were judged to be in good condition, 24 percent in fair condition, 4 percent in poor
30 condition, and 13 percent of the occupied habitats had an unknown condition. Within the
31 planning area, Yellowstone cutthroat occur in the Snake River system above Shoshone Falls
32 and within the Yellowstone River system. May et al. (2007) determined that Yellowstone
33 cutthroat currently occupy 43 percent of the stream miles they historically occupied.
34 Conditions for occupied Yellowstone cutthroat habitat across its range were rated as part of
35 the 2006 Westslope cutthroat status assessment (May et al. 2007). Approximately 14 percent
36 of habitats were judged to be in excellent condition, 52 percent were judged to be in good
37 condition, 20 percent in fair condition, 5 percent in poor condition, and 9 percent of the
38 occupied habitats had an unknown condition. In the planning area, Bonneville cutthroat
39 trout only occur within the Bear River drainage in southeast Idaho. An adfluvial population
40 occurs in Bear Lake. The range-wide status of Bonneville cutthroat improved considerably
41 from 1980 to 2000 (Lentsch et al. 2000).

1 Seven of the remaining nine special status fish species are endemics. Four species, Bear Lake
2 whitefish, Bonneville whitefish, Bonneville cisco, and Bear Lake sculpin are endemic to Bear
3 Lake. While the Big Lost River whitefish is endemic to the Big Lost River system, the
4 Shoshone sculpin is endemic to springs and spring creeks in the Hagerman Valley, and the
5 Wood River sculpin is endemic to the Wood River system.

6 The white sturgeon occurs in the Snake River below Shoshone Falls. Their numbers have
7 been greatly reduced largely due to the lack of passage at dams and reduced spawning habitat
8 due to the reservoirs behind the dams. The sturgeon fishery in the Snake River is popular,
9 but no harvest of white sturgeon is allowed.

10 The northern leatherside chub has a patchy distribution within the planning area. The
11 species occupies habitat within the Goose Creek and Salt River systems. They are generally
12 found sporadically, in low numbers, and in the presence of other minnow species, such as
13 reidside shiners and speckled dace. The USFWS completed a status review for the species in
14 2011, and found that they were not warranted for listing under the ESA.

15 In general, the remaining fish in **Table 3-17** are more broadly distributed within the planning
16 area. Special status aquatic mollusks are discussed in the Special Status Species section of the
17 EIS.

18 **3.5 Other Special Status Species**

19 **3.5.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

20 The list of special status species for BLM-administered lands in Idaho and the Western
21 Montana District; the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Boise, Caribou, Challis, Payette, Salmon,
22 Sawtooth, and Targhee National Forests; and the Curlew National Grassland includes
23 mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, and plants. There are 383 special
24 status species. Of these, 28 species are mammals, 51 are birds, 4 are reptiles, 8 are
25 amphibians, 25 are fish, 21 are invertebrates, and 246 are plants.

26 The BLM's objectives for special status species are to conserve and recover ESA-listed
27 species and the ecosystems on which they depend so that ESA protections are no longer
28 needed for these species, and to initiate proactive conservation measures that reduce or
29 eliminate threats to BLM sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of and need for listing
30 of these species under the ESA. The BLM 6840 Manual, Special Status Species Management,
31 sets policy for the management of candidate species and their habitat. The 6840 manual
32 directs the BLM to undertake conservation actions for such species before listing is
33 warranted and also to "work cooperatively with other agencies, organizations, governments,
34 and interested parties for the conservation of sensitive species and their habitats to meet
35 agreed on species and habitat management goals."

36 The BLM 6840 Manual requires the BLM to identify strategies, restrictions, management
37 actions, and provisions necessary to conserve or recover ESA-listed species and conserve
38 BLM sensitive species. The 6840 Manual also requires managers to determine to the extent
39 practicable, the distribution, abundance, population condition, current threats, and habitat



1 needs for sensitive species, and evaluate the significance of actions in conserving those
2 species.

3 Similarly, Forest Service direction for threatened and endangered species is to manage
4 habitats and activities to achieve recovery of these species so that special protection
5 measures provided under ESA are no longer necessary. Direction for sensitive species is to
6 develop and implement management practices to ensure that these species do not become
7 threatened or endangered because of management actions. Additionally, the Forest Service
8 Manual 2670 directs the Forest Service to maintain viable populations of all native and
9 desired nonnative wildlife, fish, and plant species.

10 Activities within the planning area are likely to primarily affect sagebrush habitat. Areas of
11 conifer encroachment (primarily western or Utah juniper; Douglas-fir in some limited areas)
12 targeted for sagebrush restoration to benefit GRSG will also be affected to varying degrees
13 depending on time and scale. Therefore, only those species that depend on sagebrush habitat
14 or that are strongly associated with juniper will be analyzed. **Table 3-18**, Special Status
15 Species within the Planning Area, identifies these species, their status, and where the
16 designations apply. There are a total of 215 special status species that depend on sagebrush
17 habitat. Of these, 16 species are mammals, 20 are birds, 4 are reptiles, 3 are amphibians, 3 are
18 invertebrates, and 169 are plants.

Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Mammals			
Grizzly bear (<i>Ursus arctos</i>)	ESA Threatened	X	X
Canada lynx (<i>Lynx canadensis</i>)	ESA Threatened	X	X
Southern Idaho ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus brunneus endemicus</i>)	ESA Candidate	X	X
Gray wolf (<i>Canis lupus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Pygmy rabbit (<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Piute ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus mollis artemisae</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
California bighorn sheep (<i>Ovis canadensis californiana</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (<i>Ovis canadensis</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Cliff chipmunk (<i>Tamias dorsalis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Uinta Chipmunk (<i>Tamias umbrinus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Merriam's ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus canus vigilis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Wyoming ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus elegans nevadensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Great Basin pocket mouse (<i>Perognathus parvus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Little pocket mouse (<i>Perognathus longimembris</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Dark kangaroo mouse (<i>Microdipodops megacephalus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Kit fox (<i>Vulpes velox</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Birds			
Greater Sage-Grouse (<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>)	ESA Candidate	X	X
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Golden eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Upland sandpiper (<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Long-billed curlew (<i>Numenius americanus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Prairie falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Ferruginous hawk (<i>Buteo regalis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Swainson's hawk (<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Columbia sharp-tailed grouse (<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	
Mountain quail (<i>Oreotyx pictus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Calliope hummingbird (<i>Stellula calliope</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Loggerhead shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
McCown's longspur (<i>Calcarius mcconni</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sage sparrow (<i>Amphispiza belli</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Brewer's sparrow (<i>Spizella breweri</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sage thrasher (<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Black-throated sparrow (<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Bobolink (<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Reptiles			
Mojave black-collared lizard (<i>Crotaphytus bicinctores</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Longnose snake (<i>Rhinocheilus lecontei</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Western ground snake (<i>Sonora semiannulata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Common garter snake (<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Amphibians			
Western toad (<i>Bufo boreas</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Woodhouse toad (<i>Bufo woodhousii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Plains spadefoot (<i>Spea bombifrons</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Columbia spotted frog (<i>Rana luteiventris</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Invertebrates			
Idaho point-headed grasshopper (<i>Acrolophitus pulchellus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
St. Anthony sand dunes tiger beetle (<i>Cicindela arenicola</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	X
Bruneau Dunes tiger beetle (<i>Cicindela waynei waynei</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	X
Plants			
Goose Creek milkvetch (<i>Astragalus anserinus</i>)	ESA Candidate	X	X
Packard's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus cusickii</i> var. <i>packardiae</i>)	ESA Candidate	X	
Christ's Indian Paintbrush (<i>Castilleja christii</i>)	ESA Candidate		X
Slickspot peppergrass (<i>Lepidium papilliferum</i>)	ESA Proposed	X	X
Cusick's horse-mint (<i>Agastache cusickii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Western boneset (<i>Agertina occidentalis</i> = <i>Eupatorium occidentale</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Pink agoseris, Mill Creek agoseris (<i>Agoseris lackschewitzii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Aase's onion (<i>Allium aaseae</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Tapertip onion (<i>Allium acuminatum</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Two-headed onion (<i>Allium anceps</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
King's angelica, Great Basin angelica (<i>Angelica kingii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Coral lichen (<i>Aspicilia rogerii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Challis milkvetch (<i>Astragalus amblytropis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Lost River milkvetch (<i>Astragalus amuls-amissi</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Lemhi milkvetch (<i>Astragalus aquilonius</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Sweetwater milkvetch (<i>Astragalus aretioides</i> = <i>Orophaca aretioides</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Mourning milkvetch (<i>Astragalus astratus</i> var. <i>inseptus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Barr's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus barrii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Painted milkvetch (<i>Astragalus ceramicus</i> var. <i>apus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Stiff milkvetch, Idaho milkvetch (<i>Astragalus conjunctus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Lesser rushy milkvetch (<i>Astragalus convallarius</i> var. <i>convallarius</i> = <i>A. junciformis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Barren milkvetch (<i>Astragalus cusickii</i> var. <i>sterilis</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Meadow milkvetch (<i>Astragalus diversifolius</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Geyer's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus geyeri</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Tufted milkvetch, Plains milkvetch (<i>Astragalus gilviflorus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	

Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Starveling milkvetch (<i>Astragalus jejunus</i> var. <i>jejunus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Mulford's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus mulfordiae</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Newberry's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus newberry</i> var. <i>castoreus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Picabo milkvetch (<i>Astragalus oniciformis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Wind River Astragalus (<i>Astragalus oreganus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Payson's milkvetch (<i>Astragalus paysonii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Snake River milkvetch (<i>Astragalus purshii</i> var. <i>ophiogenes</i> = <i>A. ophiogenes</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Bitterroot milkvetch (<i>Astragalus scaphoides</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Railhead milkvetch (<i>Astragalus terminalis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	X
Four-wing milkvetch (<i>Astragalus tetrapterus</i> = <i>A. cinerascens</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Mudflat milkvetch (<i>Astragalus yoder-williamsii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Large-leaved balsamroot (<i>Balsamorhiza macrophylla</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
King's desert grass (<i>Blepharidachne kingii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Daggett rock cress (<i>Boechea demissa</i> = <i>Arabis demissa</i> var. <i>languida</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sapphire rockcress (<i>Boechea fecunda</i> = <i>Arabis fecunda</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Peculiar moonwort (<i>Botrychium paradoxum</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Blue gramma (<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Mohave brickellbush (<i>Brickellia oblongifolia</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Beautiful bryum (<i>Bryum calobryoides</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Fringed redmaids (<i>Calandrinia ciliata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cusick's camas (<i>Camassia cusickii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Obscure evening primrose (<i>Camissonia andina</i> = <i>Oenothera andina</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Small camissonia (<i>Camissonia parvula</i> = <i>Oenothera parvula</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Winged-seed evening primrose (<i>Camissonia pterosperma</i> = <i>Oenothera pterosperma</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Idaho sedge (<i>Carex idaho</i> a = <i>C. parryana</i> ssp. <i>Idaho</i> a)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Earth lichen (<i>Catapyrenium congestum</i> = <i>Heteroplacidium congestum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Mahala mat (<i>Ceanothus prostratus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cusick's false yarrow (<i>Chaenactis cusickii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Desert pincushion (<i>Chaenactis stevioides</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Birchleaf mountain-mahogany (<i>Cercocarpus montanus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Lanceleaf springbeauty (<i>Claytonia multiscapa</i> var. <i>flava</i> = <i>C. lanceolata</i> var. <i>multiscapa</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Yellow bee plant (<i>Cleome lutea</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Twisted/Alkali cleomella (<i>Cleomella plocasperma</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Short-spored jelly lichen (<i>Collema curtisporum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Uinta Basin cryptantha (<i>Cryptantha breviflora</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Tufted cryptantha (<i>Cryptantha caespitosa</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Malheur cryptantha (<i>Cryptantha propria</i> = <i>Oreocarya propria</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Miner's candle (<i>Cryptantha scoparia</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Silky cryptantha (<i>Cryptantha sericea</i> = <i>Oreocarya sericea</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sepal-tooth dodder (<i>Cuscuta denticulata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Greeley's wavewing (<i>Cymopterus acaulis</i> , var. <i>greeleyorum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Ibapah springparsley (<i>Cymopterus ibapensis</i> = <i>Epallageiton ibapensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
California damasonium (<i>Damasonium californicum</i> = <i>Machaerocarpus californicus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Silver-skin lichen (<i>Dermatocarpon lorenzianum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Doublet (<i>Dimeresia howellii</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Bacigalupi's downingia (<i>Downingia bacigalupii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Harlequin calicoflower, Parti-color Downingia (<i>Downingia insignis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Pointed draba, Beavertip draba, Rockcress draba (<i>Draba globosa</i> = <i>D. apiculata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
White false tickhead (<i>Eatonella nivea</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Swamp willow-herb (<i>Epilobium palustre</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Rabbitbrush goldenweed, Bloomer's goldenweed (<i>Ericameria bloomeri</i> = <i>Haplopappus bloomeri</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Windward's goldenbush (<i>Ericameria discoidea</i> var. <i>winwardii</i> = <i>Ericameria winwardii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Linearleaf fleabane (<i>Erigeron linearis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Matted buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum caespitosum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Welsh's buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum capistratum</i> var. <i>welshii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Great Basin desert buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum desertorum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Hooker's buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum hookeri</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Calcareous buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum ochrocephalum</i> var. <i>calcareum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Packard's buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum shockleyi</i> var. <i>packardiae</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Shockley's matted buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum shockleyi</i> var. <i>shockleyi</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Railroad Canyon wild buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum soliceps</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cushion cactus/spinystar (<i>Escobaria vivipara</i> var. <i>vivipara</i> = <i>Coryphantha vivipara</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
White-margined wax plant (<i>Glyptopleura marginata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Spiny hopsage (<i>Grayia spinosa</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cronquist's forget-me-not (<i>Hackelia cronquistii</i> = <i>H. patens</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Bug-leg goldenweed (<i>Haplopappus insecticuriis</i> = <i>H. integrifolius</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Prostrate huchensia (<i>Hornungia procumbens</i> = <i>Hutehinsia procumbens</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cooper's rubber-plant (<i>Hymenoxys cooperi</i> var. <i>canescens</i> = <i>Actinea canescens</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Large Canadian St. John's wort (<i>Hypericum majus</i> = <i>H. canadense</i> var. <i>majus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Ballhead ipomopsis (<i>Ipomopsis congesta</i> ssp. <i>crebrifolia</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Spreading gilia (<i>Ipomopsis polycladon</i> = <i>Gilia polycladon</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Davis' peppergrass (<i>Lepidium davisii</i> = <i>L. montanum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Thick-leaf pepperweed (<i>Lepidium integrifolium</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Pryor Mountain bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella lesicii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Middle Butte bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella obdeltata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sacajawea's bitterroot (<i>Lewisia sacajaweanae</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Nuttall desert-parsley (<i>Lomatium nuttallii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Packard's desert parsley (<i>Lomatium packardiae</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Inch-high lupine (<i>Lupinus uncialis</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Torrey's desert dandelion (<i>Malacothrix torreyi</i> = <i>M. sonchoides</i> var. <i>torreyi</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	

Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
United blazingstar (<i>Mentzelia congesta</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Smooth stickleaf (<i>Mentzelia mollis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Leafy nama (<i>Nama densum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Green needlegrass (<i>Nassella viridula</i> = <i>Stipa viridula</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Rigid threadbush (<i>Nemacladus rigidus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Saint Anthony evening-primrose (<i>Oenothera psammophila</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Challis crazyweed (<i>Oxytropis besseyi</i> var. <i>salmonensis</i> = <i>O. nana</i> var. <i>salmonensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Creeping nailwort (<i>Paronychia sessiliflora</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Simpson's hedgehog cactus (<i>Pediocactus simpsonii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Idaho penstemon (<i>Penstemon idahoensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Janish's penstemon (<i>Penstemon janishiae</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Lemhi beardtongue (<i>Penstemon lemhiensis</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Short-lobed penstemon (<i>Penstemon seorsus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Indian apple, Wild crab apple (<i>Peraphyllum ramosissimum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Spine-noded milkvetch (<i>Peteria thompsoniae</i> = <i>P. nevadensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Obscure phacelia (<i>Phacelia inconspicua</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Malheur yellow phacelia (<i>Phacelia lutea</i> var. <i>calva</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Least phacelia, Small-flower phacelia (<i>Phacelia minutissima</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Idaho twinpod, Salmon twin bladderpod (<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i> var. <i>lyrata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Small-flowered ricegrass (<i>Piptatherum micranthum</i> = <i>Oryzopsis micrantha</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Thorn skeleton weed (<i>Pleiaranthus spinosa</i> = <i>Stephanomeria spinosa</i> = <i>Lygodesmia spinosa</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Platte cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla plattensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Alkali primrose (<i>Primula alkalina</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Cusick's primrose (<i>Primula cusickiana</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Turtleback, Annual brittlebrush (<i>Psathyrotes annua</i> = <i>Bulbostylis annua</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Dwarf wooly-heads (<i>Psilocarphus brevissimus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Beartooth large-flowered goldenweed (<i>Pyrracoma carthamoides</i> var. <i>subsquarrosa</i> = <i>haplopappus carthamoides</i> var. <i>subsquarrosus</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Thinleaf goldenhead (<i>Pyrocoma linearis</i> = <i>Haplopappus uniflorus</i> var. <i>howellii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Snake River goldenweed, Radiate goldenweed (<i>Pyrocoma radiata</i> = <i>Haplopappus raidatus</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
White grouse pellet lichen (<i>Rhizoplaca idahoensis</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Least snapdragon (<i>Sairocarpus kingii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Silver chicken sage (<i>Sphaeromeria argentea</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Lost River silene (<i>Silene scaposa</i> var. <i>lobata</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Basin goldenrod (<i>Solidago spectabilis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Few-flowered goldenrod (<i>Solidago velutina</i> = <i>S. sparsifolia</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
White-stemmed globe-mallow (<i>Sphaeralcea munroana</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Tall dropseed (<i>Sporobolus compositus</i> var. <i>compositus</i> = <i>Sporobolus asper</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Malheur princesplume (<i>Stanleya confertiflora</i> = <i>S. annua</i> , <i>S. rara</i> , <i>S. viridiflora</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Smooth buckwheat (<i>Stenogonum salsuginosum</i> = <i>Eriogonum salsuginosum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Rush aster (<i>Symphotrichum boreale</i> = <i>Aster junceiformis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
American wood sage (<i>Teucrium canadense</i> var. <i>occidentale</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Woven-spore lichen (<i>Texosporium sancti-jacobi</i> = <i>Cyphellium sancti-jacobi</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Wavy-leaf thelypody (<i>Thelypodium repandum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Meadow pennycress (<i>Thlaspi parviflorum</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Showy townsendia (<i>Townsendia florifera</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Scapose townsendia (<i>Townsendia scapigera</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Douglas's clover (<i>Trifolium douglasii</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Owyhee clover (<i>Trifolium onybeense</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Plumed clover (<i>Trifolium plumosum</i> var. <i>amplifolium</i>)	BLM & Forest Service Sensitive	X	X
Idaho range lichen (<i>Xanthoparmelia idahoensis</i>)	BLM Sensitive	X	
Sitka columbine (<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Lost River milvetch (<i>Astragalus amnis-amissi</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
White Cloud milkvetch (<i>Astragalus vexilliflexus</i> var. <i>nubilus</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Beautiful bryum (<i>Bryum calobryoides</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Centennial rabbitbrush (<i>Chrysothamnus parryi</i> ssp. <i>montanus</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Davis' wavewing (<i>Cymopterus davisii</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X

**Table 3-18
Special Status Species within the Planning Area**

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status*	Federal Land	
		BLM	Forest Service
Douglas' biscuitroot (<i>Cymopterus douglasii</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Serpentine draba (<i>Draba oreibata</i> var. <i>serpentine</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Payson bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella paysonii</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Idaho pennycress, Stanley thlaspi (<i>Noccaea idahoensis</i> var. <i>aileeniae</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Cache beardtongue (<i>Penstemon compactus</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Marsh's bluegrass (<i>Poa abbreviate</i> ssp. <i>marshii</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Tobias' saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga bryophora</i> var. <i>tobiasiae</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X
Tolmie's saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga tomiei</i> var. <i>ledifolia</i>)	Forest Service Sensitive		X

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3.6 Wild Horse and Burro Management

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The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, as amended by FLPMA and the Public Rangeland Improvement Act of 1978, direct the protection and management of wild horses and burros on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands. Both the BLM and Forest Service have responsibility for managing Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burros. Under the Act, the BLM identified herd areas as places used as habitat by a herd of wild horses at the time the Act was passed. To carry out its duties under the 1971 law, the BLM periodically evaluates each herd area to determine if it has adequate food, water, cover, and space to sustain healthy and diverse wild horse and burro populations over the long-term. The areas that meet these criteria are then designated as HMAs, where horses or burros can be viably managed as a component of the BLM-administered lands. The BLM designates an appropriate management level (AML) and specifies an allowable range in horse numbers for each HMA based upon available forage and other resources necessary to sustain the horse or burro populations, as well as resource objectives and other designated uses of the BLM-administered lands.

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Wild horse and burro management areas on National Forest System lands are called territories. However, no active territories exist within the planning area. There are two inactive territories in Idaho on the Challis National Forest which no longer have any wild horses.

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3.6.1 Conditions on BLM-Administered Lands

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Within the planning area, the BLM manages six HMAs, all in the state of Idaho: four in the Boise District, one in the Twin Falls District, and one in the Idaho Falls District. Additionally, there are nine herd areas within the planning area, five of which are in southwestern Montana, and four of which are in Idaho (see **Figure 3-2**, Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas and Herd Areas). The HMAs encompass approximately 361,900 acres of BLM-administered lands, and support between 424 and 617 head of horses

1 when populations are within AML. Approximately 551 horses are on BLM-administered
2 lands within these HMAs based upon current population estimates (**Table 3-19**, HMAs
3 within the Planning Area). It is assumed that a wild horse consumes 12 AUMs per year; as
4 such, the AML can be multiplied by 12 to determine the number of AUMs utilized by wild
5 horses.

6 **3.6.2 Conditions on National Forest System Lands**

7 The Forest Service does not manage any wild horses or burros within the planning area.

8 **3.6.3 Regional Context**

9 **Table 3-20**, Acres of Wild Horse and Burro Areas within GRSG Habitat in the Planning
10 Area, displays acres of wild horse and burro territories in GRSG habitat (Manier et al. 2013).
11 In the table, data are presented by surface management agency and their occurrence within
12 occupied habitat in the planning area.

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Figure 3-2 Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas and Herd Areas



Table 3-19
HMA's within the Planning Area

HMA	AML Range	Population Estimate ¹	Acres of BLM-Administered Lands within Planning Area
Black Mountain	30-60	55	38,900
Challis	185-253	185	154,300
Fourmile	60 ²	65	13,000
Hardtrigger	66-130	141	57,200
Sands Basin	33-64	65	9,500
Saylor Creek	50 ³	40	89,000

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Population estimates current as of November 2012

²An AML target, rather than a range, was specified for this herd by the existing LUP

³AML not established, but is currently managed for 50 horses in accordance with the 1987 Jarbidge Resource Management Plan.

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Table 3-20
Acres of Wild Horse and Burro Areas within GRSG Habitat in the Planning Area

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	41,300	2,007,200	601,400	228,500	1,792,900	1,177,200
Forest Service	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tribal and Other Federal	0	50,700	7,200	0	69,800	0
Private	2,300	602,400	29,100	4,400	271,200	51,900
State	3,500	74,300	4,800	14,200	83,200	15,000
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Includes number of acres where BLM and Forest Service Wild Horse and Burro areas overlap GRSG habitat.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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3.7 Wildland Fire Management

The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was developed by the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture in 1995 in response to dramatic increases in the frequency, size, and catastrophic nature of wildland fires in the US. The 2001 review and update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy consists of findings, guiding principles, policy statements, and implementation actions, and replaces the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. Known as the 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (DOI et al. 2001), this update recommends that federal fire management activities and programs include the following:

11



- 1 • Provide for firefighter and public safety
- 2 • Protect and enhance land management objectives and human welfare
- 3 • Integrate programs and disciplines
- 4 • Require interagency collaboration
- 5 • Emphasize the natural ecological role of fire
- 6 • Contribute to ecosystem sustainability

7 The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy provides nine guiding principles fundamental
8 to the success of the federal wildland fire management program and the implementation of
9 review recommendations. These umbrella principles compel each agency to review its
10 policies to ensure compatibility.

11 The wildland fire management program encompasses the full range of hazardous fuels,
12 management of wildfire, and the rehabilitation of lands affected by wildfire.

13 The wildfire suppression program utilizes a coordinated effort to respond to all unplanned
14 ignitions (wildfire) with a preplanned, appropriate response. Each response is guided by LUP
15 and fire management plan direction. As the severity and number of wildfires escalates, the
16 further response and prioritization of fire suppression resources becomes a collaborative
17 effort with all management levels within BLM and Forest Service working closely with
18 interagency partners.

19 Trend analysis of fire starts and acres burned in the sage steppe ecosystem is very general
20 and dependent predominately upon weather and fuels conditions. The relative fuel
21 conditions of live fuel moistures and fine fuel loadings coupled with weather conditions such
22 as relative humidity, wind speed, and days since last rainfall drive large fire growth in the
23 grass fuel type.

24 Fire occurrence is weighed towards human causes, especially around urban centers and along
25 major highway corridors. However, lightning is the major contributor to multiple large fire
26 days and high numbers of acres burned. Lightning storms generally track from southwestern
27 towards eastern Idaho, leaving successive lightning starts across all three southern districts,
28 often times in remote or difficult to reach areas. These lightning events are commonly
29 associated with strong winds, which contribute to rapid large fire growth. Summer storms
30 commonly lack significant rainfall. It should be reasonably expected that the majority of
31 large fire days correspond to high percentile Burning Index days. Burning Index is a number
32 related to the contribution of fire behavior to the effort of containing a fire. The Burning
33 Index rates fire danger related to potential flame length over a fire danger rating area.

34 Since 2006, emphasis upon the protection of GRSG habitat during suppression actions has
35 taken center stage in planning and operational discussions. High numbers of PPH and PGH
36 acres were burned in 2007 and 2012. The majority of these acres were burned during

1 corresponding high Burning Index days or periods. Fire season generally extends from early
2 June thru October, and large fires can be expected during that time.

3 *Fire Regime Condition Class*

4 Natural Fire Regime: A natural fire regime is a general classification of the role fire would
5 play across a landscape without modern human mechanical intervention (Agee 1993; Brown
6 1995). The five natural fire regimes are classified based on average number of years between
7 fires (fire frequency) combined with the severity of the fire on the dominant overstory
8 vegetation (amount of vegetation replacement). These five regimes include:

9 I – 0 to 35 year frequency and low (surface fires most common) to mixed (less than
10 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced) severity

11 II – 0 to 35 year frequency and high severity (greater than 75 percent of the
12 dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

13 III – 35 to 100+ year frequency and mixed severity (less than 75 percent of the
14 dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

15 IV – 35 to 100+ year frequency and high severity (greater than 75 percent of the
16 dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

17 V – 200+ year frequency and high severity (greater than 75 percent of the dominant
18 overstory vegetation replaced)

19 Fire regime condition class (FRCC) is a classification of the amount of change in fire
20 frequency and severity from the natural fire regime (Hann and Bunnell 2001). The three
21 classes are based on low (FRCC 1), moderate (FRCC 2), and high (FRCC 3) change from the
22 natural fire regime (Hardy et al. 2001; Schmidt et al. 2002). The change in natural fire regime
23 results from changes to one or more of the following fire regime attributes: vegetation
24 characteristics (e.g., species composition, structural stages, stand age, canopy closure, and
25 mosaic pattern); fuel composition, fire frequency, severity, and pattern; and other associated
26 disturbances (e.g., insect and disease mortality, grazing, and drought).

27 Characteristic vegetation and fuel conditions are considered to be those that occurred within
28 the natural fire regime. Uncharacteristic conditions are considered to be those that did not
29 occur within the natural fire regime. Examples of uncharacteristic conditions include
30 invasive species (e.g., weeds, insects, and diseases) or excessive vegetation removal. The
31 amount of change is based on comparison of the fire regime attributes as identified above to
32 the natural fire regime. The amount of change is then classified to determine the FRCC.

33 **3.7.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

34 The Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program (HFR) involves a variety of treatments to
35 accomplish the following:



- 1 • Modify vegetation to provide for firefighter safety
- 2 • Reduce the potential of wildfire spread
- 3 • Reduce the detrimental effects of wildfire on a landscape
- 4 • Restore ecosystem resiliency
- 5 • Allow the natural role of fire on the landscape
- 6 • Protect private holdings and infrastructure
- 7 • Decrease the costs of rehabilitation efforts after a wildfire has occurred

8 Depending on the specifics of the overall project, multiple treatment types may be involved
9 over several years to obtain the specifications for the project. One example of this would be:
10 For an annual grass dominated area, prescribed fire will be used to remove existing layers of
11 the annual grass and reduce the seed source. Chemical applications would be utilized to
12 further reduce the seed source and the resulting new annual grass plants. Mechanical
13 seedings of perennial (native or nonnative, grass/shrub/forb) mixtures would occur,
14 pending the most successful time of year for applications.

15 Examples of treatment types include:

- 16 • **Prescribed Fire (Treatment)** – An HFR Treatment Category for any fire
17 ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives and to achieve Fire
18 Management objectives.
- 19 • **Mechanical (Treatment)** – An HFR Treatment Category that describes work
20 that manually or mechanically removes or modifies fuel load structures to
21 achieve Fire Management objectives.
- 22 • **Other (Treatment)** – An HFR Treatment Category that describes work
23 involving the use of chemicals and biological methods to achieve Fire
24 Management objectives.

25 In Idaho, the HFR Program has been in place since the start of the 2000 National Fire Plan
26 identified the need and funding source to develop and maintain the program. Within the last
27 5 years, which would represent the most current treatments on the existing landscape, the
28 following acreage and types of treatments are shown below. The prescribed fire acreages
29 have decreased from historical levels due to multiple large scale wildfires accomplishing the
30 removal of undesirable vegetation in areas planned for future projects. Mechanical
31 treatments have increased in, both, seeding and mechanical reductions of conifer
32 encroachment throughout PPH and PGH areas. The use of chemical or “Other” types of
33 treatments has grown to increase the probability of success of seeding(s) of perennial (native
34 or nonnative, grass/shrub/forb) mixtures by removing the dominance and competitiveness
35 of the undesirable annual grass and weed species. Biological or “Other” treatments (insects,
36 goat, and specific pathogens) have recently been of interest in very specific areas due to the

1 “high risk” in areas that may have significant values should accidents occur during
2 implementation of mechanical treatments (e.g., rocks and windows).

3 As described in Section 4.2.2, cheatgrass can dramatically alter sagebrush ecosystems and
4 their fire frequencies. Increasing exotic annual grasses, primarily cheatgrass, are resulting in
5 sagebrush loss and degradation (USFWS 2010a, p. 13,932). Cheatgrass can more easily
6 invade and create its own feedback loop in areas that are: 1) dry with understory vegetation
7 cover that is not substantial, or 2) experiencing surface-disturbing activities (e.g., road
8 construction). It can facilitate short fire return intervals by outcompeting native herbaceous
9 vegetation with early germination, early moisture and nutrient uptake, prolific seed
10 production, and early senescence (Hulbert 1955; Mack and Pyke 1983; Pellant 1996).
11 Furthermore, by providing a dry, fine fuel source during the peak of fire season, cheatgrass
12 increases the likelihood of fire, which increases the likelihood of further cheatgrass spread
13 (Pellant 1990). While research and management efforts are focused on developing means of
14 controlling cheatgrass on a large scale, the only current management actions under the fire
15 program to minimize the spread of fire in GRSG habitat are: fuels treatments, pre-
16 suppression planning, and effective fire suppression geared toward protecting GRSG habitat.
17 Reducing the spread of cheatgrass and the scale of wildfire through appropriate conservation
18 actions associated with other BLM and Forest Service post-fire programs, such as ES&R or
19 BAER, could also result in more or improved habitat for GRSG.

20 3.7.2 Trends

21 **Table 3-21**, BLM Treatment Types and Acreages Over the Past Five Years, presents fuel
22 treatment types and acreages over the past 5 years.

Table 3-21
BLM Treatment Types and Acreages Over the Past Five Years

Treatment Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Prescribed Fire	11,199 acres	8,647 acres	7,189 acres	6,398 acres	3,021 acres
Mechanical	46,073 acres	38,992 acres	33,975 acres	30,987 acres	30,725 acres
Other	59,003 acres	47,991 acres	36,500 acres	39,895 acres	71,666 acres

Source: BLM GIS 2015

23
24 Over the past few years, the focus of the HFR program was to treat acreages within the
25 WUI. This was specific to protecting private in-holdings in the attempt to decrease the
26 detrimental effects of wildfire to human structures and the associated infra-structure for the
27 communities.

28 ***Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR)***

29 Alteration to the historic fire regime has substantially reduced the sagebrush steppe
30 communities of the Sub Unit and the larger Great Basin. The exclusion of wildfire within the
31 upper elevations shrub steppe communities (primarily mountain big sagebrush) has
32 converted GRSG habitat into juniper woodland.



1 The greatest loss of GRSG habitat however has been from cheatgrass proliferation and
2 wildfire within the lower elevation sagebrush communities (primarily Wyoming big
3 sagebrush). Historically, wildfire was not a common occurrence within the Wyoming big
4 sagebrush sites. Current literature estimates the fire interval at approximately 100 years.
5 When these sites did burn, the discontinuous fuels of the scattered native bunch grasses
6 likely resulted in small, discontinuous fires. Conversely, cheatgrass is highly flammable due to
7 its uniform fine fuels which dry out early in the growing season. Each recurring fire set the
8 stage for further cheatgrass expansion, resulting in an ever increasing cheatgrass/fire cycle
9 and loss of GRSG habitat. On many of these sites, fire-return intervals have been shortened
10 to between 2 and 4 years (Whisenant 1990).

11 Lower elevation shrub steppe communities within the subunit (even those containing
12 minimal cheatgrass understories) will cross a threshold into fire maintained cheatgrass
13 dominated communities unless they are successfully rehabilitated within the first couple
14 years following wildfire. Such areas are also highly susceptible to noxious weed invasions.
15 Therefore, successfully reestablishing perennial vegetation within this narrow time frame is
16 essential for reducing the loss of low elevation GRSG habitat.

17 Fire rehabilitation consists of mitigating damaging effects from wildfire and in restoring
18 vegetative structure and function to recently burned fire damaged areas which cannot
19 recover on their own. These efforts consist of seeding perennial grasses, shrubs, and forbs.
20 The seeding technique is based largely on seed size. Most grasses (which have relatively large
21 seeds) are drill seeded to effectively cover the seed, whereas sagebrush and many forbs
22 (which consist of small seeds) are most successful broadcast seeded.

23 Drought and invasive annual grass competition are the two biggest challenges to
24 reestablishing perennial vegetation following wildfire on the low elevation sites. Seedings are
25 most successful during years of adequate precipitation and on sites where cheatgrass
26 competition is minimal such as recently burned sagebrush stands in good condition, or
27 sagebrush stands with cheatgrass in the understory which burned hot enough consume
28 cheatgrass seed lying on the soil surface underneath the sagebrush canopy. Accordingly, the
29 higher the density of sagebrush cover prior to the burn, the greater the likelihood for
30 seedings success. Because sagebrush fires burn hotter and slower than grassland fires, the
31 cheatgrass seed lying on the soil surface underneath the sagebrush canopy is usually
32 consumed, whereas the seed laying outside of the sagebrush canopy or other shrub free areas
33 (such as previously burned cheatgrass-dominated sites) is not consumed and remains viable.
34 Accordingly, the areas underneath the burned sagebrush canopy create a cheatgrass free
35 “clean” seedbed which allows seeded species to establish relatively free of cheatgrass
36 competition. Although the areas outside of the canopies will remain dominated by
37 cheatgrass, the established plants underneath the former sagebrush canopy will usually
38 outcompete the adjacent cheatgrass over time. However, strong wind-driven fires often
39 prevent consumption of cheatgrass seed, thereby require cheatgrass control. Seeding
40 previously burned cheatgrass-dominated sites devoid of a brush overstory, is not usually
41 successful because these rapid cheatgrass driven fires do not provide enough heat to
42 consume cheatgrass seed lying on the soil surface.

1 Herbicides have proven to be the most effective and noninvasive method for controlling
2 annual grasses prior to seeding. Before 1991, the use of herbicides to control invasive annual
3 grasses was prohibited on public land. Therefore, various tilling methods such as plowing
4 and disking were the only available options. Unfortunately, these treatments damaged
5 remaining native vegetation and biologic soil crusts, increased site susceptibility to wind
6 erosion and often resulted in seed being drilled too deeply, thereby opening the site for total
7 cheatgrass domination when seedings were unsuccessful. Prescribed fire was used in
8 attempts to kill cheatgrass seed while still on the plant. Although such fires kill some seed
9 still on the plant, they do not burn hot enough to kill cheatgrass seed on the soil surface.

10 Intensive livestock grazing is often suggested for controlling cheatgrass competition.
11 Although targeted grazing may have some applications for fuels management, it is not
12 effective in reducing cheatgrass competition (Hempy-Mayer and Pyke 2008). During the
13 short time when cheatgrass is highly palatable in the spring, a sufficient number of livestock
14 cannot be concentrated on a small enough area to reduce the cheatgrass seed significantly or
15 reduce cheatgrass seed lying on the soil surface. In addition, this type of grazing can be
16 detrimental to remaining perennial grasses, opening the site up for further cheatgrass
17 expansion in the future.

18 The BLM and Forest Service are authorized to use various approved contact and pre-
19 emergent herbicides for controlling invasive annual grasses. Both types of herbicides have
20 their advantages and shortcomings.

21 Contact herbicides such as Glyphosate have been widely and successfully used within the
22 Boise, Twin Falls, and Idaho Falls Districts in Idaho. These herbicides must be applied
23 during the short period that cheatgrass is actively growing, and before seed development
24 occurs. When numerous cheatgrass crops occur on a given year, repeated applications are
25 required. Additionally, application rates must be tuned to minimize damage to existing
26 perennial plants while effectively controlling the invasive annuals. Glyphosate binds quickly
27 to soil particles and is inactivated. Unbound glyphosate is degraded by soil bacteria.

28 Pre-emergent herbicides such as imazapic and sulfometuron methyl are highly effective in
29 controlling invasive annual grasses while having minimal impacts on most established
30 perennial species. They are also classified as nontoxic to fish and wildlife. These herbicides
31 do not require the specific application timing needed with glyphosate, and their residual
32 action in the soil controls annual grasses whenever they happen to germinate. The residual
33 action lasts from 1 to 3 years, depending on soil moisture, pH, and temperature. In addition
34 to controlling invasive annual grasses prior to seeding, these herbicides could be used to help
35 maintain and protect existing native plant communities which have been invaded with
36 annual grasses. Such treatments would allow the natives to gain a competitive advantage over
37 the exotic annuals, and the associated reduction in annual grass fuels would reduce the site's
38 risk to wildfire. A limitation of these herbicides is their potential to damage crops at
39 extremely low concentrations. Accordingly, these herbicides must be used in accordance to
40 the label and/or other appropriate restrictions in such situations.



1 Recent research on naturally occurring fungi and bacteria for controlling cheatgrass is
2 encouraging and may prove to be an effective future control method. Examples include
3 Dooley and Beckstead's (2010) *Characterizing the interaction between a fungal seed pathogen and a*
4 *deleterious rhizobacterium for biological control of cheatgrass*; Stewart's (2009) *The grass seed pathogen*
5 *Pyrenophora semeniperda as a biological agent for annual Brome grasses*; and Meyer et al.'s (2008).
6 *Cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum) biocontrol using indigenous fungal pathogens*.

7 Selecting plant materials which can establish and persist in these arid cheatgrass competitive
8 environments is essential for restoring GRSG habitat lost through wildfire. Prior to the mid-
9 1980s, fire rehabilitation funds could not be used for sagebrush seeding. Since that time,
10 sagebrush is included in most fire rehabilitation seedings on its respective ecological sites.
11 Occasionally, during busy fire years, sagebrush seed shortages restrict its use to priority
12 burned GRSG habitat.

13 Native grasses and forbs are preferred over introduced species when they can meet the
14 above requirements. Historically, few adapted native grass seed was available which could
15 persist in these desert environments, thereby requiring the use of durable introduced species
16 such as crested wheatgrass. Over time, selections of native blue bunch wheatgrass, basin
17 wildrye, Snake River wheatgrass, squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, and Sandberg bluegrass have
18 become increasingly available and are now used extensively in fire rehabilitation seedings for
19 areas that receive at least 10 inches of annual precipitation in recently burned sagebrush
20 communities. For the past ten years, the BLM has been funding the interagency Great Basin
21 Native Plant Selection and Increase Project for increasing native seed availability, especially
22 native forbs important to GRSG, and to improve the success of land managers in
23 establishing native plants (Forest Service 2013b).

24 However, some important native grasses (such as Thurber's needlegrass) are still not widely
25 available and or effective in competing with cheatgrass in the harshest environments. In
26 these areas, durable introduced species as Siberian wheatgrass and Russian wild rye are still
27 the only viable option. Even those species are often unsuccessful on those sites.
28 Additionally, restoring native plant communities in repeatedly burned annual dominated
29 grasslands has proven largely unsuccessful. Considerable speculation and research has
30 attempted to understand why. A lack of mycorrhiza, soil nutrients, and other changes to the
31 soil environment from years of invasive annual grass domination is believed to be at least
32 partially responsible.

33 The theory of "assisted succession" is suggested as a method for ultimately restoring these
34 areas by first vegetating with resilient introduced species to break the fire cycle, removing
35 annual grass dominance and deplete annuals' seed source, and restore soil characteristics
36 which may in time make the site more hospitable to restoring the native community,
37 followed by eventual seeding with natives. Accordingly, this is a long term costly process
38 which cannot begin to be implemented until the fire cycle has been broken. Until the
39 majority of annual grass dominated landscapes can be rehabilitated to less fire prone species
40 in the long-term, these short fire cycles will result in a continual loss of these investments,
41 and in the remaining native sagebrush steppe communities.

1 Seeded areas require rest from livestock use to become fully established, followed by
2 livestock management which will maintain plant health and vigor. BLM policy traditionally
3 prescribes a minimum of two growing seasons rest from livestock grazing, and until plant
4 establishment objectives are met. Depending on moisture and other site conditions, longer
5 rest is often needed before grazing can be resumed. However, a true native restoration could
6 require years of rest from grazing to become successfully established (depending on plant
7 materials used and site characteristics). Such large-scale treatments could have significant
8 repercussions to grazing permittees, and may also necessitate more restrictive management
9 to maintain the native seeded species over the long term.

10 The ability to protect these areas from recurring wildfire is crucial to maintaining the
11 reestablished sagebrush component. Successful fire rehabilitation seeding can contribute to
12 this goal by changing the fuels from highly flammable annual grasses with high fuel
13 continuity, into less-fire-prone perennial bunch grasses, which stay greener longer and which
14 provide much less fuel continuity (Pellant 1992). Accordingly, when fire does return to these
15 rehabilitated areas, the fires are often spotty and leave substantial unburned sagebrush
16 islands and a seed source for naturally reestablishing sagebrush. Additionally, the burned
17 perennial grasses quickly re-sprout and compete effectively with annual weeds.

18 Also warranted is a system of effectively managed fuel breaks consisting of durable, fire-
19 resistant vegetation, such as forage kochia, placed primarily along roads or other appropriate,
20 strategic features. In general, vegetative fuel breaks have characteristics that disrupt fuel
21 continuity, harbor lower fuel loads, and have lower volatile compounds and increased
22 moisture content (Pellant 1992). Fuel breaks help provide defensible anchor points for
23 facilitating fire suppression activities and can allow fires to be compartmentalized, ultimately
24 reducing potential fire size.

25 ***Burned Area Emergency Response***

26 The Forest Service's Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) program is designed to
27 address emergency situations through its key goals of protecting life, property, and critical
28 natural and cultural resources. The objective of the program is to determine the need for and
29 to prescribe and implement emergency treatments on federal lands to minimize threats to
30 life or property resulting from the effects of a fire or to stabilize and prevent unacceptable
31 degradation to natural and cultural resources. Loss of vegetation exposes soil to erosion;
32 runoff may increase and cause flooding, sediments may move downstream and damage
33 houses or fill reservoirs, and put endangered species and community water supplies at risk.

34 BAER teams are staffed by specially trained professionals, and BAER assessments usually
35 begin before a wildfire has been fully contained. There are a variety of emergency
36 stabilization techniques that the BAER team might recommend. Reseeding of ground cover
37 with quick-growing or native species, mulching with straw or chipped wood, construction of
38 straw, rock or log dams in small tributaries, and placement of logs to catch sediment on hill
39 slopes are the primary stabilization techniques used. The team also assesses the need to
40 modify road and trail drainage mechanisms by installing debris traps, modifying or removing
41 culverts to allow drainage to flow freely, adding additional drainage dips and constructing
42 emergency spillways to keep roads and bridges from washing out during floods.



1 **3.7.3 Regional Context**

2 **Table 3-22**, Acres of Wildland Fire within GRSG Habitat, and **Table 3-23**, Acres with High
3 Probability for Wildland Fire within GRSG Habitat, display wildland fire data for GRSG
4 habitat in the planning area (Manier et al. 2013). **Table 3-23** also uses data from the Forest
5 Service’s fire simulator, FSim. FSim generates burn probabilities by simulating fires using
6 historical weather data and current landcover data. **Figure 3-3**, Fire History in the Planning
7 Area, and **Figure 3-4**, Fire Frequency in the Planning Area, illustrate fire issues in the sub-
8 region.

9 **3.8 Livestock Grazing**

10 The foremost authority that provides for grazing of BLM-administered lands is the Taylor
11 Grazing Act which was passed on June 28, 1934, to protect public rangelands and their
12 resources from degradation, to provide for orderly use to improve and develop public
13 rangelands, and to stabilize the livestock industry. Following various homestead acts, the
14 Taylor Grazing Act established a system for allotting grazing privileges. The FLPMA and the
15 Public Rangeland Improvement Act (1978) also provide authority for managing grazing on
16 public rangelands managed by the BLM. BLM grazing administration, excluding of Alaska, is
17 governed by 43 CFR Part 4100.

18 The primary laws that govern grazing on National Forest System lands are the Organic
19 Administration Act of 1897, Granger-Thye Act of 1950, Multiple Sustained Yield Act of
20 1960, FLPMA, Forest Rangeland Renewable Resources and Planning Act of 1974, National
21 Forest Management Act of 1976, and Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978. The
22 Forest Service manages livestock grazing under direction in 36 CFR Part 222, Forest Service
23 Manual 2200, and Forest Service Handbook 2209.13. In addition, LUPs identify the
24 suitability of land on National Forest System units to produce forage for grazing animals and
25 establish programmatic direction for grazing activities, including goals, objectives, desired
26 conditions, standards, guidelines, and monitoring requirements. Although an area may be
27 deemed suitable for use by livestock in a LUP, a project-level analysis evaluating the site-
28 specific impacts of the grazing activity, in conformance with NEPA, is required in order to
29 authorize livestock grazing on specific allotments.

30 The BLM grazing administration regulations were revised in 1995 to include Fundamentals
31 of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (43 CFR
32 4180). In accordance with 43 CFR 4180.2, both the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health
33 and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management, and the Standards for Rangeland Health
34 and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands Administered by the
35 BLM for Montana and the Dakotas were placed in effect on August 12, 1997, and
36 subsequently apply to grazed BLM-administered lands in the planning area. Standards are
37 integrated into the BLM’s land management through incorporation into grazing permits and
38 LUPs, as a basis for environmental assessments and through NEPA analysis, and as a basis
39 for monitoring. Guidelines are integrated into land management by incorporating them into
40 livestock grazing authorizations and management practices. The standards and guidelines
41 provide a clear statement of agency policy and direction for those who use BLM-
42 administered lands for livestock grazing and for those who are responsible for their

Figure 3-3 Fire History in the Planning Area



Figure 3-4 Fire Frequency in the Planning Area



Table 3-22
Acres of Wildland Fire within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	400,000	39,300	965,900	836,500	30,100	1,809,400
Forest Service	36,700	8,700	161,500	2,800	12,600	33,900
Tribal and Other Federal	80,200	127,000	82,400	58,100	17,100	58,100
Private	47,200	73,300	190,300	72,400	13,800	417,400
State	28,300	9,800	30,900	38,600	11,100	53,100
Other	100	0	100	600	0	700

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Acres calculated from wildland fires occurring between 2000 and 2012; represents total acres burned.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

1

Table 3-23
Acres with High Probability for Wildland Fire within GRSG Habitat¹

Surface Management Agency	Acres ² within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ³	MZ IV
BLM	1,801,400	402,600	4,438,100	6,035,000	862,000	11,904,200
Forest Service	428,900	182,700	621,400	601,200	31,100	1,163,200
Tribal and Other Federal	270,100	435,900	301,900	461,500	180,100	487,200
Private	890,300	593,300	2,268,400	1,338,600	871,200	4,068,100
State	363,900	62,700	649,700	600,300	151,600	738,700
Other	26,300	1,300	26,300	61,900	8,400	62,000

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹High burn probability is based on a national burn probability dataset generated for the 2012 Fire Program Analysis System and provided by the National Interagency Fire Center. Areas were classified in several categories: non-burnable, low probability, and high probability.

²Derived from Forest Service FSim Burn data

³Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

2

3 management and accountable for their conditions. In accordance with 43 CFR Part 4180, if
4 it is determined that grazing management practices or levels of grazing are significant factors
5 in failing to achieve the standards and conform with the guidelines, appropriate action shall
6 be taken prior to the next grazing season to make progress towards Standards and conform
7 to the Guidelines.

8 3.8.1 Conditions within the Planning Area

9 Grazing permits and leases are the documents that authorize livestock grazing on BLM-
10 administered lands (43 CFR 4100.0-5). The kind and number of livestock, the period of use
11 (seasonal), the allotment to be used, and the amount of use in animal unit months (AUMs)

are mandatory terms and conditions of every grazing permit or lease (43 CFR 4130.3). An AUM is the amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or its equivalent for one month and an allotment is an area of land designated and managed for grazing of livestock (43 CFR 4100.0-5). Livestock graze on approximately 12,129,800 acres of BLM-administered land within 2,654 allotments in the planning area.

Grazing on National Forest System lands is permitted through term grazing permits that authorize grazing on National Forest System lands. The term grazing permit authorizes the number, kind, and class of livestock as well as the period of use and grazing allotment on which livestock are permitted to graze. Permit holders may not assign or transfer grazing privileges in whole or part (36 CFR 222.1-4). There are 319 allotments on 9,646,900 acres on National Forest System land in the planning area.

Table 3-24, Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region Planning Area – Allotments, provides information on the allotments managed in the planning area.

Table 3-24
Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Region Planning Area – Allotments

District or Forest	Allotments	Acres in Planning Area	Active AUMs	Non Habitat	PGH	PPH
BLM						
BLM Boise District	522	3,709,900	410,800	1,325,500	568,300	1,816,100
BLM Idaho Falls District	873	3,420,500	396,300	551,500	366,600	2,502,400
BLM Twin Falls District	534	3,750,900	543,700	813,600	685,300	2,252,000
BLM Western Montana District	426	849,500	103,600	185,000	211,100	453,500
Total	2,355	11,730,700	1,454,400	2,875,600	1,831,200	7,024,000
Forest Service						
Beaverhead-Deerlodge	83	2,334,900	207,600	2,008,700	177,200	149,000
Boise	16	1,244,500	48,300	1,168,400	56,500	19,600
Caribou-Targhee	64	2,224,600	308,700	2,002,100	164,500	105,800
Curlew	2	47,800	27,900	1,800	6,800	39,200
Salmon-Challis	82	2,184,100	142,200	1,639,500	201,800	342,900
Sawtooth	72	1,611,000	172,100	1,135,300	202,800	273,000
Total	319	9,646,900	906,800	7,955,800	809,600	929,500

Source: BLM GIS 2015; Forest Service 2013a; Forest Service 2013c

Facilities for livestock management on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands in the planning area occur at varying densities based upon management needs, landownership patterns and other factors. These facilities include, but are not limited to fences, cattle guards, corrals, pipelines, water troughs, wells and reservoirs. Fences are used to delineate allotment boundaries, pastures within allotments, landownerships, and to exclude the impact of ungulate grazing from certain resources. Corrals are smaller fenced

1 areas that are occasionally located on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands
2 for the purposes of gathering, sorting and handling livestock. Watering facilities are used to
3 improve livestock distribution in areas where naturally occurring surface water is not
4 available, and to reduce livestock use of naturally occurring springs and streams. In addition,
5 supplemental salt, mineral, and protein may be provided for livestock grazing on BLM-
6 administered and National Forest System lands, to aid with distribution of authorized
7 livestock.

8 Since 1999, an assessment of rangeland health standards and guidelines has been made on
9 2,219 BLM allotments comprising 9,978,899 acres within the planning area. Of the
10 allotments which have been assessed, 1,403 allotments comprising 3,509,733 acres are
11 meeting all applicable standards and guidelines. An additional 451 allotments comprising
12 4,581,851 acres are not achieving one or more of the applicable standards and guidelines due
13 to livestock grazing management, but management actions have been implemented to
14 correct the identified issues. On 61 allotments comprising 660,901 acres, standards are not
15 being achieved due to livestock management, but management actions have not yet been
16 taken to make progress towards meeting standards. On 293 allotments comprising 1,226,179
17 acres, one or more applicable standards was not met due to factors other than livestock
18 management. Standards and guidelines assessments have not been completed on 528
19 allotments comprising 2,406,238 acres within the planning area. The Forest Service does not
20 have an equivalent assessment to the BLM's rangeland health standards and guidelines, nor
21 are similar assessment data available for National Forest System lands.

22 3.8.2 Regional Context

23 **Table 3-25**, Acres of Grazing Allotments within GRSG Habitat, through **Table 3-27**, Miles
24 of Fences within GRSG Habitat, display grazing data for GRSG habitat in the planning area
25 (Manier et al. 2013). In each table, data are presented by surface management agency and
26 their occurrence within occupied habitat in the planning area. It should be noted that for
27 **Table 3-26**, Acres of BLM Allotments Not Meeting Land Health Standards within GRSG
28 Habitat, data were assembled in 2008 from available records, and progress has been made
29 towards meeting standards and guidelines since this time. In addition, this table reflects only
30 those allotments not meeting Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines,
31 Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals).

Table 3-25
Acres of Grazing Allotments within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH			Acres within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
BLM	1,976,900	8,916,400	4,670,700	7,256,900	8,946,000	13,408,800
Forest Service	865,700	416,700	1,050,800	954,000	146,500	1,566,700
Tribal and Other Federal	128,700	148,500	153,800	262,900	156,400	266,200
Private	465,400	4,524,200	1,201,300	1,101,900	3,957,300	3,044,600
State	214,000	771,600	257,900	629,000	1,032,700	693,600



Table 3-25
Acres of Grazing Allotments within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH			Acres within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
Other	400	4,200	400	1,400	17,700	1,500

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

1

Table 3-26
Acres of BLM Allotments Not Meeting Land Health Standards within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM (Idaho)	440,700	366,000	968,900	1,397,800	286,900	2,617,200

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Only includes allotments not meeting Land Health Standards with grazing as the causal factor

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

2

Table 3-27
Miles of Fences within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Miles within PGH ¹			Miles within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	4,600	8,800	7,200	10,600	9,300	16,100
Forest Service	1,600	1,100	1,900	2,000	500	2,800

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Derived from a dataset that identifies pasture and allotment borders on BLM-administered and National Forest System land as potential fences

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

3

3.9 Recreation

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The diverse planning area offers multiple settings for a wide range of opportunities for recreation requiring no permits and no or minimal fees on BLM-administered and National Forest System land.

5

6

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3.9.1 Conditions within the Planning Area

8

BLM Recreation

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Objectives of the BLM recreation program are to: (1) provide broad spectrum of resource dependent recreation opportunities to meet the needs and demands of public land visitors, (2) foster agency-wide efforts to improve service to the visiting public, (3) maintain high quality recreation facilities to meet public needs and enhance the image of the agency, and (4) improve public understanding and support of the BLM by effectively communicating the

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1 agency's multiple use management programs to the recreation visitor. The BLM
2 accomplishes these objectives by focusing on visitor services, information and interpretation,
3 resource enhancement and protection, facility maintenance and development, tourism
4 programs, improved accessibility, and essential administrative functions. In meeting these
5 objectives, the BLM also considers the presence of other federal, state and local, and private
6 recreation opportunities; the need to assist states and local communities served by the
7 agency to broaden and improve their economic base; and the need to continually monitor
8 recreation trends, customer preferences, and technological advances to improve short,
9 medium and long range strategic planning efforts.

10 BLM recreation planning and management is based on the establishment of Recreation
11 Management Areas. Recreation management areas fall into two categories: 1) Special
12 Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) and 2) Extensive Recreation Management Areas
13 (ERMA). The BLM Recreation Planning Manual 8320 was released in 2011. Manual 8320
14 made policy changes to how BLM addresses planning for recreation management areas.
15 Because the policy changes are recent, there are currently no LUPs that have recreation
16 decisions based on the new policy. Consequently, the management decisions described here
17 are done so in the context of the previous recreation policy.

18 Recreation management areas are administrative sub-units that serve as the basic land unit
19 for recreation management. Each area is identified and managed as a unit based on similar or
20 interdependent recreation values, homogenous or interrelated recreation use, land tenure and
21 use patterns, or administrative efficiency.

22 SRMAs are established to direct recreation program priorities, including the allocation of
23 funding and personnel, to those BLM-administered lands where a commitment has been
24 made to provide specific recreation activity and experience opportunities on a sustainable
25 basis. This includes a long term commitment to manage the physical, social, and
26 administrative settings to sustain these activities and experience opportunities. Delineation is
27 based on administrative/management criteria, including the existence of congressional
28 designations, similar or interdependent recreation values, homogenous or interrelated
29 recreation uses, land tenure and use patterns, transportation systems, administrative
30 efficiency, intensity of use, high resource values, public concerns, or interagency
31 considerations. These areas usually require a high level of recreation investment and/or
32 management. They include recreation sites, but recreation sites alone do not constitute a
33 SRMA. SRMAs established to reflect a congressional designation may be larger than the
34 designation boundary when significant recreation issues or management concerns occur
35 outside the designated area.

36 ERMAs are where recreation management is only one of several management objectives and
37 where limited commitment of resources is required to provide extensive and unstructured
38 type of recreation activities. They may contain recreation sites. The areas consist of the
39 remainder of land areas not included in SRMAs within a field office.

40 The number of SRMAs and ERMAs are listed in **Table 3-28**, Recreation Management
41 Areas, and are mapped in **Figure 3-5**, Special Recreation Management Areas.



Table 3-28
Recreation Management Areas

SRMAs	48
ERMAs	18

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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Cooperating Agency Review

Figure 3-5 Special Recreation Management Areas



1 Within the recreation management are, there are approximately 400 recreation sites. These
2 sites range in size and intensity of use from intensely used OHV areas (e.g., St Anthony Sand
3 Dunes), boat ramps, and campgrounds to lightly used overlooks, trailheads and interpretive
4 wayside exhibits.

5 BLM-administered lands received over 6 million visits in 2012. The BLM estimates that 20
6 to 25 percent of recreation visits were related to OHV use (e.g., motorcycles, all-terrain
7 vehicles, and trucks). OHV use on BLM-administered lands has seasonal variations. In early
8 spring when the forests often still have snow, BLM-administered lands will get recreational
9 OHV use. As the temperatures rise and the lower elevation areas get hotter, OHV users will
10 migrate to higher elevations where temperatures are cooler (often making more use of
11 national forests). Use on BLM-administered lands in the fall will increase as temperatures
12 cool and hunting season starts. There are BLM-administered lands that see little recreation
13 use except during hunting season. OHV use is low during the cold winter months.

14 Depending on the OHV designation, use will be on routes in limited areas or possibly off
15 routes where the area is designated as open (see **Section 3.10**, Travel Management, for OHV
16 designations).

17 Other types of recreation activity that occur include bicycling, camping, hiking, horseback
18 riding, skiing, snowmobiling, rafting/floating, power boating, fishing, swimming,
19 photography, wildlife viewing, and hunting.

20 ***Forest Service Recreation***

21 The Forest Service provides and manages a myriad of recreation opportunities for the
22 visiting public. The National Forests and Grasslands provide the greatest diversity of
23 outdoor recreation opportunities in the world, connecting visitors with nature in an
24 unmatched variety of settings and activities. Visitors can hike, bike, ride horses, and drive
25 OHVs; picnic, camp, hunt, fish, and navigate waterways; view wildlife and scenery; and
26 explore historic places. Visitors glide through powder at world class alpine resorts and
27 challenge themselves on primitive cross-country ski or snowmobile routes. With many
28 partners, the recreation program strives to promote healthy lifestyles, support local
29 economies, and connect citizens to their public lands. The Intermountain Region of the
30 Forest Service manages over 34 million acres of forests and grasslands (5.8 million in
31 Wilderness), with almost all of it open for public use and enjoyment. In 2012, over 11.5
32 million visitors came to enjoy the resources provides within the region.

33 ***BLM Special Recreation Permits***

34 The BLM manages organized, commercial, and competitive recreation activities on BLM-
35 administered lands and related waters with special recreation permits (SRPs). As a
36 management tool, SRPs reduce user and resource conflicts, mitigate adverse impacts on
37 resources, provide opportunities for monitoring activities, enhance visitor experience
38 opportunities, and, with user fee requirements, allow for a fair return for these types of land
39 uses. Issuance of an SRP is discretionary, with proposed activities subject to NEPA
40 compliance and mitigation requirements specific to the proposed activity. The BLM may
41 deny a permit request if assessment indicates unacceptable impacts; if an approved

1 moratorium or restricted allocation system exists for the proposed activity, location, or time-
2 frame; if there are serious health and safety concerns; or if past performance by an applicant
3 has been deemed unacceptable and problematic. The BLM may require an applicant to
4 possess appropriate insurance, bonding, certifications of training, and state permits/licenses
5 to protect resource values, the served public, and the federal government.

6 In 2012, the BLM had 341 active SRPs. Of those SRPs, 241 were commercial river permits
7 and 24 are commercial big game hunting permits. The remaining SRPs are for organized
8 groups, competitive events, or other types of commercial recreation outfitters (e.g., bike
9 tours).

10 ***Forest Service Special Use Permits***

11 The Forest Service manages trail, river, and similar recreation opportunities and their access
12 and supports facilities under the principles enumerated in FSM 2303. Special Use Permits are
13 issued for specific types of recreation activities on Forest Service managed land and may be
14 required when extra measures are needed to protect natural or cultural resources. The
15 following are recreation special uses that involve facilities:

- 16 • Recreation special use permits involving privately owned facilities include resorts,
17 marinas, ski areas, target ranges, organization camps, recreation residences, and
18 other facilities. These permits are typically authorized under term permits and
19 users pay a land use fee based on a percent of revenue or appraised value of the
20 land.
- 21 • Recreation special uses involving government-owned facilities are concession
22 campgrounds, resorts, organization camps, and some other facilities.
- 23 • Recreation special uses involving commercial public services are outfitting and
24 guiding for a broad range of activities, groomed cross-country ski trails, and
25 recreation events (including competitive races, eco-challenges, dog trails,
26 adventure games, and endurance races). These uses are usually authorized under
27 the Recreation Enhancement Act, which allows fees to be retained by the
28 administrative unit that collected them.

29 Additionally, noncommercial group use permits are required for groups of 75 or more
30 people. These users do not pay fees.

31 The Forest Service has 910 active recreation special use permits within the planning area
32 (197 at Boise National Forest, 258 at Sawtooth National Forest, 114 at Salmon-Challis
33 National Forest, 29 at Payette National Forest, and 312 at Caribou-Targhee National Forest).

34 No permits are required for private, non-commercial use of public lands for camping,
35 fishing, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, or similar activities.

36 In 2012, the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service had 2335 recreation special use
37 permits and 267 recreation special use permits for group activities and recreation events. Of
38 the total recreation special use permits about 1400 were for recreation residences, 796 were



1 for outfitter and guiding services, 53 were for organizational camps, 42 were for resort and
2 marina permits, 28 were for concessionaires, and 16 were for ski areas.

3 **3.9.1 Trends**

4 Recreation use is expected to continue to grow throughout the planning area. The proximity
5 of many recreation opportunities to the area surrounding Boise has dramatically increased
6 recreational visitation within portions of the planning area and is expected to continue to do
7 so.

8 Five key drivers are causing changes to recreation in the planning area:

- 9 1. Increased urbanization as a result of population growth and changing
10 demographics
- 11 2. Changing public expectations and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities,
12 especially for dispersed recreation
- 13 3. Increased energy development in portions of the planning area
- 14 4. Close proximity of BLM-administered lands to private property, and the growing
15 use of BLM-administered lands as a community-based recreation asset
- 16 5. Technological advances, such as all-terrain or utility vehicles and mountain bikes,
17 affordable global positioning system (GPS) units, as well as better outdoor
18 equipment and clothing

19 These drivers will impact the activity opportunities that can be offered and the recreation
20 experience and benefit opportunities that can be produced by land managers and partners.

21 ***Hunting***

22 Although hunting licenses issued have dropped over the last decade, hunting remains a
23 popular recreation activity within the region. While deer and elk are the most popular game
24 in the planning area, of more relevance to this analysis are falconry and upland bird hunting.

25 ***Falconry***

26 Falconry permit holders were surveyed after the fall 2010-Spring 2011 hunting season
27 (Table 3-29, Falconry Permits).

**Table 3-29
Falconry Permits (Fall 2010-Spring 2011)**

Species	# Hunters	# Days	# Harvest	Birds/Hunter	Days/Hunter	Birds/Day
Forest Grouse	1	3	0	0.00	2.0	0.00
Chukar	8	95	4	0.49	12.3	0.04
California Quail	5	46	4	0.76	8.8	0.09
Gray Partridge (Huns)	42	1,261	86	2.04	30.0	0.07
Pheasant	27	850	117	4.35	31.7	0.14

**Table 3-29
Falconry Permits (Fall 2010-Spring 2011)**

Species	# Hunters	# Days	# Harvest	Birds/ Hunter	Days/ Hunter	Birds/ Day
Rabbit	15	467	83	5.69	32.1	0.18
Sage-Grouse	25	551	58	2.28	21.8	0.10
Sharp-tailed Grouse	8	149	13	1.67	19.8	0.08
Mourning Doves	6	173	8	1.16	26.6	0.04
Ducks	42	1,173	340	8.05	27.8	0.29
Geese	1	3	0	0.00	2.0	0.00
	180	4,770	711	3.94	26.4	0.15

159 hunters purchased Idaho falconry permits which would allow hunting in Fall 2010-Spring 2011.

Upland Birds

Idaho offers a multitude of upland game bird hunting opportunities on millions of acres of BLM-administered and National Forest System land.

Hunters can pursue three species of forest grouse – dusky, ruffed, and spruce – and two species of prairie grouse – Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and GRSG – all native to Idaho. Forest grouse hunting opportunities exist across the state, while Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and GRSG hunting is limited to certain areas only.

While GRSG are widely distributed in areas with large blocks of sagebrush, the hunting season is generally short (1 week during 2012) and opportunities are limited to areas of southern Idaho.

Idaho also offers chukar and gray partridge hunting, and has robust populations of California quail. Chukar and gray partridge (huns) thrive on large tracts of public ground and are available to everyone willing to make the effort to hunt them.

Chukar are typically found in rocky, arid areas covered with cheatgrass and sagebrush. Gray partridge (huns) are often found in close proximity to chukar and adjacent to cultivated land across the state. Expect to find the best populations of chukar and gray partridge in the Clearwater, Magic Valley, and Southwest regions.

California quail occur from south-central Idaho, west to the Oregon border and north to the Palouse Prairie. Good populations live along rivers and streams with brushy cover below 3,500 feet in elevation.

Historically, Idaho was a destination pheasant hunting location, but populations have declined because of changes in farming practices and the resultant loss of habitat.

Upland game population trends are monitored through harvest surveys, August roadside counts, August helicopter flush counts, mourning dove coo counts, hunter check stations, and wing barrel harvest data. Each region collects data using various methods based on



1 regional bird densities and sampling constraints. Statewide, telephone surveys assess overall
2 hunter activity and harvest of upland game species. From 1996-2000, telephone surveys
3 estimated statewide rather than regional trends (except turkey) due to budget constraints. A
4 separate telephone survey has been conducted since 2000 for GRSG and sharp-tailed grouse
5 to improve sample size for these two species that have been considered for listing under the
6 ESA.

7 In 2009, approximately 40,100 resident hunting license buyers hunted upland game and
8 approximately 5,300 nonresident hunting license buyers hunted upland game. This
9 represents 18 percent of all resident hunting license buyers and 16 percent of all nonresident
10 hunting license buyers.

11 For GRSG, the season framework was altered in 1996 to provide three different types of
12 seasons: liberal, conservative, and closed. In 2002, the season framework was modified. The
13 Birch Creek Valley and the Big Desert areas, closed to GRSG hunting from 1995 to 2001,
14 were reopened. Research suggested that the closed season did not have any measurable
15 effect on GRSG populations, as measured by number of GRSG counted on lek routes. In
16 2009, there was a 7-day season with a 1-bird daily bag limit in Zone 2, and a 23-day season
17 with a 2-bird daily bag limit in Zone 3.

18 Starting in 2000, GRSG hunters were required to purchase a GRSG hunting validation. This
19 requirement provided a means to collect better harvest estimates from a sample of GRSG
20 hunters through a telephone survey. Approximately 4,400 hunters harvested 7,200 GRSG in
21 2009.

22 Numerous check stations are run in the state to gather information on reproductive success
23 in different areas. In general, the sample size has decreased at these check stations in recent
24 years due to shortened seasons and reduced hunter participation.

25 **3.10 Travel Management**

26 **3.10.1 Conditions on BLM-Administered Lands**

27 Travel and transportation are integral parts of virtually every activity that occurs on BLM-
28 administered lands. The BLM has taken a comprehensive approach to travel and
29 transportation management (TTM). It is an interdisciplinary approach to travel and
30 transportation planning and management that addresses resource uses and associated access
31 to BLM-administered lands and waters, including motorized, nonmotorized, mechanical, and
32 animal-powered modes of travel.

33 Travel and transportation management planning means providing clear and specific direction
34 that addresses public and administrative access needs on the proper levels of land and water
35 for all modes of travel. The TTM process addresses variability among landscapes, users'
36 interests, equipment options, and cultural and biological resource constraints. The primary
37 goal of TTM is to develop a systematic network of routes with appropriately designated uses
38 that provides opportunities for a diverse set of activities to occur on BLM-administered
39 lands, such as recreation, energy development, grazing, and wildlife management. Travel

1 management objectives serve as the foundation for appropriate travel and access
2 prescriptions.

3 There is considerable overlap between travel management and all other uses on BLM-
4 administered lands. For example, many people visit BLM-administered lands for recreation
5 purposes. For these visitors, a route system may serve as either a means to reach a
6 destination where the activity occurs (e.g., a road to a trailhead or parking area) or as the
7 focus of the recreation activity itself (e.g., four-wheel driving, hiking, or horseback riding
8 trails).

9 To reduce the duplication of narrative between travel management and the other sections of
10 this document, this section addresses only public travel and access (i.e., OHV management
11 area designations, route designations, types of travel, and seasonal area limitations). The
12 interrelated recreation components, such as OHV use, are addressed under **Section 3.9,**
13 **Recreation.**

14 ***Modes of Travel***

15 Visitors to BLM-administered lands use roads and trails for a variety of activities involving
16 various modes of travel. Motorized travel in the planning area ranges from standard
17 passenger vehicles driving on maintained roads to OHVs operating on primitive roads and
18 trails. OHV is synonymous with off-road vehicle, as defined in 43 CFR 8340.0-5(a):

19 Off-road vehicle means any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel on
20 or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding: 1) Any
21 nonamphibious registered motorboat; 2) Any military, fire, emergency, or law
22 enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes; 3) Any vehicle whose
23 use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer or otherwise officially approved;
24 4) Vehicles in official use; and 5) Any combat or combat-support vehicle when used
25 in times of national defense emergencies.

26 OHVs commonly used in the planning area include off-road motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles,
27 utility terrain vehicles, jeeps, specialized 4-by-4 trucks, and snowmobiles. Other modes of
28 travel include mountain biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, pack
29 animal driving, hiking, boating, hang-gliding, paragliding, ballooning, and wheelchairs. The
30 type and amount of use and the location of roads and trails influence physical, social, and
31 administrative recreation setting and the overall quality of the recreation experience.

32 ***Travel Designations***

33 Executive Order 11644 and 43 CFR 8340 both require the BLM to designate all BLM-
34 administered lands nationally as open, closed, or limited for OHV use.

35 *Open*

36 Areas designated as Open are areas where all types of vehicle use are permitted at all times
37 anywhere in the area. Use is subject to any operating regulations and vehicle standards
38 established in other parts of the CFR.



1 *Limited*

2 Areas designated as Limited are areas restricted at certain times, in certain areas, or to certain
3 vehicular use. These restrictions may be of any type but can generally be accommodated
4 within the following categories: numbers of vehicles; types of vehicles; time or season of
5 vehicle use; permitted or licensed use only; use on existing roads and trails; use on designated
6 roads and trails; and other restrictions.

7 *Closed*

8 Areas designated as Closed are areas restricted at certain times, in certain areas, and to
9 certain vehicular use. These restrictions may be of any type but can generally be
10 accommodated within the following type of categories: numbers of vehicles; types of
11 vehicles; time or season of vehicle use; permitted or licensed use only; use on existing roads
12 and trails; use on designated roads and trails; and other restrictions.

13 ***Federal Regulations***

14 Route designation criteria are described in 43 CFR 8342.1 and state:

15 The authorized officer shall designate all public lands as open, limited, or closed to
16 off-road vehicles. All designations shall be based on the protection of the resources
17 of the public lands, the promotion of the safety of all the users of the public lands,
18 and the minimization of conflicts among various uses of the public lands; and in
19 accordance with the following criteria:

20 (a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed,
21 vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of
22 wilderness suitability.

23 (b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant
24 disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered
25 or threatened species and their habitats.

26 (c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle
27 use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring
28 public lands, and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in
29 populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.

30 (d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or
31 primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized
32 officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect
33 their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

34 ***National Guidance***

35 On a national level and in response to increasing demand for motorized and mechanized
36 recreation trails on BLM-administered lands, the BLM first developed an OHV strategy and
37 then a mountain bike strategy. These strategies emphasize that the BLM should be proactive

1 in seeking travel management solutions that conserve natural resources while providing for
2 ample recreation opportunities.

3 The BLM released the current version of the Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) in
4 March 2005. Guidance on determining Open, Limited, and Closed OHV Area designations
5 during the planning process was incorporated into the Comprehensive Trails and Travel
6 Management Section (Appendix C, Section II D).

7 Additional TTM guidance continued to be developed and culminated with the release of the
8 Travel and Transportation Management Manual (1626) in July 2011. Current policy states
9 that Open areas will be limited to a size that is geographically identifiable and can be
10 effectively managed and that expansive open areas allowing cross-country travel will not be
11 designated in LUP revisions or new travel management plans.

12 The Travel and Transportation Handbook (H-8342) was released in March of 2012. It
13 provides detailed guidance using the designation criteria in 43 CFR 8342.1 for area and route
14 selection. It includes guidance for developing other implementation plans including but not
15 limited to sign plans, education and outreach plans, law enforcement plans, and maintenance
16 plans.

17 **3.10.2 Conditions on National Forest System Lands**

18 The Forest Service published its Travel Management Rule in 2005. It required each national
19 forest to designate roads, trails, and areas open or closed to motor vehicles. Designations
20 were made in accordance with criteria described in Executive Order 11644 and included the
21 type of vehicle and, if appropriate, time of year for motor vehicle use. A given route, for
22 example, could be designated for use by motorcycles, ATVs, or street-legal vehicles. Once
23 designation was complete, the rule prohibited motor vehicle use off the designated system.

24 In addition to its formal regulations, the Forest Service developed TTM planning guidance,
25 including the Travel Management Manual, FSM 7700 (2008), and the Travel Planning
26 Handbook, FSH 7709.55 (2008).

27 ***Federal Regulations***

28 The criteria for Forest Service route designation are found in 36 CFR 212.55 (a), General
29 criteria for designation of National Forest System roads, trails, and areas on National Forest
30 System lands and state:

31 In designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas
32 on National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use, the responsible official shall
33 consider effects on National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public
34 safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of
35 National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads,
36 trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and
37 the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.



(b) Specific criteria for designation of trails and areas. In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands, the responsible official shall consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:

(1) Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;

(2) Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;

(3) Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands;

(4) Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands. In addition, the responsible official shall consider:

(5) Compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and other factors.

3.10.3 Current Conditions

Travel planning is complete for all lands administered by the Forest Service in the planning area. National Forest System lands with a designated route system are considered the same as the Limited designation on lands administered by BLM.

The BLM has not conducted travel management planning throughout the sub-region. In areas with a designation of Limited, motorized use will be limited to existing roads until individual route selection and designation occurs during subsequent implementation-level planning. Current travel management designations are presented by field office in Table 3-30, Travel Management Designations within the Planning Area.

Table 3-30
Travel Management Designations within the Planning Area

Field Office	Open	Limited	Closed
Bruneau	0	975,300	210,400
BLM	0	975,300	210,400
Forest Service	0	0	0
Burley	0	949,400	19,400
BLM	0	608,900	19,400
Forest Service	0	340,500	0
Challis	0	1,064,700	13,400
BLM	0	706,600	13,400
Forest Service	0	358,100	0
Dillon	0	1,069,100	10,700
BLM	0	671,800	10,700
Forest Service	0	397,300	0
Four Rivers	1,320	433,600	1,420

Table 3-30
Travel Management Designations within the Planning Area

Field Office	Open	Limited	Closed
BLM	50	351,500	1,420
Forest Service	1,260	82,100	0
Jarbidge	0	961,800	55,200
BLM	0	961,800	55,200
Forest Service	0	0	0
Owyhee	0	813,000	224,400
BLM	0	813,000	224,400
Forest Service	0	0	0
Pocatello	0	406,100	310
BLM	0	320,900	310
Forest Service	0	85,300	0
Salmon	0	471,200	14,400
BLM	0	348,300	14,400
Forest Service	0	122,800	0
Shoshone	0	1,253,100	139,600
BLM	0	1,214,900	139,600
Forest Service	0	38,200	0
Upper Snake	40	1,930,200	16,900
BLM	0	1,564,700	16,900
Forest Service	40	365,400	0
Other – Forest Service Raft River	0	71,900	0
Total Acres:	1,350	10,399,300	706,200

Source: BLM GIS 2015

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3.10.4 Regional Context

Table 3-30, Miles of Roads within GRSG Habitat, and **Table 3-31**, Acres of Roads within GRSG Habitat, display data for roads within GRSG habitat in the planning area. In each table, data are presented by surface management agency and their occurrence within occupied GRSG habitat in the planning area and MZs that overlap the planning area.

Table 3-30
Miles of Roads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Miles within PGH			Miles within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
BLM	3,408	17,000	6,500	12,500	20,100	18,900
Forest Service	1,001	500	1,200	1,405	200	1,900
Tribal and Other Federal	600	2,700	700	1,000	1,600	1,000
Private	3,600	19,600	7,200	4,700	15,500	8,700
State	801	2,100	1,300	1,613	2,800	1,800

Table 3-30
Miles of Roads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Miles within PGH			Miles within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
Other	100	0	100	100	100	100

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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Table 3-31
Acres of Roads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	36,600	188,800	68,500	130,700	209,600	199,400
Forest Service	10,900	5,600	12,900	14,100	2,900	20,100
Tribal and Other Federal	7,600	28,600	8,000	10,900	17,100	11,200
Private	42,300	236,700	83,500	53,000	170,800	100,900
State	9,200	23,400	14,100	17,200	30,200	18,800
Other	800	200	800	1,200	900	1,200

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Assumes footprint of 73.2 meters for interstate highways, 25.6 meters for primary and secondary highways, and 12.4 meters for other roads.

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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3.11 Lands and Realty

The primary goal of the BLM Lands and Realty program is to enhance the administration of public landownership to provide the most effective configuration of lands and interests in land, consistent with land use plans developed through a full and open public involvement process, and to further the purposes of FLPMA. The objectives of the Forest Service landownership adjustment program are to achieve the optimum landownership pattern for the protection and management of resource uses, settle land title claims, and provide resource administrators with title information about the use of and resources on the land they administer.

Lands and realty actions can generally be divided between land tenure adjustments and land use authorizations. Land tenure adjustments focus on land exchange, acquisition (including purchase and easement acquisition), and disposal. Withdrawals, while managed as part of land and realty, are administrative actions that do not affect land tenure. Land use authorizations consist of ROWs and other leases or permits for the use and occupancy of public land.

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1 Forest Service land use plan prescriptions are similar to BLM exclusion and avoidance areas.
2 Prescriptions can restrict or prohibit certain uses in a planning area. It should also be noted
3 that the Forest Service grants special use authorizations (granting ROWs, permits,
4 easements, and leases), while the BLM grants ROWs on their respective agency lands. Lastly,
5 the Forest Service completes landownership adjustments (purchase, exchange, donation, and
6 ROW acquisition), while the BLM conducts land tenure adjustments (exchanges, disposals,
7 and acquisitions).

8 3.11.1 Conditions within the Planning Area

9 The lands within the planning area are owned and may be managed by multiple federal, state,
10 and local agencies, as well as private landowners. The configuration of landownerships and
11 their proximity to each other is an important factor when considering land tenure
12 adjustments and evaluating land use authorization applications. The planning area contains
13 lands managed by several federal and state agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (in trust for
14 Native American tribes), and private lands. Error! Reference source not found., Error!
15 Reference source not found., shows the acreage and overall percent ownership for each land
16 manager in the planning area.

Table 3-33
Acres of GRSG Habitat by Surface Management

Surface Land Management	Acres PPH	Acres PGH	Acres Outside Habitat	Total Acres
BLM Total	7,272,100	1,971,800	3,205,100	12,449,000
BLM – Idaho	6,811,400	1,749,900	2,982,900	11,544,200
BLM – Montana	460,600	222,000	222,200	904,800
Forest Service Total	962,400	898,100	11,391,900	13,252,400
Forest Service - Idaho	728,200	664,100	9,718,800	11,111,100
Forest Service - Montana	162,300	234,000	1,673,100	2,069,400
Forest Service - Utah	71,900	0	0	71,900
US Fish and Wildlife Service	39,700	11,700	30,000	81,400
National Park Service	27,200	222,700	261,800	511,700
Department of Energy	378,000	182,500	1,670	562,200
Department of Defense	11,100	37,700	78,500	127,400
Bureau of Reclamation	3,250	3,260	109,800	116,300
Indian Tribe	143,900	10,700	189,000	343,600
Idaho State	642,400	377,500	804,500	1,824,400
Montana State	221,665	167,455	431,995	821,115
Utah State	630	0	0	630
Private	2,127,600	1,857,200	9,652,900	13,637,700
Other	87,800	32,200	294,400	414,400
Total Acres:	11,921,200	5,756,600	26,164,500	43,842,300

Source: BLM GIS 2015



1 Within the planning area, BLM-administered lands have been classified for retention or
2 disposal pursuant to Section 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act (43 USC 315f), FLPMA, and 43
3 CFR Parts 2400 and 2500; BLM-administered lands have also been identified as ROW
4 exclusion or avoidance areas, and ROW corridors, pursuant to FLPMA and 43 CFR Part
5 2800. Section 205 of the FLPMA authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to acquire access
6 (lands or interest therein) over non-federal lands to units of the National Forest System by
7 purchase, exchange, donation, or eminent domain. Several acts of Congress authorize
8 occupancy and use of National Forest System lands and interests in lands administered by
9 the Forest Service. The applicable statutory authority determines the appropriate special use
10 authorization. For example, some permits and temporary permits are issued under the
11 provisions of the Organic Administration Act of June 4, 1897 (16 USC 477-482, 551), while
12 some easements and leases and other types of permits are issued under the provisions of
13 Title V, Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (43 USC 1761-
14 1771), and the Forest Roads and Trails Act of 1964.

15 **Table 3-32**, Land Classifications/Designations in Planning Area (Acres), lists the number of
16 acres identified with land tenure classifications and ROW designations in the planning area.
17 **Figure 3-6**, Authorized Rights-of-Way in the Planning Area, and **Figure 3-7**, Pending and
18 Expired Rights-of-Way in the Planning Area, provide an overview of the extent of lands
19 currently occupied by ROWs.

Table 3-32
Land Classifications/Designations in Planning Area (Acres)

Land Status	Acres within Planning Area
Withdrawals (Total)	4,032,400
Withdrawals (BLM)	3,827,900
Withdrawals (Forest Service)	204,500
ROW Avoidance (Total)	8,306,100
ROW Avoidance (BLM)	1,134,300
ROW Avoidance (Forest Service)	7,171,800
ROW Exclusion (Total)	3,333,200
ROW Exclusion (BLM)	1,061,500
ROW Exclusion (Forest Service)	2,271,700

Source: BLM GIS 2013, BLM GIS 2015

Land Tenure Adjustments

22 Landownership (or land tenure) adjustment refers to those actions that result in the disposal,
23 acquisition, purchase, exchange, or donation of land or acquisition or grant of ROW by the
24 BLM; or purchase, exchange, or donation of land, or ROW acquisition by the Forest Service.
25 Section 102(a) of FLPMA requires that land be retained in federal ownership unless, as a
26 result of land use planning, it is determined that disposal of certain parcels will service in
27

Figure 3-6 Authorized Rights-of-Way in the Planning Area



Figure 3-7 Pending and Expired Rights-of-Way in the Planning Area



1 the national interest. In all land tenure adjustments, keeping the surface and mineral estate
2 intact on both the lands disposed of and acquired would benefit the future owners and their
3 use of the land.

4 *Disposals*

5 Disposal areas include tracts of land that are economically difficult to manage, and/or
6 parcels that could serve important public objectives, including, but not limited to, expansion
7 of communities and economic development. These lands are usually disposed of through
8 exchanges or land sales.

9 The Forest Service has very limited authority to sell or otherwise dispose of National Forest
10 System lands. Most authorities allowing the sale of lands have specific criteria or identify
11 only a small number of properties for sale or disposal in a limited geographical area. The tool
12 used most often for conveyance of lands within National Forest boundaries is land
13 exchange.

14 LUPs relevant to the planning area identify 1,812,300 acres of BLM-administered land for
15 disposal. Of these, 559,300 acres lie within PPH, while 257,400 acres lie within PGH. No
16 National Forest System land has been identified for disposal in the planning area.

17 Exchanges. Exchange is the process of trading lands or interests in lands and serves as a
18 viable tool for the BLM to accomplish its goals and mission. Exchanges must be in the
19 public interest and conform to applicable BLM LUPs. The lands to be exchanged must be of
20 approximately equal monetary value and located within the same state. BLM-administered
21 lands may be exchanged for lands or interests in lands owned by corporations, individuals, or
22 government entities. Except for those exchanges that are congressionally mandated or
23 judicially required, exchanges are voluntary and discretionary transactions with willing
24 landowners.

25 Land exchanges are used to bring lands and interests in land with high public resource values
26 into public ownership, consolidate land and mineral ownership patterns to achieve more
27 efficient management of resources and BLM programs, and dispose of BLM-administered
28 land parcels identified for disposal through the planning process.

29 National Forest System lands are exchanged to achieve a desired national forest
30 landownership pattern that supports forest land and resource goals and objectives, addresses
31 fragmentation, reduces future management costs, and responds to urban and community
32 needs. The objective of the Forest Service land exchange program is to use land exchanges
33 as a tool, in concert with the purchase program, to implement Forest land and resource
34 management planning and direction; to optimize National Forest System landownership
35 patterns; to further resource protection and use; and to meet the present and future needs of
36 the American people.

37 There are land exchanges pending on 76,982 acres (37,141 federal acres and 39,841
38 nonfederal acres) within the planning area. One land exchange totaling 52 acres has been
39 identified on National Forest System land in the planning area.



1 Land Sales. Section 203 (a) of FLPMA provides for sale of public lands if one of the
2 following criteria is met: (1) the tract is difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the
3 public lands and is not suitable for management by another federal agency; (2) such tract was
4 acquired for a specific purpose and the tract is no longer required for that or any other
5 federal purpose; or (3) disposal of such tract will serve important public objectives, including
6 but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development that cannot be
7 achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land. Public lands that have been
8 identified for consideration for disposal by sale in the approved LUPs meet one or more of
9 these criteria. Public lands must be sold at fair market value.

10 Section 209 of FLPMA authorizes the conveyance of federal minerals through sale and
11 specifies the conditions under which the mineral rights would be conveyed. The mineral
12 rights could be sold with the land surface, sold as a separate transaction, or retained.
13 Conveyance of mineral rights has occurred only in conjunction with the sale of land.

14 The Forest Service has very limited authority to sell or otherwise dispose of National Forest
15 System lands. Most authorities allowing the sale of lands have specific criteria or identify
16 only a small number of properties for sale or disposal in a limited geographical area. The tool
17 used most often for conveyance of lands within National Forest boundaries is land
18 exchange. Thus, no National Forest System land has been identified for sale in the planning
19 area.

20 Withdrawal. Withdrawal are formal actions that accomplish one or more of the following
21 actions:

- 22 • Transfers total or partial jurisdiction of federal land between federal agencies
- 23 • Segregates (closes) public lands to appropriation under public land laws including
24 mineral laws
- 25 • Dedicates public land for a specific public purpose

26 There are three major categories of formal withdrawals: (1) congressional withdrawals, (2)
27 administrative withdrawals, and (3) Federal Power Act or Federal Energy Regulatory
28 Commission (FERC) withdrawals. Congressional withdrawals are legislative withdrawals
29 made by Congress in the form of public laws (acts of Congress). Administrative withdrawals
30 are made by the President, Secretary of the Interior, or other authorized officers of the
31 executive branch of the federal government. Federal Power Act or FERC withdrawals are
32 power project withdrawals established under the authority of the “Federal Power Act” of
33 1920. Such withdrawals are automatically created upon filing an application for a
34 hydroelectric power development project with FERC.

35 Federal policy now restricts all withdrawals to the minimum time and acreage required to
36 serve the public interest, maximize the use of withdrawn lands consistent with their primary
37 purpose, and eliminate all withdrawals that are no longer needed. Management and
38 adjustment of withdrawals focuses on the establishment, management, modification, and
39 revocation of withdrawals.

1 The purpose of a withdrawal is to withhold National Forest System land from operation of
2 various federal laws, to either reserve the area for some future use or to maintain other
3 public values of the area. A withdrawal may prevent the land from leaving federal ownership,
4 may prevent mineral leasing or may prevent entry under the mining laws. In recent years
5 most withdrawals prevent entry under the mining laws since it is a nondiscretionary action.

6 The main object of a Forest Service withdrawal is to protect administrative sites and other
7 capital improvements, and to protect designated management areas not compatible with
8 mining activity. Other agencies such as FERC and the Bureau of Reclamation often request
9 withdrawal of National Forest System land for their purposes. The Department of Defense
10 use of National Forest System lands is by special use authorization, agreement, or the
11 Interchange Act of 1956.

12 There are currently 28 withdrawals in the planning area, encompassing 4,025,900 acres of
13 BLM-administered lands. Of these withdrawals, 1,437,200 acres reside on PPH, and 782,000
14 acres reside on PGH. There are approximately 584,100 acres of Forest Service withdrawals
15 in the planning area.

16 *Acquisition*

17 Acquisition of and interests in lands are important components of the BLM's land tenure
18 adjustment strategy. Acquisition of lands can be pursued to facilitate various resource
19 management objectives. Acquisitions, including easements, can be completed through
20 exchanges (see above), land purchases, or donations.

21 The Forest Service purchases lands through the Land and Water Conservation Fund to
22 protect critical resource areas and provide increased public recreation opportunities. Land
23 donations are accepted to consolidate National Forest System lands and protect critical
24 resource areas. The legal public use of National Forest System lands is improved by
25 acquiring ROWs for roads and trails.

26 Lands and interests in lands are acquired for the following actions:

- 27 • Improve management of natural resources through consolidation of federal,
28 state, and private lands
- 29 • Secure key property necessary to protect endangered species, promote biological
30 diversity, increase recreational opportunities, and preserve archeological and
31 historical resources
- 32 • Implement specific acquisitions authorized or directed by acts of Congress

33 Forest Service objectives in lands or interests in lands through purchase, donation, and
34 rights-of-way are to:

- 35 • Enhance the multiple use and sustained yield of the goods and services from
36 National Forest System lands



- 1 • Protect and improve the quality of renewable resources
- 2 • Protect and preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of the
- 3 national heritage
- 4 • Provide for access, use, and enjoyment of the forest resources by the public
- 5 • Improve administrative efficiency and effectiveness of National Forest System
- 6 lands

7 One Forest Service land exchange is proposed in Idaho that would affect 52 acres of land
8 within PGH.

9 Purchases. The BLM has the authority, under Section 205 of FLPMA, to purchase lands or
10 interests in lands. Similar to other acquisitions, purchase is used to acquire key natural
11 resources or to acquire legal ownership of lands that enhance the management of existing
12 public lands and resources. Acquiring lands and interests in lands through purchase helps
13 consolidate management areas to strengthen resource protection. Acquisitions are used
14 primarily to enhance recreational opportunities and acquire crucial wildlife habitats.

15 ***Land Use Authorizations***

16 The most common form of authorization to permit uses of BLM-administered lands by
17 commercial, private, or governmental entities is the ROW grant. A ROW grant is an
18 authorization to use a specific piece of BLM-administered land for certain projects such as
19 roads, pipelines, transmission lines, or communication sites.

20 Some uses of BLM-administered lands are short-term uses and authorized through land use
21 permits such as filming activities or apiary sites (bee hives).

22 Authorizations grant rights and privileges for a specific use of the land for a specific period
23 of time. The BLM's objective is to grant land use authorizations to any qualified individual,
24 business, or government entity, and to direct and control the use of authorizations on BLM-
25 administered lands in a manner that:

- 26 • protects the natural resources associated with BLM-administered lands and adjacent
- 27 lands, whether private or administered by a government entity
- 28 • prevents unnecessary or undue degradation to BLM-administered lands
- 29 • promotes the use of authorizations in common, considering engineering and
- 30 technological compatibility, national security, and area LUPs
- 31 • coordinates, to the fullest extent possible, all BLM actions with local, state, Native
- 32 American, and other federal agencies; interested individuals; and appropriate quasi-
- 33 public entities (43 CFR 2801.2)

34 Forest Service special use permits authorize and administer use of National Forest System
35 lands by individuals, companies, organized groups, other federal agencies and state or local
36 levels of government in a manner that protects natural resource values and public health and

1 safety. For example, special use permits authorize uses that contribute to the nation's
2 infrastructure for generating and transmitting energy resources, such as: electric transmission
3 facilities, oil and gas pipelines, hydropower facilities, and wind and solar facilities. They
4 authorize uses for communications, commerce, public health and safety, and homeland
5 security, such as fiber-optic and wireless telecommunications, water development systems,
6 federal, state, and local highways.

7 The Forest Service objectives of granting ROWs for roads and trails are to:

- 8 • Provide ROWs for the public road system, including the federal-aid system,
9 when such roads cross National Forest System lands or interests in lands
- 10 • Accommodate the access needs for the protection, development, and utilization
11 of lands and resources owned by private interests or administered by public
12 agencies when the planned forest development road system and public road
13 system do not meet those needs adequately
- 14 • Protect and enhance the quality of air, water, soil, and natural beauty of National
15 Forest System lands in the granting of any ROW
- 16 • Cooperate with intermingled and adjacent landowners in developing roads that
17 serve the needs of both parties through the exchange of ROWs
- 18 • Provide access across National Forest System lands to private land that is
19 adequate to secure the owners thereof of reasonable use and enjoyment of their
20 land without unnecessarily reducing the management options of the Forest
21 Service or damaging National Forest System lands or resources

22 *ROW Avoidance and Exclusion Areas*

23 Areas closed to mineral leasing, having a no surface occupancy restriction, or otherwise
24 identified as unsuitable for surface disturbance or occupancy are generally identified as
25 avoidance or exclusion areas for ROW authorizations. Restrictions and mitigation measures
26 could be modified on a case-by-case basis for avoidance areas, depending on impacts on
27 resources, while exclusion areas are strictly prohibited from ROW development. See **Table**
28 **3-32** for the number of acres currently identified as ROW avoidance and exclusion areas.

29 *ROW Corridors*

30 Designated utility corridors are developed to concentrate the effects of utility lines in
31 manageable locations on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands, which often
32 provide suitable locations for utility transmission lines. The corridors may contain power
33 line, transcontinental fiber optic communications cables, and trans-state gas pipelines.
34 Designated utility corridors are designated in BLM and Forest Service LUPs. Such corridor
35 designations are relatively uncommon in the sub-region. The mere presence of a
36 transmission line or pipeline does not imply that it is within a formally designated corridor.
37 Under this planning effort there are no undesignations or changes to the character of
38 previously existing designated corridors; for example, all West-Wide Energy Corridors in



1 Idaho allow for both overhead and buried utilities; those designations will not change. Also,
2 this plan does not attempt to establish any new formally designated ROW corridors.

3 For PPMA, new utility pipelines or transmission lines exceeding 50kV are excluded, unless
4 they can be sited within a utility corridor previously designated in a BLM or Forest Service
5 LUP (and subject to appropriate BMPs and siting considerations for GRSG). See **Table 3-**
6 **32** for the number of acres currently identified as ROW avoidance and exclusion areas.

7 ***Renewable Energy***

8 Solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal (which is managed as a fluid leasable mineral) are
9 considered renewable energy resources. Renewable energy resources all have different
10 requirements related to economic development; however, some issues are common to all
11 renewable energy resources, including connection to the existing power transmission
12 facilities and compatibility with existing federal land use.

13 Wind and solar resource facilities are permitted with ROW authorizations, through the
14 Lands and Realty Program. Geothermal resources, as mentioned above, are considered fluid
15 leasable minerals (See **Section 3.12**, Mineral Resources). As a result, management actions
16 related to the Lands and Realty Program and leasable minerals could affect renewable energy
17 resources. Special management designation areas, such as ACECs and WSAs, could also
18 affect the use of renewable energy resources by limiting the location of these facilities.

19 Forest Service renewable energy generation and transmission includes wind, solar and
20 geothermal energy facilities. Section 501(a) (4) of the FLPMA authorizes the Forest Service
21 to issue ROWs for the use and occupancy of National Forest System lands for generation,
22 transmission, and distribution of electric energy. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 recognizes
23 the Forest Service's role in meeting the renewable energy goals of the US.

24 Consistent with Forest Service policies and procedures, the use and occupancy of National
25 Forest System lands for alternative energy production, such as wind energy development, are
26 appropriate and will help meet the energy needs of the US. Permits for solar energy power
27 facilities are issued only if non-National Forest System lands are not available and if adverse
28 impacts can be minimized. Permits for geothermal energy power facilities are issued only if
29 feasibility studies have determined that it is not feasible to transmit geothermal water to a
30 power-generating facility on non-National Forest System lands and if adverse impacts can be
31 minimized.

32 **3.11.2 Trends**

33 ***Land Use Authorizations***

34 Land use authorization requests are customer driven. Within the planning area most
35 authorizations processed are primarily for roads, electric distribution lines, and
36 communications sites. Major ROWs are those large-scale utility projects, such as for 500kV
37 electric transmission, wind, and solar development. Land use authorization requests are
38 customer driven.

1 Over the last 6 years in the planning area, the BLM has received a number of applications
2 for major transmission line projects to traverse the state. Prior to that time, it had been over
3 20 years since major transmission line applications were received by the BLM. The BLM has
4 not received any applications for utility-scale solar production in the planning area, nor are
5 there solar resources comparable to the areas where utility-scale solar production projects are
6 being proposed or built.

7 Over the last six years, the BLM has authorized and then relinquished a ROW for wind
8 development and has two pending applications. Wind testing sites have been authorized on
9 BLM lands in the planning area, though no wind developments have been authorized and
10 constructed.

11 3.11.3 Regional Context

12 **Table 3-33**, Acres of GRSG Habitat within City Limits, through **Table 3-40**, Acres of Wind
13 Energy Authorizations within GRSG Habitat, displays data for GRSG habitat in the
14 planning area (Manier et al. 2013). In each table, data are presented by surface management
15 agency and their occurrence within occupied GRSG habitat in the planning area and across
16 the entire MZs.

17 The conversion of sagebrush habitat to agricultural land or urban areas can result in GRSG
18 habitat becoming fragmented and increases in domestic predators such as cats and dogs
19 (Knick and Rotenberry 1995). **Table 3-33**, Acres of GRSG Habitat within City Limits,
20 illustrates the locations where agricultural or urban development could occur given the
21 location within a city boundary.

Table 3-33
Acres of GRSG Habitat within City Limits

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH			Acres within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
BLM	300	106,200	19,700	1,100	37,400	1,100
Forest Service	700	24,600	700	0	21	0
Tribal and Other Federal	0	2,500	100	0	32,400	0
Private	4,600	209,300	43,400	4,202	79,100	4,100
State	51	10,900	2,800	31	6,800	31
Other	38	0	38	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

22
23 Communication towers, transmission lines, electrical distribution lines and other vertical
24 structures provide additional perching opportunities for ravens and other birds of prey can
25 result in habitat fragmentation, habitat avoidance, and can increase vehicle traffic during
26 maintenance operations (USFWS 2010a). **Table 3-34**, Number of Communication Towers
27 within GRSG Habitat, presents the number of communication towers in each MZ.



Table 3-34
Number of Communication Towers within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Number ¹ within PGH			Number ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	4	18	5	11	8	7
Forest Service	0	2	0	0	0	0
Tribal and Other Federal	8	5	8	1	2	1
Private	5	54	7	8	10	7
State	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Displays the number of Federal Communication Commission communication towers.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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Table 3-35, Acres of Transmission Lines within GRSG Habitat, shows the portion of transmission lines in occupied habitat in the planning area and MZs.

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Utility corridors are a planning tool that enables the BLM and Forest Service to identify desired locations for future infrastructure. **Table 3-36**, Acres of Utility Corridors within GRSG Habitat, provides the miles and acres of Section 368 Energy corridors for occupied habitat.

Table 3-35
Acres of Transmission Lines within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	29,600	172,000	42,000	56,400	130,800	83,600
Forest Service	2,000	3,000	3,500	4,432	2,900	5,800
Tribal and Other Federal	4,683	33,900	4,700	10,700	7,500	10,700
Private	29,400	206,000	57,900	23,000	119,500	47,000
State	9,330	20,000	11,200	5,912	20,100	6,500
Other	900	100	900	2,800	1,000	2,800

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Includes transmission lines greater than 115 kilovolts (kV) and assumes a 656-foot-wide (200 meter) footprint.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

8

Table 3-36
Acres of Utility Corridors within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	61,700	269,000	90,200	54,100	151,600	131,900
Forest Service	300	1,200	300	900	2,900	900
Tribal and Other Federal	700	6,500	700	0	0	0
Private	11,200	190,100	21,900	12,600	84,100	34,000
State	6,500	15,300	6,800	3,900	13,900	4,100
Other	0	0	0	0	2,200	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Centerlines for proposed locations of Section 368 energy corridors were buffered by varied widths, based on corridor width attribute data, to create the direct area of influence.

²Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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Railroads can fragment GRSG habitat (Knick and Rotenberry 1995). **Table 3-37**, Miles of Railroads within GRSG Habitat, and **Table 3-40**, Acres of Railroads within GRSG Habitat, show the railroad miles and acres, respectively, in occupied habitat.

Table 3-37
Miles of Railroads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Miles within PGH			Miles within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
BLM	66	200	100	84	100	100
Forest Service	1	0	1	8	0	8
Tribal and Other Federal	14	42	14	19	9	19
Private	42	700	300	39	300	100
State	4	100	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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Table 3-40
Acres of Railroads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	300	1,500	500	200	500	400
Forest Service	8	0	8	58	0	58



Table 3-40
Acres of Railroads within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
Tribal and Other Federal	83	300	84	77	12	77
Private	200	5,100	900	200	1,400	400
State	21	400	24	21	75	21
Other	0	0	0	0	11	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Assumes footprint of 9.4 meters.

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

1

Table 3-38
Acres of Vertical Obstructions within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres ¹ within PGH			Acres ¹ within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	100	600	200	100	300	200
Forest Service	35	28	36	11	0	22
Tribal and Other Federal	51	100	100	11	0	11
Private	100	1,400	200	63	300	200
State	0	100	0	0	100	0
Other	3	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Derived from dataset containing Federal Communication Commission communication towers and Federal Aviation Administration vertical obstructions. Excludes wind towers. Assumes a buffer of 56.4 meters (2.47 acres) around each obstruction.

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

2

Table 3-39
Acres of Wind Towers within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII	MZ IV
BLM	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forest Service	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tribal and Other Federal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private	3	600	200	0	18	0
State	0	100	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Assumes a footprint of 62 square meters per wind tower.

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

1

Table 3-40
Acres of Wind Energy Authorizations within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH			Acres within PPH		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ¹	MZ IV
BLM	14,000	0	296,500	16,100	0	580,600
Forest Service	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tribal and Other Federal	100	0	200	0	0	1,700
Private	900	0	2,300	2,100	0	13,900
State	38	0	400	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹ Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

2

3 **3.12 Mineral Resources**

4 ***Fluid Leasable Minerals***

5 The right to drill for and develop fluid minerals, namely oil and gas and geothermal
6 resources, on federal land may only be acquired through a mineral lease, offered and
7 administered by the BLM in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended
8 and supplemented (30 USC 181 et seq.). The limit for a competitive oil and gas lease is 2,560
9 acres in size, while a geothermal lease can be up to 5,280 acres in size. If an oil and gas lease
10 is not sold during the competitive sale, it may be sold noncompetitively and may be
11 combined with other parcels for a total of 10,240 acres, but the maximum size for a
12 geothermal lease remains 5,280 acres.

13 The leases have a 10-year term. If there is no discovery in 10 years, the leases expire. There is
14 no renewal for diligence. If there is a discovery, the lease may be held as long as there is
15 production. The BLM can modify the right conveyed by a lease by attaching a stipulation,
16 which is an enforceable condition of the lease. During the leasing process, the BLM may
17 apply stipulations (for example No Surface Occupancy, Controlled Surface Use, and Timing
18 Limitations) to all or parts of a lease in order to protect a wide range of resources including
19 soils, watersheds, cultural resources, and wildlife (e.g., GRSG). Stipulations may impact the
20 availability of fluid mineral resources on a lease by restricting the timing and/or location of
21 exploration and development activities. On National Forest System lands, the BLM cannot
22 issue a lease without Forest Service consent. Forest Service consent includes stipulations that
23 must be added to the lease to protect the resources on the Forest.

24 The issuance of a lease does not, in and of itself, authorize any surface-disturbing activities.
25 If a lessee wishes to conduct exploratory drilling, an application for permit to drill must be
26 submitted to the BLM for approval. An environmental analysis is conducted and as a result,
27 the BLM may attach additional, site-specific and activity-specific conditions, called
28 Conditions of Approval or Best Management Practices, to the drilling permit. The Forest



1 Service approves the Surface Use Plan of Operations portion of the application for permit to
2 drill, and may also add COAs. The BLM cannot deny operations on a lease unless the
3 operation would violate other nondiscretionary statutes, such as the ESA or the Clean Water
4 Act. In cases where surface operations would have unacceptable environmental impacts, the
5 BLM's authority to deny operations on the lease, if not specified in a particular statute, must
6 be established in the lease through the use of lease stipulations.

7 All leases, regardless of whether they have additional stipulations, are offered with standard
8 terms and conditions. In accordance with a 2002 Instruction Memorandum from the BLM
9 Washington Office, all fluid mineral leases must include the following stipulation:

10 *Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation Stipulation*

11 The lease area may now or hereafter contain plants, animals or their habitats determined to
12 be threatened, endangered, or other special status species. BLM may recommend
13 modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and
14 management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that will contribute to a need to list
15 such a species or their habitat. BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed
16 activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed
17 threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a
18 designated or proposed critical habitat. BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activity
19 that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under
20 applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act as amended, 16 USC 1531 et seq.,
21 including completion of any required procedure for conference or consultation.

22 All geothermal and oil and gas leases in Idaho contain the ESA consultation stipulation.
23 There is also a mandatory cultural resource protection stipulation applied to all leases.

24 Stipulations to protect other resources, such as GRSG, are developed during the land use
25 planning process. Stipulations must be necessary and justifiable: If a lessee is to be prevented
26 from extracting oil and gas on a lease and the prohibition is not mandated by a specific,
27 nondiscretionary statute such as the ESA, the stipulation is necessary and is to be used. A
28 stipulation is justifiable if there are resource values, uses, and/or users present that cannot
29 coexist with fluid mineral operations, cannot be adequately managed and/or accommodated
30 on other lands for the duration of operations, and provide a greater benefit to the public
31 than that of the fluid mineral operations. If a ground disturbing activity is proposed on the
32 lease during any given year, the authorized officer may modify or waive restrictions if actual
33 conditions do not warrant them.

34 **3.12.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

35 ***Oil and Gas***

36 There has never been a single producing oil and gas well in the entire state of Idaho, despite
37 the drilling of over 150 wildcat wells in the state since the early 1900s. As of March 16, 2015,
38 Idaho BLM has two federal oil and gas leases located on split-estate lands near Gray's Lake
39 in Bonneville County. The leases total approximately 4,000 acres, of which 40 acres is BLM
40 surface and the remainder is split estate. The leases were issued in 2006 for an initial term of
41 10 years. No drilling or exploration has occurred on any of the leases nor has any activity

1 been proposed; however, a wildcat well was drilled on private land near the Gray's Lake
2 leases in 2007. The well was drilled to approximately 11,000 feet without encountering an
3 economically viable hydrocarbon source. Additionally, a company has drilled numerous wells
4 on private lands in the New Plymouth area of southwest Idaho, and is planning to develop a
5 natural gas field. BLM-administered lands are located near this field and have been
6 nominated for leasing; however leasing is being deferred until completion of the Four Rivers
7 RMP. There is no GRSG habitat in this area.

8 The Dillon Field Office has 47 active oil and gas leases, none of which are producing,
9 according to LR2000. Approximately 50,000 acres of these leases are located in GRSG
10 habitat; however many leases likely contain timing limitations for other wildlife species, as
11 the Dillon RMP shows that much of the field office is covered by stipulations restricting
12 activities during critical seasons for other wildlife species or prohibiting all surface
13 occupancy.

14 **Figure 3-**, Oil and Gas Potential of Federal Oil and Gas Mineral Estate depicts the oil and
15 gas potential within the planning area.

16 ***Geothermal***

17 Idaho's prospects for development of geothermal resources are better than those for oil and
18 gas. There are currently 19 federal leases in Idaho, covering approximately 48,000 acres. Of
19 these, 13 are within GRSG habitat. Leases are scattered across southern Idaho, but are
20 primarily located near Raft River, Crane Creek, and Parma, Idaho. There are no active leases
21 currently in the Dillon Field Office. Seventeen of Idaho's 25 geothermal leases are located in
22 GRSG habitat, and all have existing stipulations protecting GRSG habitat during critical
23 seasons (as well as having stipulations to protect crucial habitat for other species):

- 24 • Each of the seven leases at Raft River have a stipulation restricting exploration
25 and development work in GRSG strutting/brood-rearing habitat from April 1
26 through June 15.
- 27 • Each of the four leases at Crane Creek contain a stipulation requiring that a
28 survey be conducted for the presence of active GRSG leks in key habitat, prior
29 to authorization of surface disturbing activities. If active leks are present (defined
30 as being used at least once in a five-year period), two stipulations will apply. One
31 is a timing limitation precluding exploration or drilling activities between March
32 15 and May 1 from 6 pm to 9 am within two miles of an active lek. The other
33



Figure 3-8 Oil and Gas Potential of Federal Oil and Gas Mineral Estate



1 stipulation precludes construction of wells, geothermal plants, power lines,
2 pipelines, or other such permanent structures that would fragment or degrade
3 nesting habitat within two miles of an active lek.

- 4 • Both of the geothermal leases located west of Weiser have the following
5 stipulations:
- 6 - Controlled surface and timing limitation use near GRSG leks and/or
7 nesting/early brood rearing habitat: Potentially disruptive major
8 construction and maintenance activities (e.g., infrastructure/energy
9 development and similar projects), shall be avoided within 4 miles (6.4
10 kilometers) of occupied or undetermined status GRSG leks from
11 February 15 to June 30 to reduce disturbance to lekking birds, or April 15
12 to June 30 for nesting GRSG (and/or hens with early broods). Major
13 construction and maintenance activity will be avoided in GRSG winter
14 range from December 1 to February 15. Specific dates may be earlier or
15 later, depending on local breeding chronology. The spatial buffer may be
16 increased or decreased based on site-specific factors analyzed and
17 documented in an environmental assessment or EIS and authorized via
18 the appropriate decision document. Exceptions may be granted for
19 activities involving only infrequent, short term disturbance (less than 1
20 hour within a 24-hour period in a specific area); or if there are
21 intervening topographic features or line-of-site screening that buffer the
22 lek or nesting habitat from disturbance; or if recent (within the past 5
23 years) site-specific studies or local expertise suggest that leks or nesting
24 hens are unlikely to be present within the 4-mile zone surrounding the
25 project activity.
 - 26 - For smaller-scale human disturbances, (e.g., water pipeline construction,
27 routine fence maintenance, and facility maintenance), a 0.62 mile (1
28 kilometer) lek disturbance buffer will apply between approximately
29 March 15 and May 1 in lower elevations and March 25 through May 15 in
30 higher elevations, from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. in a specific area to minimize
31 disturbance to lekking GRSG.

32 Geothermal exploration and development activity on federal lands in Idaho has been
33 sporadic, due largely to economic factors. Idaho now has one 10 megawatt geothermal
34 power plant currently operating, as of 2007. It is located on private land at Raft River, south
35 of Burley, Idaho. Nine federal leases surround the plant and extend up the southeast flank of
36 Jim Sage Mountain. The BLM approved five geothermal drilling permits on a lease at Raft
37 River in 2010; however no drilling has occurred to date. The drilling permits have several
38 Conditions of Approval attached to protect wildlife. These include fencing reserve pits and
39 safeguarding migratory birds from hazards associated with pits and treatment facilities,
40 including but not limited to pit screening or netting, and placing protective cones over vent
41 stacks. In addition, drilling is prohibited during the GRSG strutting and brood-rearing
42 season (lease stipulation).



1 **Figure 3-9**, Geothermal Potential of Federal Geothermal Mineral Estate, depicts the
2 geothermal potential of the federal mineral estate in the planning area.

3 ***Mineral Materials***

4 Mineral materials include sand, gravel, most building and landscaping stone, pumice, and
5 other common variety materials that are not subject to mineral leasing or location under the
6 mining laws. The Materials Act of 1947, as amended (61 Stat. 681) authorizes disposal of
7 mineral materials on BLM-administered lands through a sales system, and provides for free
8 use of material by government agencies, municipalities or nonprofit organizations, if the
9 material is not to be used for commercial purposes. Permitting the removal or extraction
10 (i.e., disposal) of mineral materials on BLM-administered lands is a discretionary activity. The
11 BLM will not authorize the disposal of mineral materials if it is determined that the aggregate
12 damage to BLM-administered lands and resources would exceed the public benefits that the
13 BLM expects from the proposed disposal; nor will the BLM dispose of mineral materials
14 from areas identified in land use plans as not appropriate for mineral materials disposal (43
15 CFR 3601.11 and 3601.12). Disposal of mineral materials on National Forest System lands is
16 covered by 36 CFR 228D.

17 Most BLM-administered land in Idaho is available for consideration of mineral material
18 disposal; however, existing guidance in many of the LUPs in the planning area encourages
19 the use of existing disposal sites until the material is depleted. **Table 3-41**, Existing Mineral
20 Materials Cases, shows the numbers of mineral material disposal cases within the planning
21 area. **Figure 3-10**, Mineral Material Commodity Types in the Planning Area, shows the
22 geographic distribution of mineral materials in the planning area.

Table 3-41
Existing Mineral Materials Cases

Field Office	# Community Pits	# Free Use Permits	# Negotiated Sales	Total # sites in GRSG Habitat
Owyhee	9	13	2	All
Bruneau	6	10	2	5
Four Rivers	6	27	4	2
Burley	12	37	2	7
Shoshone	17	18	0	9
Jarbridge	10	27	0	4
Pocatello	5	23	0	2
Challis	21	54	5	20
Salmon	6	11	3	All
Upper Snake	17	32	8	17
Dillon, MT.	4	0	0	2
Total	33	251	26	120

Source: BLM GIS 2015

¹ Data as of April 13, 2015

Figure 3-9 Geothermal Potential of Federal Geothermal Mineral Estate



Figure 3-10 Mineral Material Commodity Types in the Planning Area



1 Community pits are sites established by the BLM and Forest Service for the public to
2 acquire mineral materials by purchasing a short-term permit over-the-counter at the field
3 office. Free Use Permits are usually sand and gravel pits, and are requested by county
4 highway districts and nonprofit organizations for road construction and maintenance of
5 county roads. A negotiated sale is an exclusive site proposed by a single party, often
6 commercial, as the party must now pay for the BLM to process the permit.

7 The number of sales out of a community pit varies by site, from less than one to more than
8 50 per year. Many of the most popular community pits are for landscaping rock and building
9 stone that is simply picked up by hand from the ground surface or from a talus slope. Most
10 of these sales are for less than one ton. Most Free Use Permit sites are used sporadically and
11 may be scattered throughout a field office or ranger district office, so that when the county
12 needs material it has a nearby source, thereby reducing haul costs. A pit may be inactive for
13 several years before it is needed for a road project in the area.

14 A gravel pit is initially developed by scraping off the vegetation and topsoil, which is then
15 stockpiled for future reclamation. Most gravel pits are 5 to 15 acres in size. No infrastructure
16 other than an access road is needed for mineral materials disposals. Most mineral material
17 removal activity occurs during the summer months and during daylight hours.

18 Very few mineral material sites have mitigation measures protecting GRSG habitat. One
19 exception is the St. Anthony Sand Dune Community Pit, which has a provision stating
20 "Proposals to remove sand between March 1st and June 15th will be evaluated to determine
21 if breeding birds are utilizing the area."

22 ***Locatable Minerals***

23 Under the General Mining Act of 1872 (17 Stat. 91), any US citizen, or person with the
24 intent to become a citizen, may stake a mining claim for locatable minerals on federal lands
25 (unless administratively withdrawn from mineral entry). This gives the claimant a possessory
26 right to develop the locatable mineral resource. Lands withdrawn from mineral entry are
27 Wilderness, ACECs, and other specially designated areas. The staking of a mining claim is a
28 nondiscretionary activity: As long as the lands are open to locatable mineral entry, and as
29 long as the claimant maintains the mining claim on an annual basis in accordance with
30 regulations at 43 CFR 3830 through 3838, the mining claim is considered active. If the
31 claimant fails to properly locate or maintain the claim on an annual basis, the claim is
32 forfeited. The BLM's role is limited to recording and adjudicating the location notices and
33 maintenance filings, and preventing undue or unnecessary degradation of the lands under
34 FLPMA. **Figure 3-11**, Locatable Mineral Potential in the Planning Area, shows areas where
35 locatable minerals are considered to be more likely to be found and **Figure 3-12** shows
36 existing Surface Management Plans or Notices in the planning area.

37 If a claimant wants to perform mining operations other than casual use on BLM-
38 administered lands, a Notice of Plan, filed under 43 CFR 3809, must be filed with the BLM
39 (or 43 CFR 3802, if the claim is located on lands under wilderness review). The Forest
40 Service has similar locatable minerals management regulations at 36 CFR 228A. For
41



Figure 3-11 Locatable Mineral Potential in the Planning Area



Administrative Draft
Cooperating Agency Review

Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS
June 2015



Figure 3-12 Existing Surface Management Plans or Notices in the Planning Area



operations on National Forest System lands, a Notice of Intent must be filed. In addition, a Plan of Operations is required if the proposed activities will cause “significant disturbance of surface resources” (36 CFR 228.4[a][4]). Where there is a reference to notices or plans, it means both notices or plans on BLM-administered lands and Notices of Intent or Plans of Operation on National Forest System lands. Later in this document, the terms Notice/Notice of Intent or Plan/Plan of Operation are roughly equivalent for the purpose of this analysis. The purpose of these regulations is to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of surface resources by operations authorized by the mining laws. The subparts establish procedures and standards to ensure that operators and mining claimants meet their obligation to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation and to reclaim disturbed areas.

The existing land use plans identify areas that are closed to mineral entry but are silent on mitigation measures to be taken in GRSG habitat. **Table 3-42**, Authorized or Pending 3809 Plans and Notices, shows the numbers of 3809 Plans and Notices that are authorized or pending in the planning area.

Table 3-42
Authorized or Pending 3809 Plans and Notices

District	3809 Plans of Operations		3809 Notices		GRSG Habitat?
	Authorized	Pending	Authorized	Pending	
Boise District	15	0	10	3	1 Plan in PH
Twin Falls	7	5	4	3	5 Plans in PH
Idaho Falls	8	1	2	2	4 Plans in PH
Dillon FO	0	0	0	0	No Plans in GRSG Habitat
Total	30	6	16	8	10 Plans in GRSG Habitat

Source: BLM GIS 2015

The Boise District currently has three 3809 Plans in GRSG habitat (one plan in PPH) for mostly small operations for zeolite and bentonite along the Owyhee Front. Development has occurred or is underway in the Castle Creek drainage south of Oreana (zeolite, bentonite); close to the Oregon border near US Highway 95 (both for zeolite); and on the Owyhee Plateau near the Upper Deep Creek area.

The Twin Falls District currently has five 3809 Plans in GRSG habitat. Development has included building stone operations south of Oakley, and the Eskridge pumice pit north of Magic Reservoir. At least three companies operate quarries on Middle Mountain south of Oakley, extracting a variety of micaceous quartzite called Oakley Stone. Oakley Stone is highly prized as a building and flooring material, as it has very high tensile strength and can be split into large, thin sheets. Building stone quarry operations have been active on Middle Mountain for over sixty years in the vicinity of active GRSG leks.

The operations are confined to discrete quarries located at mid-elevation on the west slope of Middle Mountain. The quarries expand very slowly over the years, and no infrastructure



1 such as power lines or pipelines are required. Very little mechanical equipment is used, as the
2 stone is split to the desired thickness using only small hand tools such as pry bars, hammers
3 and chisels, and is then placed on pallets by hand. However, operators also use excavators,
4 dump trucks, front end loaders, and other equipment in their daily operations, and blasting is
5 used occasionally. Most of the quarry workers are employed seasonally and are housed on-
6 site, thereby reducing traffic and dust. The quarries are strung out north-south along Middle
7 Mountain such that each quarry has a separate road to access the Goose Creek road, an
8 improved gravel road that leads to Oakley.

9 During the field season (roughly May to November), semi-truck traffic, hauling pallets of
10 Oakley Stone, can be fairly intense on the Goose Creek road, making 10 to 20 round trips
11 per day. One of the operations has a mill site adjacent to the Goose Creek Road where stone
12 is split and palletized for shipping. All of the operations shut down in the winter, so in the
13 fall pallets of stone are brought off the mountain and stockpiled in Oakley. Several of the
14 quarries have been patented and are therefore privately owned. No stipulations pertaining to
15 GRSG are currently applied to the Plans of Operations for any of these quarries. Altogether,
16 the quarries employ approximately 100 people year-round and approximately 600 seasonal
17 workers (Southern Idaho Living 2012).

18 The Eskridge pumice pit is located north of Magic Reservoir, on both sides of US Highway
19 20. The mining claimants have mined pumice for landscaping material since the 1940s.
20 Current operations are located on the south side of the highway, where disturbance consists
21 of 15 acres of quarry and staging area. A few years ago, the claimant moved the operation
22 from the north side of the highway, and reclaimed (sloped and seeded) 34 acres of previous
23 disturbance. The operation is active throughout the year, but activities rotate approximately
24 every 3 years, depending on demand for the material. In the first year of the cycle, bulldozers
25 are used to rip the material from the quarry face. In the second year, the material is classified
26 based on size and color, and stockpiled. In the third year, the stockpiles are loaded into belly
27 dump trucks and transported to Gooding, where it is loaded onto train cars and shipped to
28 Rexburg, where it is sold.

29 The Idaho Falls District currently has six 3809 Plans located in GRSG habitat, all in the
30 Challis Field Office. Development has occurred or is underway for building stone (including
31 Three Rivers Stone) and zeolite. The Three Rivers Stone quarry is a large building stone
32 quarry operation situated along the south side of US Highway 93, east of the confluence of
33 the East Fork and the Main Salmon rivers. The quarry is operated in a similar manner as
34 those on Middle Mountain: The stone (a variegated argillaceous quartzite) is split into thin
35 sheets using hand tools and is palletized at the quarry. The pallets are hauled to the mill site
36 adjacent to the highway, from which they are shipped. At peak production in 2007, there
37 were 99 people employed by the quarry's operator, L&W Stone. In January, 2013, however,
38 the company announced that it would be shutting down production at the quarry while it
39 undergoes bankruptcy proceedings.

40 In the Dillon Field Office, there are currently no 3809 Plans located in GRSG habitat.

1 On the Raft River division of the Sawtooth National Forest in Utah, there are several
2 quarries of building stone. They are located on the southern slopes of the Raft River Range,
3 in GRSG habitat.

4 ***Nonenergy Solid Leasable Minerals***

5 As with fluid minerals, the right to develop non-energy solid leasable mineral resources, such
6 as phosphate, on federal lands may only be acquired through a mineral lease, offered and
7 administered by the BLM in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended
8 and supplemented (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.). Lands that are known to have a valuable
9 phosphate resource have been designated by the USGS as Known Phosphate Leasing Areas
10 (KPLAs), and are leased through a competitive leasing process. Lands outside a KPLA may
11 also be leased, however the existence of a valuable phosphate resource must be proven first,
12 through an activity referred to as “prospecting.” Idaho has 8 KPLAs, totaling 80,168 acres.
13 Idaho BLM has 48 existing leases in KPLAs, totaling 31,670 acres. Therefore there are
14 48,498 acres of unleased KPLA in Idaho. There are 12,904 acres leased outside of KPLAs
15 (38 leases).

16 The Pocatello Field Office in southeast Idaho has a large non-energy solid leasable mineral
17 program, as the phosphate resource in that field office is significant. The Middle Permian
18 Phosphoria formation comprises one of the largest resources of phosphate rock in the
19 world, with the richest phosphorite accumulations being found in southern Idaho, northern
20 Utah, and western Wyoming. Compressional forces during the Cretaceous Period resulted in
21 major folding and thrust faulting of Paleozoic and Mesozoic sediments throughout the
22 Rocky Mountain region. These sediments were folded on a regional scale into north-south
23 trending anticlines and synclines, then thrust eastward 18 to 20 miles, exposing the
24 phosphate resources of the Phosphoria formation along steeply dipping fold limbs.

25 The thickest, richest accumulations of phosphate occur in southeast Idaho, centered around
26 the Soda Springs area. The BLM manages these resources on behalf of the federal
27 government. The goal in the Pocatello RMP is to manage the federal mineral estate while
28 minimizing adverse impacts to resource values. The 2012 Pocatello RMP does not have any
29 stipulations or minerals guidance for non-energy leasable minerals which specifically address
30 GRSG.

31 Phosphate has been mined commercially in southeast Idaho for over one hundred years.
32 Most of the mining has occurred east of Soda Springs, an area that has relatively little GRSG
33 habitat. Of the 86 existing federal phosphate leases that BLM administers in Idaho, only 10
34 are located in GRSG habitat. Nine of these leases are located north and west of Blackfoot
35 Reservoir and Soda Springs, in or near PGH. None of those leases have had active mining
36 operations on them, nor is any mining planned on the leases in the next 5 to 10 years. Most
37 of the leased acreage around Blackfoot Reservoir is split estate (privately-owned or state-
38 owned surface with federal minerals). The Trail Creek and Caldwell Canyon leases, located in
39 PGH east of Conda Mountain, are currently undergoing drilling. One additional lease is
40 located in PPH northwest of Bear Lake near Paris, Idaho. Exploration drilling was
41 conducted in 2012 on the lease, and on the private lands and unleased split estate lands
42 surrounding the small lease. Timing restrictions for GRSG were applied to the approval for



1 the drilling. If developed, this property would likely be developed as an underground mine,
2 due to geologic factors.

3 In total, approximately half of the federal leases in Idaho have been mined, are currently
4 being mined, or are proposed to be mined in the next 5 to 10 years. The remaining unmined
5 leases have been held for many years and are subject to valid existing rights. The Dillon Field
6 Office has one non-energy solid leasable lease, for phosphate. It is not located in GRSG
7 habitat, and is undeveloped.

8 **Figure 3-13**, Unleased Known Phosphate Leasing Areas, shows gas potential within the
9 planning area.

10 ***Coal***

11 No economically viable coal resources have ever been discovered in Idaho, and most plans
12 are silent on the subject. The Dillon RMP states its goal is to make coal resources available
13 on a site-by-site basis. A plan amendment would be required to lease coal, along with the
14 appropriate level of NEPA analysis. No specific mitigation measures for GRSG are
15 identified in any of the land use plans. Coal mining is regulated in accordance with the
16 Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 USC 1201 et seq.). BLM's coal
17 mining regulations are found at 43 CFR 3400. According to 43 CFR 3420.1-4 (e)(1), only
18 those areas that have development potential may be identified as acceptable for further
19 consideration for leasing. As there is no development potential in the planning area, the
20 lands are determined to be unsuitable for leasing. For this reason, the impacts on GRSG
21 from the development of a coal resource will not be discussed further in this document.

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Figure 3-13 Unleased Known Phosphate Leasing Areas



1 **3.12.2 Trends**

2 ***Oil and Gas***

3 Interest in oil and gas leasing in Idaho has been sporadic over time, and it is expected to
4 remain so. Many leases were held in the 1970s and 1980s throughout much of Idaho, when
5 leasing was done under a noncompetitive system. After passage of the Federal Oil and Gas
6 Royalty Management Act in the early 1980s, leasing became a competitive process, and
7 BLM's standards for leasing became more rigorous. Lease nominations dropped dramatically
8 in Idaho and for many years, BLM's oil and gas program in Idaho was nonexistent. With
9 passage of the Energy Policy Act in 2005, Idaho BLM experienced an uptick in leasing
10 interest, with over 400,000 acres of federal land nominated since that time¹.

11 Interest in leasing is currently high in the Payette area, due to the recent wildcat discovery of
12 natural gas and planned development in that area (181,000 acres nominated for leasing,
13 overlapping). Much of the land nominated for leasing is split estate, and only the
14 northernmost nominated parcels are located in GRSG habitat. The Bear Lake area has been
15 nominated for leasing by several parties, most recently in 2012 (59,700 acres, overlapping
16 acreage). Interest in leasing the Bear Lake Plateau was at its highest in the early 1980s, when
17 a discovery of gas was made 10 miles south of the Idaho/Utah state line, and in adjoining
18 areas in Wyoming. Several wells were drilled in Idaho at that time, but were reported to be
19 dry. Other areas that have been nominated for leasing recently include approximately 90,000
20 acres in Twin Falls County, south of Rogerson, and approximately 60,000 acres in Clark
21 County, on the Idaho-Montana border in the Targhee National Forest. All of these
22 nominated lands have GRSG habitat.

23 Several geophysical surveys have been conducted recently in the Payette area (two-
24 dimensional and three-dimensional seismic surveys). It is likely that additional geophysical
25 surveys will be conducted in the planning area. Seismic reflection surveys are the most
26 commonly used geophysical tool. Very little surface disturbance is associated with a seismic
27 survey, as no excavating or drilling is involved. All that is required is a seismic energy source
28 and an array of receptors. The most common type of survey seen in Idaho involves
29 mechanically vibrating or "thumping" the ground using truck-mounted equipment. This
30 creates seismic waves that are recorded by a series of receptors placed on the ground surface
31 along a three- to five-mile line. This process requires a crew of about 10 to 15 people and 5
32 to 7 vehicles. No reclamation is usually required.

33 Despite the occasional interest in leasing in Idaho, no drilling permits have ever been filed
34 on BLM-administered lands in Idaho. This trend is expected to continue, however, for the
35 sake of this analysis, a description of the drilling process is included in this report, since the
36 issuance of a lease commits those lands to the possibility of exploration and development of
37 the oil and gas resource. Exploration drill holes for oil and gas range in depth from a few
38 thousand feet to many thousands of feet, but in much of Idaho would probably be 7,000 to
39 11,000 feet deep. These wells are 30 inches in diameter or larger at the surface, then narrow
40 (telescope) to 12 inches at the bottom of the well. In order to drill these deep, large-diameter

¹ Some of this acreage overlaps, due to multiple nominations for the same land

1 holes, a large drilling rig would be utilized. The top of the drill rig derrick could be as much
2 as 155 feet above the ground surface, and the rig floor could be at least 25 feet above the
3 ground surface. These rigs are typically equipped with diesel engines, fuel and drilling mud
4 storage tanks, mud pumps, and other ancillary equipment. Blow-out prevention equipment
5 would be utilized while drilling to prevent uncontrolled flow at the surface if a pressurized
6 hydrocarbon deposit is encountered.

7 Temporary roads would likely be needed to transport and maintain the drill rig and other
8 heavy equipment. Either existing roads would be improved or new roads would be
9 constructed to accommodate the traffic. Typically, roads are constructed with a 20-foot wide
10 graveled running surface with adjacent ditches and berms, for a total disturbance width of
11 about 40 feet. It may be necessary to haul in gravel to obtain a good road base, as well as a
12 base for the well pad. Based on the road density in the planning area, it is assumed that
13 access to the drill pads may require up to one mile of road construction or improvement.
14 Surface disturbance from construction of one mile of road equals about five acres.

15 Getting the rig and ancillary equipment to the site may require 15 to 20 trips by full-sized
16 tractor-trailers, with a similar amount for de-mobilizing the rig. There would be 10 to 40
17 daily trips for commuting and hauling in equipment. Drilling operations would likely occur
18 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. It takes approximately one month to drill one well. A
19 drilling operation generally has from 10 to 15 people on-site at all times, with more people
20 coming and going periodically with equipment and supplies.

21 During this exploratory or wildcat phase of drilling, it is likely that a drill pad, to
22 accommodate the rig and equipment, would be required at each well location. A drill pad is
23 usually 2.5 acres in size (300 feet by 350 feet), but it can vary considerably due to the depth
24 of the target zone, surface topography, and equipment needs for various drilling methods. In
25 order to obtain a level pad, cut and fill of the site may be required. Topsoil would first be
26 removed from the well pad site and stored on site for reclamation. In addition to the drill rig,
27 the well pad may house a reserve pit for storage or disposal of water, drill mud, and cuttings;
28 several mud pits and pumps, a tool shed, drill pipe rack, a fuel tank, a water tank, a generator
29 and several compressors, equipment storage, and several trailers for temporary lab and office
30 quarters. Depending on the contents of the reserve pit and environmental sensitivity of the
31 site, it may be lined or unlined.

32 Well drilling also requires water. As much water as possible is recycled on site, yet about
33 5,000 to 15,000 gallons of water may be needed each day depending on well conditions.
34 Initially, water would need to be provided, either by wells or trucked in, to meet demands.
35 Many oil or gas wells encounter water at depth when drilling for oil and/or gas and can be
36 utilized when production is ongoing. Any water rights required would likely need to be filed
37 in the name of the BLM.

38 Various tests are then run down the hole and data is collected to determine whether the well
39 is capable of production. At the conclusion of well testing, if paying quantities of oil and gas
40 are not discovered, the operator is required to plug the well according to federal and state
41 standards. Cement plugs are placed above and below water-bearing units with drilling mud



1 placed in the space between plugs. When abandonment is complete, the site is reclaimed,
2 which includes pad and road recontouring, topsoil replacement, and seeding with approved
3 mixtures. Erosion control measures would be incorporated into the reclamation design as
4 needed.

5 The drilling site could be active for approximately 1 year, from the start of drill pad and
6 access road construction; through drilling and well testing; to completion of production
7 facilities or plugging the hole and reclamation of the surface, which usually involves
8 removing all infrastructure, disposal of any waste generated, reshaping pads and roads, and
9 re-seeding. The total surface disturbance expected from the drilling of a single exploratory
10 well and the construction of one mile of access road is approximately eight acres.

11 If a producible quantity of oil or gas is discovered, additional development wells would be
12 drilled to confirm the discovery, establish the limits of the field, and drain the field.
13 Depending on the field characteristics, well spacing may be from 40 to several hundred acres
14 per well.

15 The speed at which a field is developed is dependent on the anticipated productivity. It may
16 take from 1 to 3 years to fully develop an oil or gas field. Large fields with several operators
17 may be unitized to reduce surface impacts. In addition, directional drilling may allow for
18 drilling more than one well per pad.

19 During field development, the road system may be greatly expanded. Temporary roads are
20 usually improved to accommodate more traffic and increased duration of use.
21 Improvements may include crowning, capping, and implementing additional erosion
22 controls. New roads would also be constructed. Depending on well location and
23 topography, a main access road is built with smaller secondary roads running to each pad. In
24 addition to roads, other facilities may also be installed including power lines, tank farms,
25 pipelines, oil/water separators, and injection wells.

26 Where oil and gas flow to the surface naturally, control valves and collection pipes are
27 attached to the well head. Otherwise pumps are installed. Oil is typically produced along
28 with water and gas. Separation facilities are constructed on site to remove water, carbon
29 dioxide, and hydrogen sulfide. The oil and natural gas are then separated. Water, usually
30 saline, is disposed of either through surface discharge, evaporation ponds or re-injection into
31 the producing formation.

32 If gas is present in economic quantities and a pipeline is located within close proximity, a
33 network of pipelines would likely be constructed to collect and transport the gas. If not, gas
34 would likely be re-injected into the reservoir. Oil would be collected in a similar manner and
35 stored in tanks in a central location. Well operators would likely have service operations (e.g.,
36 cementing, logging, bits, and testing) provided by established oil field service companies in
37 Wyoming or Utah.

38 The producing life span of an oil or gas field varies depending on field characteristics. A field
39 may produce for a few years to many decades. Commodity price, recovery technique, and

1 the political environment also affect the life of a field. Well abandonment may begin as soon
2 as it is depleted, or it may be rested for a period of time and put back into production.

3 ***Geothermal***

4 Interest in geothermal is sporadic in Idaho, depending on factors such as the economy,
5 political climate, government incentive programs, such as the renewable energy tax credit,
6 and technological advances. It is anticipated that drilling will occur on federal leases at Raft
7 River over the next 10 to 15 years, and that an additional power plant would be constructed,
8 likely on private lands, but with wells on federal land.

9 ***Mineral Materials***

10 Demand for mineral materials is expected to remain fairly steady, although the collapse of
11 the housing industry in 2008 definitely resulted in fewer sales throughout the planning area.
12 The implementation of full cost recovery for individual sales has caused a decline in that case
13 type.

14 ***Locatables***

15 While Idaho's mining claim numbers fluctuate with the price of gold, the number of plans
16 and notices remains fairly steady. Production of building stone in the Middle Mountain area
17 remains steady, however it was recently reported that L&W Stone's Three River Stone
18 quarry near Clayton has been shut down due to bankruptcy. Several Plans of Operations are
19 in the approval process on Middle Mountain.

20 ***Nonenergy Solid Leasable Minerals***

21 Demand for phosphate remains high, and the companies that mine in southeast Idaho
22 continue to develop new mines as old ones are reclaimed and remediated. There is no
23 indication that the leases west of Soda Springs in GRSG habitat will be developed in the
24 foreseeable future. It is anticipated that, over the next 10 years, new mines will be developed
25 on phosphate leases at Dairy Syncline, Husky/Dry Ridge, Caldwell Canyon, and Trail Creek,
26 as current mines are depleted of ore and are reclaimed. Only the Caldwell Canyon and Trail
27 Creek leases are located in GRSG habitat. Both of these leases are located primarily on split
28 estate lands: at Caldwell Canyon, the majority of the surface estate is privately owned (1,200
29 acres), with only 160 acres on BLM-administered lands; the Trail Creek lease is composed of
30 a mix of state and private surface estate. In the spring of 2013 it was announced that a
31 company plans to open an underground operation near Paris, Idaho, on patented lands in
32 GRSG habitat. The announcement stated that initial development would not involve federal
33 minerals; however, exploration drilling occurred on federal minerals in 2012.

34 The BLM has not offered a competitive phosphate lease since 2000 and does not currently
35 have any pending requests for competitive leasing. As the remaining existing leases are
36 developed however, demand for leasing, particularly in the unleased portions of KPLAs, is
37 expected to increase.

38 ***Coal***

39 It is highly unlikely that any coal exploration or development will occur in the planning area.



1 **3.13 Special Designations**

2 Within the planning area are a variety of lands set aside through congressional or
3 administrative action to protect certain values, such as Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas,
4 National Landscapes, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and Wild and Scenic Rivers
5 (**Figure 3-14**, Special Designations in the Planning Area).

6 **3.13.1 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

7 An ACEC is defined in FLPMA, Section 103(a), as an area on BLM-administered lands
8 where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to
9 important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural
10 systems or processes, or to protect life and ensure safety from natural hazards. BLM
11 regulations for implementing the ACEC provisions of FLPMA are found in 43 CFR 1610.7-
12 2(b).

13 ACECs differ from some other special management designations in that designation by itself
14 does not automatically prohibit or restrict other uses in the area. The special management
15 attention is designed specifically for the relevant and important values and, therefore, varies
16 from area to area. Restrictions that arise from an ACEC designation are determined at the
17 time the designation is made and are designed to protect the values or serve the purposes for
18 which the designation was made. The BLM identifies goals, standards, and objectives for
19 each proposed ACEC as well as general management practices and uses, including necessary
20 constraints and mitigation measures. In addition, ACECs are protected by the provisions of
21 43 CFR 3809.1-4(b)(3), which requires an approved plan of operations for activities resulting
22 in more than 5 acres of disturbance under the mining laws.

23 Research natural areas are areas where natural processes are allowed to predominate, and
24 that are preserved for the primary purposes of research and education. Under current BLM
25 policy, research natural areas must meet the relevance and importance criteria of ACECs and
26 are, therefore, designated as ACECs. Under current guidelines, ACEC procedures also are
27 used to designate outstanding natural areas.

28 There are portions of fifty two Idaho and 7 Montana ACECs in the planning area that
29 overlap occupied GRSG habitat (see **Figure 3-15**, Existing Areas of Critical Environmental
30 Concern with Preliminary Priority and General Habitat). Refer to **Table 3-43**, BLM Areas of
31 Critical Environmental Concern, which summarizes the acres of ACECs within GRSG
32 habitat and the identified relevant and important values for each. None of the existing
33 ACECs were designated solely for the purpose of protecting GRSG habitat.

34 As part of this effort, the BLM called for and received nominations for ACECs to protect
35 GRSG. A BLM interdisciplinary team reviewed nominations to determine which areas meet
36 the relevance and importance criteria, as defined by 43 CFR 1610.7-2(a)(1), and 43 CFR
37 1610.7-2(a)(2), and guidance in BLM Manual 1613, Areas of Critical Environmental
38 Concern. Details of the process and information on those areas found to meet the relevance
39 and importance criteria can be found in **Appendix S**, BLM ACEC Evaluation and Forest
40 Service Zoological Areas.

Figure 3-14 Special Designations in the Planning Area



1



Figure 3-15 Existing Areas of Critical Environmental Concern with Preliminary Priority and General Habitat

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Table 3-43
BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC Name	State	Acres in PGH	Acres in PPH	Total Acres	Values
Antelope Flat RNA	Idaho	0	590	590	Unusual and uncommon plant communities
Big Beaver	Idaho	6,700	0	6,780	Natural Features (Elk Habitat)
Birch Creek	Idaho	4,460	4,180	8,660	Crucial winter range and lambing habitat for bighorn sheep. Rare plants.
Block Mountain	Montana	550	0	8,630	Geologic Resources
Boulder Creek	Idaho	880	4,190	6,980	Scenic and multiple natural resource values
Bruneau/Jarbidge River	Idaho	33,300	35,400	73,900	Cultural, Geological, Scenic, and Natural Features (Big Horn Sheep Habitat)
Buckwheat Flats RNA	Idaho	0	190	190	Special Status Plants
Centennial Mountains	Montana	0	13,100	40,800	Wildlife Resources – grizzly bear, lynx & wolf
Centennial Sandhills	Montana	0	1,050	1,050	Geological and Botanical Resources
China Cup Butte RNA	Idaho	0	160	160	Geological values.
Cinnabar Mountain	Idaho	230	0	280	Valuable Range Reference Area, Scenic Values, Special Status Animals including GRSG
Coal Mine Basin	Idaho	0	1,610	1,610	Special Status Plants and animals (only mentions that GRSG are present), scenery, paleontological resources
Cottonwood Creek	Idaho	0	330	330	Riparian Vegetation, redband trout, bighorn sheep, and scenic quality
Cronk's Canyon	Idaho	0	1,220	1,220	Wildlife and botanical resources. Relict bighorn sheep population. Pristine natural plant communities.
Cronk's Canyon RNA	Idaho	0	370	370	Wildlife and botanical resources. Relict bighorn sheep population. Pristine natural plant communities.
Dairy Hollow RNA	Idaho	0	40	40	Geological and botanical resources.
Donkey Hills	Idaho	9,280	15,400	29,700	Wildlife resources – crucial elk habitat.

Table 3-43
BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC Name	State	Acres in PGH	Acres in PPH	Total Acres	Values
Dry Gulch RNA	Idaho	0	540	540	Botanical resources – unusual plant communities; several rare plant populations.
East Fork Salmon River Bench RNA	Idaho	0	90	80	Botanical resources – remnant pristine vegetation.
Elk Mountain	Idaho	760	11,900	12,700	Natural Features (Elk Habitat)
Everson Creek	Montana	0	8,820	8,820	Archaeological Resources
Geoff Hogander/Stump Creek	Idaho	2,450	0	2,470	Exceptional ecological communities
Goodrich Creek RNA	Idaho	390	0	390	Exceptional ecological communities
Goose Creek Mesa	Idaho	0	100	100	Natural Features (Vegetation)
Granite Pass	Idaho	0	90	300	Historic and Cultural Features
Herd Creek Watershed	Idaho	990	13,400	16,900	Botanical, fish and visual resources. Riparian recovery and demonstration area. Presence of rare plants. Variety of high elevation range and forest plant communities. Known spawning and rearing habitat for special status steelhead trout, bull trout, and Chinook salmon. Roadless/primitive and scenic values.
Herd Creek Watershed RNA	Idaho	0	280	1,060	Same as Herd Creek Watershed.
Hixon Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse Habitat	Idaho	6,780	690	11,800	Wildlife resources - Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse habitat.
Humbug Spires	Montana	20	0	8,370	Outstanding scenic qualities and diverse upland and aquatic habitat for plants, animals and fish.
Jim Sage Canyon	Idaho	150	490	660	Natural Features (Vegetation)

Table 3-43
BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC Name	State	Acres in PGH	Acres in PPH	Total Acres	Values
Jump Creek Canyon	Idaho	340	100	610	Riparian Communities
King Hill Creek	Idaho	610	1,340	2,870	Scenic and Natural Features (Redband Trout and Riparian)
Lone Bird	Idaho	0	9,980	9,980	Cultural and botanical resources. Numerous and unique cultural resources. Rare plants.
Malm Gulch/Germer Basin	Idaho	1,070	4,400	5,640	Botanical, paleontological, geologic resources. Concentration of rare plants, unusual plant communities. Petrified forest. Fragile soils.
Malm Gulch/Germer Basin RNA	Idaho	324	1,862	2,186	Same as Malm Gulch/Germer Basin
McBride Creek	Idaho	0	260	260	Special Status Plants
McKinney Butte	Idaho	0	2,210	3,760	Geological, Scenic, and Natural Features (Bats, Unusual plants, and invertebrates)
Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek	Montana	680	12,400	13,100	Cultural Resources
Nine Mile Knoll	Idaho	920	18,800	41,600	Big game wildlife values.
North Fork Juniper Woodland	Idaho	370	0	4,410	Montane Western Juniper and Special Status Plants and Animals
North Menan Butte	Idaho	150	630	780	Geological values.
North Menan Butte RNA	Idaho	20	330	340	Geological and botanical values.
Oregon-California Trail Junction	Idaho	520	0	520	Historic and Cultural Features
Owyhee River/Bighorn Sheep	Idaho	46,100	154,900	201,000	Wildlife resources - bighorn sheep habitat
Peck's Canyon RNA	Idaho	0	780	780	Botanical resources – excellent condition plant communities.
Pennal Gulch	Idaho	230	5,530	5,840	Botanical resources – rare plants; unique riparian area; unique and representative vegetation.
Pine Gap RNA	Idaho	0	240	240	Botanical resources – rare plant <i>Cryptantha caespitosa</i> .

Table 3-43
BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC Name	State	Acres in PGH	Acres in PPH	Total Acres	Values
Playas	Idaho	0	40	40	Natural Features (Davis Peppergrass)
Pleasant Valley Table	Idaho	1,470	0	1,470	Botanical resources - excellent examples of Owyhee sagebrush-Sandberg bluegrass and low sagebrush-Idaho fescue communities
Rebecca Sand Hill RNA	Idaho	340	0	340	Special Status Plants
Salmon Falls Creek Canyon	Idaho	890	570	5,130	Pristine, Scenic, and Natural Features
Sand Hollow RNA	Idaho	0	3,340	3,340	Geological and botanical resources – fragile watershed, rare plant populations; geological area of interest.
Sevenmile Creek	Idaho	0	960	1,040	Natural hazard due to unstable nature of the soils and considerable slumps that occur.
Snake River	Idaho	4,040	5,780	127,300	Botanical, Wildlife, Fish, Recreation, Scenic Resources-Extensive cottonwood riparian-wetland ecosystems, multiple listed species, world class fishery, visual class 1 areas.
Sommercamp Butte	Idaho	170	270	440	Botanical resources - good ecological condition of Mountain Mahogany-bluebunch wheatgrass communities
Squaw Creek	Idaho	30	110	150	Low elevation Wyoming sagebrush-bluebunch wheatgrass communities
Summit Creek ACEC	Idaho	0	110	110	Botanical Resources- Unique wetland system; rare plants; special recreation values.
Summit Creek RNA	Idaho	0	190	190	Botanical and Recreational Resources -Unique wetland system; rare plants; special recreation values.

Table 3-43
BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC Name	State	Acres in PGH	Acres in PPH	Total Acres	Values
Tee-Maze	Idaho	110	10,500	10,800	Geological, Scenic, and Natural Features (Bats, Unusual plants, and invertebrates)
The Badlands	Idaho	850	980	1,830	Scenic Values and Diverse Botanical Features
The Tules RNA	Idaho	100	20	110	Outstanding Geologic Features and Special Status Plants
Thousand Springs	Idaho	150	440	600	Botanical and Wildlife Resources-Unique wetland ecosystem; high value for waterfowl.
Thousand Springs RNA	Idaho	0	230	230	Botanical and Wildlife Resources-Unique wetland ecosystem; high value for waterfowl.
Travertine Park	Idaho	0	180	180	Botanical resources.
Travertine Park RNA	Idaho	0	20	20	Botanical resources.
Triplet Butte	Idaho	300	0	310	Undisturbed vegetation communities, cultural resources, bighorn sheep, and scenic quality
Virginia City Historic District	Montana	240	0	510	Cultural Resources

Source: BLM GIS 2015

3.13.1 Wilderness

BLM

In 1964, the Wilderness Act (the Act) established the National Wilderness Preservation System to be managed by the Forest Service, National Park Service, and USFWS. In 1976, with the passage of the FLPMA, Congress made the BLM the fourth agency with wilderness management authority under the Wilderness Act.

Section 4(b) of the Act further sets forth the agencies' responsibilities in administering wilderness areas and states that the preservation of wilderness character is the primary management mandate. In the relevant part, the Act states: "Except as otherwise provided in this Act, each agency administering any area designated as wilderness shall be responsible for preserving the wilderness character of the area."

As set forth in Section 2(c) ("Definition of Wilderness") of the Wilderness Act, wilderness character is composed of four mandatory qualities and a fifth, optional, quality. These are:



- 1 i. Untrammled. The Wilderness Act states that wilderness is “an area where the
2 earth and its community of life are untrammled by man.” A “trammel” is
3 literally a net, snare, hobble, or other device that impedes the free movement of
4 an animal. Here, used metaphorically, “untrammled” refers to wilderness as
5 essentially unhindered and free from modern human control or manipulation.
6 This quality is impaired by human activities or actions that control or manipulate
7 the components or processes of ecological systems inside wilderness.
- 8 ii. Natural. The Wilderness Act states that wilderness is “protected and managed so
9 as to preserve its natural conditions.” In short, wilderness ecological systems
10 should be as free as possible from the effects of modern civilization.
11 Management must foster a natural distribution of native wildlife, fish, and plants
12 by ensuring that ecosystems and ecological processes continue to function
13 naturally. Watersheds, water bodies, water quality, and soils are maintained in a
14 natural condition; associated ecological processes previously altered by human
15 influences will be allowed to return to their natural condition. Fire, insects, and
16 diseases are allowed to play their natural role in the wilderness ecosystem except
17 where these activities threaten human life, property, or high value resources on
18 adjacent nonwilderness lands. Additional guidance on this is provided in section
19 1.6.C of this manual, which addresses the management of specific activities in
20 wilderness. This quality may be affected by intended or unintended effects of
21 human activities on the ecological systems inside the wilderness.
- 22 iii. Undeveloped. The Wilderness Act states that wilderness is an area “of
23 undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without
24 permanent improvements or human habitation,” “where man himself is a visitor
25 who does not remain,” and “with the imprint of man’s work substantially
26 unnoticeable.” Wilderness has minimal evidence of modern human occupation
27 or modification. This quality is impaired by the presence of structures or
28 installations, and by the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, or
29 mechanical transport that increases people’s ability to occupy or modify the
30 environment. More detail on the activities that impair this quality is found in
31 Section 1.6.B of this policy.
- 32 iv. Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation. The Wilderness Act states that
33 wilderness has “outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and
34 unconfined type of recreation.” Wilderness provides opportunities for people to
35 experience: natural sights and sounds; remote, isolated, unfrequented, or
36 secluded places; and freedom, risk, and the physical and emotional challenges of
37 self-discovery and self-reliance. Any one wilderness does not have to provide all
38 these opportunities, nor is it necessary that they be present on every acre of a
39 given wilderness. Where present, however, the preservation of these
40 opportunities is important to the preservation of wilderness character as a whole.
41 This quality is impaired by settings that reduce these opportunities, such as
42 visitor encounters, signs of modern civilization, recreation facilities, and
43 management restrictions on visitor behavior.

1 v. Unique, Supplemental, or Other Features. The Wilderness Act states that
2 wilderness areas “may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of
3 scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.” Though these values are not
4 required of any wilderness, where they are present they are part of that area’s
5 wilderness character, and must be protected as rigorously as any of the four
6 required qualities. They may include historical, cultural, paleontological, or other
7 resources not necessarily considered a part of any of the other qualities. These
8 values are identified in a number of ways: in the area’s designating legislation,
9 through its legislative history, by the original wilderness inventory, in a wilderness
10 management plan, or at some other time after designation.

11 Section 4(b) of the Wilderness Act states that: “Except as otherwise provided in this Act,
12 wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific,
13 educational, conservation, and historical use.” In most cases the public purposes reflect one
14 or more qualities of wilderness character and are administered so as to preserve the
15 wilderness character of the area.

16 Section 4(c) of the Wilderness Act lists uses and activities that are specifically prohibited in
17 wilderness: “Except as specifically provided for in this Act, and subject to existing private
18 rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness
19 area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the
20 administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in
21 emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no
22 temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing
23 of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any
24 such area.”

25 The BLM Wilderness Manual 6340 states: Wildlife management within wilderness is guided
26 by all relevant laws, including the Wilderness Act, acts designating specific wilderness areas,
27 the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Native American treaty rights,
28 43 CFR 6300 (Management of Designated Wilderness Areas), 43 CFR 24 (Department of
29 the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State-Federal Relationships), and applicable State laws
30 and policies regarding wildlife.

31 Many wilderness areas provide important habitat for federally listed threatened or
32 endangered wildlife species. The BLM will manage wilderness areas to protect and recover
33 known populations of federally listed threatened or endangered species and to aid in their
34 recovery in previously occupied habitat. The wilderness restrictions can directly or indirectly
35 influence GRSG and their habitat.

36 The BLM has seven wilderness areas within the planning boundary (**Table 3-44**, BLM-
37 Administered Wilderness Areas). These seven areas are all within Owyhee County and were
38 designated by Congress in 2009 through the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act.

39 A wilderness management plan for the seven BLM wilderness areas will be released in draft
40 in February 2013. A final plan should be completed by mid to late 2013.



Table 3-44
BLM-Administered Wilderness Areas

BLM Wilderness Name	Wilderness Acres
Bear Trap Wilderness	6,350
Big Jacks Creek Wilderness	52,800
Bruneau-Jarbridge Rivers Wilderness	90,000
Little Jacks Creek Wilderness	50,900
North Fork Owyhee Wilderness	43,400
Owyhee River Wilderness	267,300
Pole Creek Wilderness	12,500
Total BLM Wilderness	523,250

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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2 ***Forest Service***

3 The Forest Service, National Park Service, and BLM manage wilderness areas under the
4 same legislation; the 1964 Wilderness Act. The agencies have similar objectives and policies
5 related to wilderness. Below is text from the Forest Service wilderness manual.

6 Wilderness is a unique and vital resource. In addition to offering primitive recreation
7 opportunities, it is valuable for its scientific and educational uses, as a benchmark for
8 ecological studies, and for the preservation of historical and natural features.

9 Manage the wilderness resource to ensure its character and values are dominant and
10 enduring. Its management must be consistent over time and between areas to ensure its
11 present and future availability and enjoyment as wilderness. Manage wilderness to ensure
12 that human influence does not impede the free play of natural forces or interfere with
13 natural successions in the ecosystems and to ensure that each wilderness offers outstanding
14 opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Manage
15 wilderness as one resource rather than a series of separate resources (FSM 2300 Sec. 2320.6).

16 *Objectives*

- 17 • Maintain and perpetuate the enduring resource of wilderness as one of the
18 multiple uses of National Forest System land.
- 19 • Maintain wilderness in such a manner that ecosystems are unaffected by human
20 manipulation and influences so that plants and animals develop and respond to
21 natural forces.
- 22 • Minimize the impact of those kinds of uses and activities generally prohibited by
23 the Wilderness Act, but specifically excepted by the Act or subsequent
24 legislation.
- 25 • Protect and perpetuate wilderness character and public values including, but not
26 limited to, opportunities for scientific study, education, solitude, physical and
27 mental challenge and stimulation, inspiration, and primitive recreation
28 experiences.

- Gather information and carry out research in a manner compatible with preserving the wilderness environment to increase understanding of wilderness ecology, wilderness uses, management opportunities, and visitor behavior.

Policy

- Where there are alternatives among management decisions, wilderness values shall dominate over all other considerations except where limited by the Wilderness Act, subsequent legislation, or regulations.
- Manage the use of other resources in wilderness in a manner compatible with wilderness resource management objectives.
- In wildernesses where the establishing legislation permits resource uses and activities that are nonconforming exceptions to the definition of wilderness as described in the Wilderness Act, manage these nonconforming uses and activities in such a manner as to minimize their effect on the wilderness resource.
- Cease uses and activities and remove existing structures not essential to the administration, protection, or management of wilderness for wilderness purposes or not provided for in the establishing legislation.
- Because wilderness does not exist in a vacuum, consider activities on both sides of wilderness boundaries during planning and articulate management goals and the blending of diverse resources in forest plans. Do not maintain buffer strips of undeveloped wildland to provide an informal extension of wilderness. Do not maintain internal buffer zones that degrade wilderness values. Use the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (FSM 2310) as a tool to plan adjacent land management.
- Manage each wilderness as a total unit and coordinate management direction when they cross other administrative boundaries.
- Use interdisciplinary skills in planning for wilderness use and administration.
- Gather necessary information and carry out research programs in a manner that is compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment.
- Whenever and wherever possible, acquire non-federal lands located within wildernesses, as well as non-federal lands within those areas recommended for inclusion in the system.

The Forest Service manages eight wilderness areas that are either all or portions of within the planning area (**Table 3-45**, National Forest System Wilderness Areas).

Table 3-45
National Forest System Wilderness Areas

Forest Service Wilderness Name	Wilderness Acres
Sawtooth	217,100
Frank Church River of No Return	2,366,900



**Table 3-45
National Forest System Wilderness Areas**

Forest Service Wilderness Name	Wilderness Acres
Anaconda Pintler	158,600
Gates of the Mountains	28,600
Lee Metcalf	264,600
Red Rock Lakes	32,400
Absaroka Beartooth	943,600
Total Forest Service Wilderness	2,709,100

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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National Park Service

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The following is from the National Park Service Wilderness Management Policy 2006: The National Park Service will manage wilderness areas for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such a manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. Management will include the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness. The purpose of wilderness in the national parks includes the preservation of wilderness character and wilderness resources in an unimpaired condition and, in accordance with the Wilderness Act, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

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Craters of the Moon National Monument manages one wilderness area within the planning boundary (Table 3-46, National Park Service Wilderness Areas).

**Table 3-46
National Park Service Wilderness Areas**

National Park Service Wilderness Name	Wilderness Acres
Craters of the Moon National Wilderness	43,200
Total National Park Service Wilderness	43,200

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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3.13.2 Wilderness Study Areas

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Section 603 of FLPMA directed the BLM to carry out a wilderness review of the BLM-administered lands. The wilderness inventory was conducted from 1978 to 1980. The original inventory focused on roadless areas of BLM-administered lands of 5,000 acres or more and on roadless islands, but also included areas of less than 5,000 acres that had wilderness characteristics in association with contiguous roadless lands managed by another agency, and areas of less than 5,000 acres that had wilderness characteristics and could practicably be managed to keep those characteristics in an unimpaired condition. Additional WSAs were designated through the BLM land use planning process under the authority of Sections 201, 202, and 302 of FLPMA after the reports to Congress were completed in 1993.

1 The inventory phase identified areas that were found to have the characteristics of
2 wilderness enumerated by Congress in Section 2 (c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964:

3 “A wilderness...(1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature,
4 with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities
5 for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand
6 acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an
7 unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of
8 scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.” When these characteristics were found
9 within a defined boundary, the presence of the wilderness resource was documented and the
10 area was classified as a WSA.

11 During the study phase, all values, resources, and uses occurring within each WSA were
12 analyzed, pursuant to the NEPA, through legislative environmental impact statements.
13 When the study was completed, recommendations as to the suitability or unsuitability of
14 each WSA for designation as wilderness were submitted to the President through the
15 Secretary of the Interior, and then from the President to Congress.

16 Consistent with BLM Manual 6330 and FLPMA Section 603(c), the BLM currently manages
17 approximately 770,000 acres of WSAs within the planning boundary. This includes 10 WSAs
18 in the Dillon Field Office and 34 WSAs in the Idaho Field Offices. **Table 2-9** identifies
19 acres of WSAs that contain GRSG habitat in the decision area for this LUPA/EIS.

20 **3.13.3 National Landscapes, Monuments, and Conservation Areas**

21 ***National Landscape Conservation System***

22 The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) was created in 2000 through an order
23 signed by Interior Secretary Babbitt. The concept of the NLCS was for the BLM to manage
24 a system of lands with a dominant conservation mission. In the order, Secretary Babbitt
25 included lands, rivers, and trails designated by acts of Congress or presidential proclamations
26 under the 1906 Antiquities Act as units in the NLCS. In 2009, Congress passed the Omnibus
27 Public Lands Management Act, which permanently established the NLCS “... to conserve,
28 protect and restore nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural,
29 ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations.”

30 Since the creation of the NLCS, the BLM has promoted understanding of the system. As a
31 way to help the public recognize the NLCS, the BLM has developed a brand and logo:
32 National Conservation Lands.

33 Within the planning area, there are multiple units representing the National Conservation
34 Lands. These include a National Monument, a National Conservation Area, Wilderness
35 Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic
36 Trails.

37 ***National Monuments and National Conservation Areas***



1 National Monuments are areas either designated by Congress or by presidential
2 proclamation (under the authority of the Antiquities Act of 1906) to protect unique historic
3 landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, or other objects of historic or scientific
4 interest. Within the planning area, the BLM and the National Park Service jointly administer
5 the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve (737,700 acres). The BLM
6 portion of the monument was designated in 2000 to protect *kipukas* (small areas surrounded
7 by lava). These are some of the last undisturbed vegetation communities on the Snake River
8 Plain and the surrounding sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.) steppe ecosystem. They consist of
9 diverse communities of grasses, sagebrush, and shrubs that provide habitat for a variety of
10 wildlife. This area also includes lava tube caves, older volcanic formations, and volcanic
11 buttes. Craters of the Moon is managed to protect and preserve the objects and values for
12 which it was designated.

13 National Conservation Areas (NCAs) are designated by Congress to conserve, protect,
14 enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future
15 generations. NCAs feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic,
16 archaeological, paleontological, historical, educational, and scientific resources. Within the
17 planning area, the BLM manages the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National
18 Conservation Area (485,000 acres). Congress established the NCA in 1993 to protect a
19 unique environment that supports one of the world's most dense concentrations of nesting
20 birds of prey. Falcons, eagles, hawks, and owls are found here in exceptional profusion and
21 variety. The NCA is managed to conserve, protect, and enhance raptor populations and their
22 associated habitats.

23 The BLM manages National Monuments and National Conservation Areas in accordance
24 with the direction provided in BLM Manual 6220. This policy will be adhered to during any
25 site-specific NEPA analyses that are conducted within either of these areas.

26 ***National Scenic and Historic Trails***

27 A National Historic Trail (NHT) is congressionally designated as an extended long-distance
28 trail, not necessarily managed as continuous. It follows as closely as possible and practicable
29 the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. The purpose of an
30 NHT is to identify and protect the historic route and the historic remnants and artifacts for
31 public use and enjoyment. An NHT is managed to protect the nationally significant
32 resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may
33 pass, including the primary use or uses of the trail.

34 While National Scenic and Historic Trails cross lands managed by different agencies, trails
35 and trail segments that cross BLM-administered lands are managed in accordance with BLM
36 Manual 6280, Management of National Scenic and Historic Trails and Trails Under Study or
37 Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation. This manual mandates that the
38 BLM establish NHT's Management Corridors to assist in the management of the resources,
39 qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses for which the NHT was
40 designated. The designation of NHT's Management Corridors in the future may encompass
41 lands that include GRSG habitat and may include management decisions and actions that
42 likely will have positive effects on GRSG populations.

1 **Table 3-50**, National Historic Trails, lists the NHTs in the planning area, by planning
2 district.

Table 3-50
National Historic Trails

Planning District	National Historic Trail
BLM	
Dillon Field Office	Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Oregon National Historic Trail
Burley Field Office	California National Historic Trail
Four Rivers Field Office	Oregon National Historic Trail
Owyhee Field Office	Oregon National Historic Trail
Pocatello Field Office	Oregon National Historic Trail California National Historic Trail
Salmon Field Office	Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail
Shoshone Field Office	Oregon National Historic Trail
Upper Snake Field Office	Oregon National Historic Trail Nez Perce National Historic Trail
Forest Service	
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	Nez Perce National Historic Trail Oregon National Historic Trail
Caribou-Targhee National Forest	Nez Perce National Historic Trail

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3.13.4 Wild and Scenic Rivers

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The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 USC 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Act is notable for safeguarding the special character of these rivers, while also recognizing the potential for their appropriate use and development. It encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection.

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It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dams and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes. (Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, October 2, 1968)



1 Rivers may be designated by Congress or, if certain requirements are met, the Secretary of
2 the Interior. Each river is administered by either a federal or state agency. Designated
3 segments need not include the entire river and may include tributaries. For federally
4 administered rivers, the designated boundaries generally average one-quarter mile on either
5 bank in the lower 48 states and one-half mile on rivers outside national parks in Alaska in
6 order to protect river-related values.

7 ***River Classification***

8 Rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational.

- 9 • Wild River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of
10 impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or
11 shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges
12 of primitive America.
- 13 • Scenic River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of
14 impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and
15 shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- 16 • Recreational River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily
17 accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their
18 shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the
19 past.

20 Regardless of classification, each river in the National System is administered with the goal
21 of protecting and enhancing the values that caused it to be designated. Designation neither
22 prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property.
23 Recreation, agricultural practices, residential development, and other uses may continue.
24 Protection of the river is provided through voluntary stewardship by landowners and river
25 users and through regulation and programs of federal, state, local, or tribal governments. In
26 most cases not all land within boundaries is, or will be, publicly owned, and the Act limits
27 how much land the federal government is allowed to acquire from willing sellers. Visitors to
28 these rivers are cautioned to be aware of and respect private property rights.

29 The Act purposefully strives to balance dam and other construction at appropriate sections
30 of rivers with permanent protection for some of the country's most outstanding free-flowing
31 rivers. To accomplish this, it prohibits federal support for actions such as the construction of
32 dams or other instream activities that would harm the river's free-flowing condition, water
33 quality, or outstanding resource values. However, designation does not affect existing water
34 rights or the existing jurisdiction of states and the federal government over waters as
35 determined by established principles of law.

36 The Forest Service manages two designated rivers within the planning boundary (**Table 3-**
37 **47**, National Forest System Wild and Scenic Rivers). The Middle Fork of the Salmon is
38 wholly within the planning boundary whereas only a portion of the Salmon River is within
39 the planning boundary.

**Table 3-47
National Forest System Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Name	Classification	River Miles
Salmon River	Wild	79
	Recreational	46
Middle Fork of the Salmon River	Wild	103
	Scenic	1

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The BLM manages 16 designated rivers that are wholly within the planning boundary (Table 3-, BLM-Administered Wild and Scenic Rivers). All of the 16 rivers are within wilderness areas. Where the wilderness policy is more restrictive than the Wild and Scenic Rivers policy regarding actions within wilderness, the wilderness policy takes precedence; however, Wild and Scenic Rivers must be administered so as to protect and enhance the values that caused it to be designated.

**Table 3-48
BLM-Administered Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Name	Classification	River Miles
Battle Creek	Wild	23.4
Big Jacks Creek	Wild	35
Bruneau River	Recreational	0.6
	Wild	39.3
West Fork Bruneau River	Wild	0.35
Cottonwood Creek	Wild	2.6
Deep Creek	Wild	13.1
Dickshooter Creek	Wild	9.25
Duncan Creek	Wild	0.9
Jarbidge River	Wild	28.8
Little Jacks Creek	Wild	12.4
North Fork Owyhee River	Recreational	5.7
	Wild	15.1
Owyhee River	Wild	67.3
South Fork Of The Owyhee River	Recreational	1.2
	Wild	31.4
Red Canyon	Wild	4.6
Sheep Creek	Wild	25.6
Wickahoney Creek	Wild	1.5

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3.13.5 Regional Context

Table 3-49, Acres of Conservation Areas within GRSG Habitat, displays special designations data for GRSG habitat in the planning area. Data are presented by surface management agency and their occurrence within occupied GRSG habitat in the planning area and the MZs that overlap the planning area.

Table 3-49
Acres of Conservation Areas within GRSG Habitat

Surface Management Agency	Acres within PGH ¹			Acres within PPH ¹		
	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV	Planning Area	MZ II/VII ²	MZ IV
BLM	231,000	511,100	741,400	904,200	241,300	1,510,700
Forest Service	400	46,800	3,000	500	2,500	26,600
Tribal and Other Federal	240,100	105,700	254,800	67,900	93,300	76,000
Private	108,800	358,900	164,300	120,400	217,100	124,800
State	16,500	41,400	16,600	22,300	44,000	22,500
Other	1,500	4,400	1,500	21	26,500	21

Source: Manier et al. 2013

¹Includes Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, USFWS refuges, National Conservation Easements, National Park Service units, National Landscape Conservation System Units, congressionally designated Wilderness areas, and conservation areas on private and state land.

² Note: BER combined acres for MZs II and VII

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3.14 Soil Resources

Many resources and resource uses, including livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, riparian habitat, special status species, fisheries, recreation, water quality and forestry, depend on suitable soils. Consequently, soil attributes and conditions are important to BLM and Forest Service management direction.

Soils are defined by the processes that form them. Through time, these processes form unique soil types and influence what plants may grow upon them. Soil surveys indicate that climate and topography are the primary influences on soil formation. Soil development processes, such as rock weathering, decomposition of plant materials, accumulation of organic matter, and nutrient cycling, are controlled largely by climate. Soil moisture and temperature strongly affect the rates of addition, removal, translocation, and transformation of material within the soil. Topography influences site conditions such as precipitation amounts and effectiveness, drainage, runoff, erosion potential, and temperature.

Soils play an integral part in vegetation community development. Plants use soil as an anchor, a means to provide water for growth, and a storehouse for the nutrients needed for growth. Plant communities are most noticeably influenced where soil texture and thickness of soil horizons change, depth to restrictive layers including abrupt soil horizon boundaries exist, and by soil drainage, moisture holding capacity, or depth to water table. Native plant communities require management considerations that include the ability of the soil to produce a healthy ecosystem over the long term. Reducing the risk of erosion from water and air processes, limiting compaction from traffic source or grazing, and allowing the water to infiltrate at a normal rate for the given soil texture will allow vegetative communities to thrive and further protects the soil resources.

1 The NRCS provides soil mapping across the United States. Soil information and mapping
2 from the NRCS are provided below under existing conditions to describe soil resources.

3 Land uses strive to conform to Standards for Public Land Health on BLM-administered
4 lands, which describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of
5 the BLM-administered lands.

6 **3.14.1 Conditions within the Planning Area**

7 ***Soil Productivity***

8 Soil productivity within the planning area varies widely due to the diversity of soils and site
9 characteristics, specifically differences in elevation and slope gradient. The planning area
10 landscape varies greatly from broad valleys to mountains.

11 The average annual precipitation and temperature in the project area vary greatly by
12 elevation and aspect. Some of the most productive soils are found in well drained valley
13 bottoms, toe-slopes, benches, and broad ridge tops. On uplands where rainfall is moderate
14 to low, medium-textured soils may produce favorable conditions, depending on land uses
15 such as livestock grazing. Soils that feature shallow clay pans, hardpans, or salts pose
16 substantial constraints to land use and land use management.

17 Management practices affect the ability of soils to maintain productivity by influencing
18 disturbances such as displacement, compaction, erosion, and alteration of organic matter and
19 soil organism levels. When soil degradation occurs in semiarid, high desert regions, natural
20 processes are slow to return site productivity. Prevention of soil degradation is far more
21 cost-effective and time effective than remediation or waiting for natural processes.
22 Management practices, such as proper stocking rates for livestock, rotation of grazing,
23 periodic rest from grazing, improved design, construction and maintenance of roads,
24 selective logging, rehabilitation of unneeded surface disturbance, restricting vehicles to roads
25 and trails, rehabilitating mined areas, and control of concentrated recreational activities, have
26 reduced erosion effects and improved soil conditions.

27 ***Soil Erosion***

28 Erosion is a continuing natural process that can be accelerated by human disturbances.
29 Factors that influence soil erosion include soil texture, structure, length and percent of slope,
30 vegetative cover, and rainfall or wind intensity. Soils most susceptible to erosion by wind or
31 water are typified by bare or sparse vegetative cover, noncohesive soil particles with slow
32 infiltration rates, and moderate to steep slopes. Wind erosion processes are less affected by
33 slope angle but are highly influenced by wind intensity.

34 The semi-arid planning area has a low percentage of natural plant community ground cover,
35 allowing the soils to erode naturally in wind and during infrequent rain events. In addition,
36 management actions affect the rate at which soil erodes. Activities that remove vegetative
37 cover increase the erosion rate. Some soils are particularly vulnerable to soil erosion.



1 NRCS soil map unit descriptions rate soils in the planning area according to their
2 susceptibility to water and wind erosion. Wind erosion is particularly a hazard when surface
3 litter and vegetation are removed by fire or other disturbances. Soils in the planning area
4 were screened based on several relevant characteristics that indicate potentially fragile soils
5 or high erosion hazards. These characteristics include:

- 6 • soils rated as highly or severely erodible by wind or water, as described in NRCS
7 soil survey reports
- 8 • landslide areas as identified in NRCS soil survey reports
- 9 • soils on slopes greater than 35 percent

10 ***Soil Types***

11 When making land management decisions based on soil related hazards or limitations, the
12 BLM evaluates soil surveys available from the NRCS. Soils mapped according to the
13 boundaries of major land resource areas, which are geographically associated land resource
14 units that share common characteristics related to physiography, geology, climate, water
15 resources, soils, biological resources, and land uses. Each soil survey describes the specific
16 properties of soils in the area surveyed and shows the location of each kind of soil on
17 detailed maps. The BLM evaluates soil map units to make management decisions that would
18 likely affect soils. Each soil survey applicable to the planning area describes soil map units by
19 the individual soil or soils that make up the unit. These descriptions indicate the limitations
20 and hazards inherent in each unit. Descriptions include soil depth, range of elevation, origin,
21 climate, physical properties, runoff capabilities, erosion hazard, associated native vegetation,
22 wildlife habitat use, and capability for community development and other uses.

23 Soil can be classified in many ways according to a whole host of parameters. For the
24 generalization of soils in the planning area, the taxonomy of soil order is a convenient
25 starting place. Most of the soils in the planning area are part of the largest soil order,
26 Mollisols. The remaining areas are composed of similar young developmental soils in the
27 Inceptisol, Entisol, and Andisol orders, with a very small amount of Histisols and Vertisols
28 that have particular properties that may be of importance.

29 Soil properties can provide information as to why certain plants may grow in one area and
30 not another, or why erosion occurs by wind and not water. The NRCS provides a suite of
31 risk ratings, interpretations, and basic soil data that describes soils resources. The soil texture
32 for most soils across the planning area is a loam as composed of the representative percent
33 of sand, silt and clay. Some greater or lesser amounts of these percentages produce clayey
34 loams and silty loams for the most part. The soils have very low amounts of organic matter
35 (2 percent), low available moisture content in the top 10 inches (25.4 cm) and are considered
36 well drained. The risk of erosion by water is slight, except in those very steep canyons and
37 exposed bedrock ridges that have a severe to very severe rating. The overall majority of the
38 planning area is considered to be of slight risk for erosion. The soils are prone to
39 degradation when soil is removed in excess of the ability to rebuild it. In this area of the
40 state, the amount of loss can be significant with wind exposure or increased erosion from

1 water. Only 1 to 2 tons of soil per acre per year needs to be removed in approximately half
2 of the planning area to have a loss of long term productivity.

3 The amount of sand, silt and clay in the soil alters the water infiltration. Soils with higher
4 amounts of silt and clay infiltrate water more slowly than soils with higher amounts of sand.
5 For most of the planning area water infiltrates rapidly into the soil resulting in little standing
6 water.

7 Hydric (wet) soils and unique biological soil crusts are key soil resources in the planning area.

8 Hydric Soils. Hydric soils constitute only a small portion of the planning area. Hydric soils
9 are associated with riparian areas and wetlands. Riparian-wetland soils are found throughout
10 the planning area along water courses, near springs, seeps, playas, and adjacent to reservoirs.
11 Because of the presence of water, riparian-wetland soils have properties that differ from
12 upland areas.

13 Biologic Soil Crusts. Biologic soil crusts are made up of tiny living plants and bacteria that
14 grow together on the soil surface. They help keep the soil from washing or blowing away, fix
15 nitrogen from the atmosphere into the soil, help keep out weeds, and promote the health of
16 plant communities. Loss of biological soil crusts is a contributing factor in the replacement
17 of native vascular plants by invasive species such as cheatgrass or medusa head.

18 Based on research throughout the west, parameters for the ecology and management of
19 biological soil crusts have been developed by the Department of the Interior. Factors found
20 affecting presence, density, cover, and species diversity of macrobiotic crusts include
21 elevation, soils, and topography, disturbances, timing of precipitation, vascular plant
22 community, ecological gradients and microhabitats.

23 ***Biological Soil Crusts***

24 Biological soil crusts are an important component of a broad range of ecological sites in the
25 Intermountain West. They function as a living mulch by retaining soil moisture, increasing
26 organic matter and discouraging annual weed growth (Eldridge and Greene 1994, Belnap
27 and Gillette 1997, 1998, Belnap 2001, McKenna-Neumann et al. 1996, Rosentreter et al.
28 2007). Biological soil crust communities are more prevalent at lower elevations compared to
29 higher elevations with greater precipitation where vascular plant growth precludes biological
30 crust development (Belnap 2001). Specific to soil erosion, biological soil crusts protect
31 interspatial surface areas by occupying open areas between larger plants (Belnap et al. 1997).
32 Biological crust condition and cover is also a direct function of the ecological health of the
33 plant community and the NRCS “National Range and Pasture Book” identifies biological
34 soil crusts as a critical ecological attribute to be used as an indicator of rangeland health
35 (USDA 2003). Anthropogenic disturbances have been documented to impact the diversity
36 and function of these communities (Robinson et al. 2013, Peterson 2013).



1 **3.14.2 Trends**

2 Soil resources change slowly unless catastrophic or larger scale disturbance events such as
3 landslides, floods, volcanoes, or wildfires occur. Then, erosion or deposition would change
4 the ground cover at one point or many. Thus, the degree of change in the planning area
5 would be considered low or insignificant, with the direction of change being the most likely
6 to occur naturally over time. There have been larger wildfire events and to some degree
7 restoration activities that have altered the vegetation communities where juniper has been
8 invading sagebrush communities.

9 The overall guidance for soil resources is to maintain or improve the ability of the soil to
10 support vegetation and allow water and nutrients to be cycled by either macro or
11 microorganisms, all of which promote and improve the health of the land. Degradation by
12 excessive grazing, erosion, or land developments will cause a reduction in soil function as
13 one or perhaps many of the soil properties are changed thereby affecting the functions
14 necessary for healthy soils. In the planning area, impacts on soil resources have resulted from
15 energy development, grazing, recreation, natural processes, and other activities. The potential
16 for maintaining or restoring these communities and conserving the soil resource depends on
17 the specific soil types and how resource programs are managed.

18 **3.15 Water Resources**

19 Water on BLM-administered and National Forest System lands is regulated by the Clean
20 Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Public Land Health Standards, and other laws,
21 regulations, and policy guidance at the federal, state, and local levels. Water resources in
22 Idaho are regulated by the EPA, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Idaho Department
23 of Environmental Quality.

24 The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality has granted designated management
25 agency status to the BLM. As a designated management agency, the BLM must: (1)
26 implement and enforce natural resource management programs for the protection of water
27 quality on federal lands under its jurisdiction; (2) protect and maintain water quality where it
28 meets or exceeds applicable state and Tribal water quality standards; (3) monitor activities to
29 assure that they meet standards and report the results to the State of Idaho; and (4) meet
30 periodically to recertify water quality BMPs. BMPs include methods, measure, or practices to
31 prevent or reduce water pollution, including but not limited to structural and nonstructural
32 controls, operations, and maintenance procedures. BMPs are applied as needed to projects.

33 **3.15.1 Existing Conditions**

34 The discussion of existing conditions includes a description of water resources for the
35 planning area, regardless of landownership. Where appropriate, it also includes a more
36 detailed description of water resources for just BLM-administered lands within the planning
37 area. For this, the description is limited to describing water resources associated with GRSG
38 and their habitat. Wetlands and livestock water developments are important sources of water
39 that can influence GRSG and their habitat.

1 **3.15.2 Conditions within the Planning Area**

2 The BLM is the overwhelming land manager in the planning area. The Forest Service,
3 USFWS, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and State of Idaho all have lands within the planning area
4 that also contain a suite of water resources.

5 Within the planning area, the major water features are streams, lakes, wetlands, playas, and
6 dry lakes. Streams can be ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial. Ephemeral streams do not
7 flow during an average water year, but do flow in response to large precipitation events.
8 Intermittent streams flow during spring runoff for an average water year, but generally dry
9 up later in the summer. Perennial streams contain some water all year for an average water
10 year. Lakes can be permanent or temporary. Wetlands and floodplains vary in extent and
11 depth throughout the year. Permanent waters can also be in the form of ponds and
12 reservoirs developed for human or livestock consumption.

13 Stream channels and floodplains are important because their shape and condition affect how
14 rapidly water flows through a river system, how much water is stored within the basins, the
15 quality of the water, and how much erosion occurs. These functions, in turn, affect fish and
16 wildlife habitat, agriculture, recreation, and the susceptibility of local communities and
17 landowners to floods.

18 As early land management reduced vegetation in the watershed, overland flow of water
19 increased, and stream channels deepened to match the increased supply of water and
20 sediment. Major flood events in the late 1800s were the likely immediate cause of the
21 deepening channels. Channel incisions eventually lead to bank failures and subsequent
22 channel widening. As channel widening and bank failures continued, new low flow channels
23 began to form in the debris from bank failure. Many of the stream channels in the planning
24 area were in the process of this initial buildup in the 1980s. The result of this process is that
25 new channels are usually lower than pre-disturbance channels, and the old floodplain now
26 functions primarily as a terrace. Some terraces may be the result of climatic variations and
27 associated changes in flow and sediment supply. The final stage of channel evolution results
28 in a new bankfull channel and active floodplain at a new, lower elevation. Many stream
29 channels in the planning area have new, lower elevation channels and floodplains.

30 **Surface Water**

31 The US is divided and sub-divided into successively smaller hydrologic units called regions,
32 sub-regions, accounting units (basins), and cataloging units (sub-basins). Each hydrologic
33 unit is identified by a unique hydrologic unit code consisting of two to eight digits. The
34 fourth level of classification (sub-basin) is represented by an eight-digit hydrologic unit code.

35 The historic scarcity of stream flow in the planning area has led to increased flow regulation
36 by the State of Idaho. Projects for irrigation, livestock, human use, and flood control have
37 significantly altered natural flow regimes. This has changed habitat conditions, channel
38 stability and timing of sediment and organic material transport. Stream flow has been altered
39 by management activities such as water impoundments, water withdrawals, road
40 construction, vegetation manipulation, grazing, fire suppression, and timber harvesting.



1 Most surface runoff in the planning area is from snowmelt or rainfall producing peak
2 discharges in the spring and early summer. Many of the streams in the lower elevation semi-
3 arid areas are either intermittent, with segments of perennial flow near springs, or ephemeral,
4 with flow only during spring runoff and intense summer storms.

5 *Riparian Areas and Wetlands*

6 Riparian areas are ecosystems that occur along rivers, streams or water bodies. These area
7 exhibit vegetation or physical characteristics reflective of a permanent surface or subsurface
8 water influence. Typical riparian areas include lands along, adjacent to, or contiguous with
9 perennially and intermittently flowing rivers, streams, and shores of lakes and reservoirs with
10 stable water levels. Excluded are sites such as ephemeral streams or washes that do not
11 exhibit vegetation dependent on free water in the soil. Wetlands are areas that are inundated
12 or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and
13 which under normal circumstances do support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted
14 for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include marshes, swamps, lake shores,
15 lakeshores, sloughs, bogs, wet meadows, and riparian areas. Even through riparian and
16 wetlands areas occupy only a small percentage of the planning area, these areas provide a
17 wide range of functions critical to many different wildlife species, improve water quality,
18 provide scenery, and recreational opportunities.

19 The BLM uses proper functioning condition (PFC) assessments for evaluating riparian-
20 wetland areas and uses it to supplement existing stream channel and riparian area evaluations
21 and assessments. Each riparian-wetland has to be judged against its capability and potential.
22 The capability and potential of natural riparian-wetland areas are characterized by the
23 interaction of hydrology, vegetation, and erosion/deposition. PFC is defined separately for
24 lotic (moving water systems, such as rivers, streams, and spring and lentic (standing water
25 systems, such as lakes, ponds, seeps, and wet meadows). If a riparian or wetland area is not
26 in PFC, it is placed into one of three other categories; functional at risk, nonfunctional, or
27 unknown.

28 The majority of BLM stream channels and floodplains within the planning area are not
29 meeting the BLM standard of PFC. However relatively few stream channels are
30 nonfunctioning. More intermittent stream channels are in nonfunctioning condition than
31 perennial streams but they also have more miles of stream at potential and PFC.

32 *Water Quality*

33 Water quality as defined by the Clean Water Act, includes all the physical, biological, and
34 chemical characteristics which affect existing and designated beneficial uses. The state of
35 Idaho is required to identify which beneficial uses a water body currently supports or could
36 support in the future. Water quality standards are established to protect the beneficial uses of
37 the State's waters. Beneficial uses in planning area are public and private domestic water
38 supplies, industrial water supply, irrigation, livestock watering, fish and aquatic life, and
39 recreation.

40 The State of Idaho is required by section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act to identify waters
41 which are water quality impaired because of failing to meet their designated beneficial uses.

1 Section 303(d) requires that each state develop a list of water bodies that fail to meet water
2 quality standards and delineate stream segments and listing criteria for all streams. The
3 Section 303(d) list of impaired waters is updated biannually, and the state is required to
4 develop a total maximum daily load allocation for each pollutant of concern.

5 Water quality is evaluated based on the ability of a water body to support beneficial uses of
6 the water. Generally, key water qualities are those that support native fish and wildlife and
7 support human uses such as agriculture, recreation, and domestic water supply.

8 The major water quality concern for streams in the planning area has been water
9 temperature. These water temperature concerns correlate to the beneficial use of fish
10 spawning and rearing habitat. Conditions that affect stream temperature can be summarized
11 as amount of near stream vegetation, channel shape, and hydrology. Many of these
12 conditions are interrelated, and many conditions vary considerably across the landscape. For
13 example, channel width measurements can change greatly over even small distances along a
14 stream. Some conditions vary daily and or seasonally. Stream orientation from a north-south
15 to an east-west can change solar heating considerably when stream width and vegetation type
16 remain the same.

17 Removal of riparian vegetation and the shade it provides contributes to elevated stream
18 temperatures. Channel widening can similarly increase solar loading. The principal source of
19 heat energy delivered to the water column is solar energy striking the stream surface directly.
20 Exposure to solar radiation can cause an increase in stream temperature. The ability of
21 riparian vegetation to shade the stream throughout the day depends on aspect and vegetation
22 height, width, density, and position relative to the stream, as well as aspect the stream flows.

23 Causes of stream degradation are removal of riparian vegetation and destabilization of
24 streambanks. The land use most commonly associated with these problems in the planning
25 area is livestock grazing. Other land uses associated with degraded streams include roads,
26 trails, water withdraw, reservoir storage and release, altered physical characteristics of the
27 stream and wetlands alteration.

28 ***Groundwater***

29 Groundwater is used for irrigation, domestic use, and livestock use. The quality of the
30 groundwater is a function of the chemical makeup of the underground formation containing
31 the water. Most of the planning area contains good quality water but the water is usually hard
32 and contains moderate amounts of dissolved minerals.

33 Springs and seeps occur in areas where water from aquifers reaches the surface. Many
34 springs begin in stream channels and others flow into small ponds or marshy areas that drain
35 into channels. Some springs and seeps form their own channels that reach flowing streams,
36 but other springs lose their surface expression and recharge alluvial fill material or permeable
37 stratum.

38 Springs and seeps are important to aquatic habitats because of the perennial base flow they
39 provide to a stream. The outflow from springs in summer usually helps to maintain lower



1 water temperatures. In winter, especially in small streams, base flow helps to maintain an
2 aquatic habitat in an otherwise frozen environment.

3 *Water Quantity*

4 Water balance across the US is approximately 30 percent runoff and 70 percent evaporation.
5 This may be different across the planning area due to higher temperatures and lower relative
6 humidity in some areas.

7 Peak flows are connected with the spring runoff and snow melt with a decrease to near base
8 flow during the month of July. Seasons and years of low water yield are particularly crucial
9 periods for most of the planning area's beneficial uses.

10 The annual flow patterns may have changed since the 19th century. Historical descriptions
11 indicate that streams were relatively stable with good summer streamflow and good water
12 quality and heavy riparian cover. Streambanks were covered with dense growths of aspen,
13 poplar, and willow; cottonwood galleries were thick and wide; and beaver were abundant.
14 Now peak flows are greater and late season flows are diminished. This may be the normal
15 condition of larger flowing streams in the planning area. It is suspected that these effects are
16 due to reduced rates of soil infiltration, reduced capacity for groundwater/riparian storage,
17 and loss of in channel storage in beaver ponds.

18 **3.15.3 Trends**

19 Demands on water resources have increased over the past few decades. Although most early
20 water rights were established for irrigation and mining, today's demand includes municipal
21 water supplies, commercial and industrial supplies, and maintenance of adequate streamflow
22 for fish, recreation, and water quality.

23 The availability of water in much of the planning area is limited and may hamper additional
24 developments that depend on water. Future water development for wildlife, recreation, and
25 livestock would require a State of Idaho water right before project implementation could
26 occur.

27 **3.16 Cultural Resources**

28 In this section the term "cultural resources" is used to encompass the broad scope of
29 resources that must be considered by the BLM and Forest Service and as further defined
30 below. A cultural resource is a definite location of human activity, occupation, or use
31 identifiable through field survey, historical documentation, or oral evidence (BLM Manual
32 8100). The term cultural resources is inclusive and has been adopted and widely used to refer
33 to the diverse human record found in sites, structures, objects and places created and/or
34 used by people. These may comprise archaeological, historic, or architectural sites,
35 structures, objects, or places, and may include locations of traditional cultural or religious
36 importance to a particular social and/or cultural group, often referred to as Traditional
37 Cultural Properties. The term includes "historic properties," as defined in the National
38 Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA), and the implementing regulations
39 found at 36 CFR Part 800. Historic properties are cultural resources determined to be

1 eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The term also
2 includes “archaeological resources” as defined in the Archaeological Resources Protection
3 Act of 1979, and other sites, structures, objects, items and places as addressed in other
4 statutes/regulations (e.g., American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, the Antiquities
5 Act of 1906, NEPA, and the Native America Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of
6 1990).

7 Cultural resources are represented by the full temporal range of human occupation of the
8 continent, from the first peoples’ arrival and settlement in the region over 13,000 years ago
9 and subsequent tribal groups expansion and use throughout all of the sub-region and other
10 parts of the West to more recent incursions of fur trappers, homesteaders and miners and
11 ranchers of the last 200 years. Cultural resources can include surface and buried artifacts and
12 cultural features made and left by human cultures in archaeological sites; items built by past
13 cultures (e.g., houses/house remains and activity areas); and places associated with traditional
14 cultural uses.

15 **3.16.1 Considering Effects on Cultural Resources Pursuant to Section 106** 16 **of the NHPA**

17 Cultural resources are most frequently identified and recorded through federal compliance
18 with Section 106 of the NHPA and subsequent consultation with Native American tribes
19 and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO). Section 106 requires that federal agencies
20 that fund, approve, authorize, license, or permit actions or undertakings to consider effects
21 on “historic properties” that could occur due to the proposed undertakings. It is important
22 to emphasize again that the term “historic property” has a specific meaning under the
23 NHPA, referring only to those properties determined to be eligible for or listed in the
24 NRHP regardless of property type or period of use (e.g., traditional cultural property or
25 archaeological site, and historic or prehistoric).

26 Federal regulations define specific criterion for NRHP eligibility and provide the measures
27 for evaluating cultural resources for their eligibility. These criteria are found at 36 CFR 60.4.
28 Once a cultural resource has been determined to be eligible for the NRHP the agency must
29 consider the potential effects of the proposed action on the historic property and provide
30 measures to either reduce or mitigate any adverse effects. Consequently, compliance with
31 Section 106 provides a primary mechanism for federal agencies to assess and take into
32 account the effects of proposed federal actions or undertakings on cultural resources during
33 NEPA reviews.

34 The BLM follows alternative procedures, defined in state specific protocols, for meeting its
35 Section 106 obligations allowed for and pursuant to the implementing regulations of the
36 NHPA (36 CFR 800.14). In collaboration with the Advisory Council on Historic
37 Preservation and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the BLM
38 developed alternative procedures that define the manner in which the agency will comply
39 with Section 106 of the NHPA. These procedures are defined in a national Programmatic
40 Agreement, revised in 2012, between the three parties. The national Programmatic
41 Agreement procedures are implemented by the state specific protocol agreements with each



1 state's SHPO. The protocols further define how the BLM will coordinate with the SHPO in
2 each state to fulfill Section 106 responsibilities.

3 Prior to initiating proposed actions for protection and enhancement of GRSG and GRSG
4 habitat, the responsible manager shall determine the area of potential effect; review existing
5 information on known and anticipated historic properties that could be affected; seek
6 information (in coordination with environmental review and land use planning processes)
7 from Native American tribes and other parties likely to have knowledge of or concern with
8 historic properties (including places of traditional cultural and religious significance);
9 determine the need for field surveys or other actions to identify historic properties; make a
10 good faith effort to identify and evaluate historic properties; assess and determine effects on
11 historic properties; and identify measures to avoid, lessen or mitigate adverse effects on
12 historic properties.

13 As the various types of GRSG/habitat improvement projects are identified, effects on
14 cultural resources can be assessed on a case by case or programmatic level; however, given
15 current information, it is assumed that all future actions will require separate NHPA
16 analyses. Any programmatic procedures not covered by the BLM's national Programmatic
17 Agreement or state protocols will require either (a) separate NHPA analysis, or (b) a separate
18 Section 106 agreement.

19 **3.16.2 Conditions of the Planning Area**

20 The planning area includes federal lands administered by the BLM Boise, Twin Falls, and
21 Idaho Falls Districts in Idaho and the Dillon Field Office of the Western Montana District
22 in Montana. National Forest System lands include lands administered by the Boise,
23 Sawtooth, Salmon-Challis, and Caribou-Targhee National Forests in Idaho, and the
24 Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest in Montana. A majority of the habitat is sagebrush
25 steppe on BLM-administered land, with upland sagebrush steppe and sub-alpine habitat or
26 ecotones located on National Forest System lands. The Snake and Salmon Rivers, and the
27 headwaters of the Missouri river, are three major watershed systems within the planning
28 area.

29 In general, and as extrapolated from BLM survey and site location data, on average 15
30 percent of BLM-administered lands within the planning area have been inventoried, resulting
31 in the recordation of 17,801 archaeological resources (**Table 3-50**, Recorded Cultural
32 Resource Surveys and Sites within GRSG Habitat in the Planning Area), including
33 prehistoric and historic sites. These data indicate that, on average, six to eight sites occur per
34 square mile on BLM-administered lands within the planning area. Formal determinations of
35 eligibility have not been completed for most sites in the planning area; however, recorded
36 resources are treated as eligible until determined otherwise. Based on logged eligibility
37 determinations for known sites on BLM-administered lands, roughly 14 percent of recorded
38 sites have been determined to be eligible for listing on the NRHP. These data indicate that
39 over 2,492 of the recorded sites on BLM-administered lands are eligible for the NRHP
40 (**Table 3-50**, Recorded Cultural Resource Surveys and Sites within GRSG Habitat in the
41 Planning Area).

Table 3-50
Recorded Cultural Resource Surveys and Sites within GRSG Habitat in the Planning Area

Habitat	Idaho BLM Surveys	Idaho BLM Resources	Montana BLM Surveys	Montana BLM Resources	Planning Area Totals
PPH	2,057 surveys	12,517	596 surveys	723	718,292 acres
	692,778 acres		25,514 acres		13,240 Resources
PGH	1,226 surveys	4,561	538 surveys	564	763,170 acres
	739,277 acres		23,893 acres		5,125 Resources
Totals	1,432,055 acres	17,078	49,407 acres	1,287	1,481,462 acres 18,365 Resources

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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The total extent of the cultural resource base is unknown for the National Forests in PPH or PGH, as the entire land base has not been inventoried. Survey coverage of GRSG habitat on the National Forests in the sub-region varies between 5 and 15 percent on most of the National Forests, with most surveys conducted for range allotment plans, wildlife habitat improvement projects, and commercial activities. The exact number of cultural resource surveys and sites located on the National Forests changes as new surveys are conducted; therefore, providing exact numerical information would not be accurate.

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Several well-known historic properties and districts occur in the planning area, as listed by field office in **Table 3-51**, Well Known Historic Properties within the Planning Area. These historic properties along with other eligible properties in the planning area would need evaluation for the effects of proposed undertakings for GRSG habitat improvement prior to implementation. Areas not previously inventoried would be subjected to full cultural resources analysis for ground-disturbing actions.

Table 3-51
Well Known Historic Properties within the Planning Area

Field Office	Key National Register Listed or Eligible Properties
Dillon	The Bannack National Historic Landmark Big Hole National Battlefield Everson Creek/Black Canyon Quarry District Muddy Creek Archaeological District Historic mining districts, including Argenta, Bannack, Blue Wing, Ermont, Melrose, Rochester, Silver Star, Utopia, and Virginia City
Burley	Castle Rocks Traditional Cultural Property City of Rocks National Historic Landmark Kelton Road
Bruneau	Camas and Pole Creeks Archaeological District Shoofly Rock Alignments Little Blue Table complex Five Fingers & Y "Buffalo" Jumps Hole in Rock Pictographs
Challis	Challis Springs Historic District



Table 3-51
Well Known Historic Properties within the Planning Area

Field Office	Key National Register Listed or Eligible Properties
	Ima Mine White Knob Mining District Crystal City Double Springs Challis Bison Jump Bayhorse Mining District Donkey Hills horse trap
Jarbridge	Toana Freight Wagon Road Devil Creek Complex Bruneau River/DryLakes Complex Browns Bench Obsidian Complex
Owyhee FO	Silver City Historic District Delamar Historic District
Salmon FO	Jaguar Cave Rag Town Buckhorn Mine Elmira Mine
Shoshone FO	Wilson Butte Cave Richfield Pumphouse
Upper Snake FO	Birch Creek Rockshelters Bobcat Cave Jackknife Cave Black Canyon Rock Art Sites

Source: BLM GIS 2013

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The Forest Service identifies their significant historic properties through identification of Priority Heritage Assets (Table 3-52, Forest Service Priority Heritage Assets and Listed Properties within the Planning Area). These are, in essence, the most significant sites on the forest.

Table 3-52
Forest Service Priority Heritage Assets and Listed Properties within the Planning Area

National Forest	Number of Priority Heritage Assets	Listed Properties
Boise NF	34	Atlanta Ranger Station Rocky Bar Townsite
Beaverhead – Deerlodge NF	45	Historic Resources of Pony, Montana Canyon Creek Charcoal Kilns Butte Anaconda and Pacific Railway Historic District Birch Creek Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark
Sawtooth NF	32	Pole Creek Guard Station

**Table 3-52
Forest Service Priority Heritage Assets and Listed Properties within the Planning Area**

National Forest	Number of Priority Heritage Assets	Listed Properties
		Oregon National Historic Trail
Caribou-Targhee NF	10	Salt River Hydroelectric Plant Bishop Mountain Lookout Squirrel Meadow Guard Station Mesa Falls Lodge Hudspeth's Cutoff Oregon Trail
Salmon – Challis NF	58	Leesburg Townsite and Cemetery Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark Custer Townsite

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Cultural Use of the Planning Area

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Three cultural areas are located within the planning area. Cultural areas have often been correlated to physiographic regions, with the planning area falling within the northern Great Basin, southeastern Plateau and western Plains regions. These cultural areas roughly correspond to distinctly different indigenous groups with different languages and moderately different resource-based economic systems and social structures. While these areas are associated to cultural groups and distinct tribes, cultural boundaries are fluid and overlapping. The main homelands and cultural traits of tribal groups that inhabit the region are generally defined by the cultural areas. Tribes that inhabit the region today and in the past include Great Basin groups such as the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and the Eastern Shoshone; the Plateauan Nez Perce, Coeur d'Alene, Pend d'Oreille, Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation; and Plains groups including the Blackfeet Tribe, Chippewa Cree Tribes, and the Crow.

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Tribal members actively use BLM-administered and National Forest System lands for traditional resource procurement. The planning area contains populations of economically important plant and animal resources to tribal groups and individuals with certain species dominating depending on the region and the particular preferences of tribes or individuals. The sagebrush steppe and rocky upland flats are likely to support populations of plants such as bitterroot, biscuit root, Indian carrot, Indian rice grass and needle grass and other important root plants, such as camas in wetland areas. Modern traditional food plant gathering focuses almost entirely on root crops and wild fruits especially if they are found near the various reservations. Other types of cultural food plants such as seeds are not collected today to the degree they were collected in former times. Cultural plants for weaving appear to be collected wherever they are found. Medicinal cultural plants are undoubtedly collected today but practitioners of indigenous healing methods may not share the types of species used as readily as those collecting plants for subsistence and weaving. Rabbits, deer, elk, and fish are also important animal resources in the planning area.

1 The most common type of prehistoric site or cultural resource in Idaho and southwestern
2 Montana is the lithic scatter. These types of sites contain mainly flaked stone (debitage)
3 and/or stone tools left during the process of creating or repairing bifacial tools, such as
4 arrow points, spear points, dart points, knives or scrapers. Lithic scatters often represent the
5 remnants of prehistoric tool manufacturing/maintenance, locales created during subsistence
6 pursuits, including hunting camps, animal butchering sites, or quarries. The lithic scatter
7 comprises approximately 70 percent or more of recorded prehistoric sites in the planning
8 area. Other site types may include habitation sites with remnants of house pits, house rings
9 and hearths, as well as milling and storage equipment, such as pottery and basketry, and
10 stone circles and wickiups in far eastern Idaho and Montana. Ceremonial sites may also exist
11 in the planning area, but only a few may leave an archaeological signature, such as cairns, pits
12 (e.g., eagle catching and fasting) or stacked rock of a vision quest site, or medicine wheels,
13 and may require tribal consultation with practitioners and elders to identify. Other site types
14 include trails, such as the Oregon National Historic Trail (NHT) and Nez Perce NHT,
15 petroglyphs and pictographs, hunting drivelines and blinds, rock shelters, and caves.

16 While researchers in Idaho and Montana have developed varying cultural chronologies for
17 prehistoric human use of the region, the general periods of use are similar and are discussed
18 in very general terms here to outline prehistoric use of the planning area. The prehistoric
19 cultural chronology for both Idaho and Montana include five general periods, the Early
20 Prehistoric (Paleo-Indian), circa 13,500 to 8,000 years before the present, three sub-periods
21 of the Middle Prehistoric 8,000 to 300 years before the present and the Protohistoric/Early
22 Historic 300 to 150 years before the present. General overviews of archeological research in
23 the region are provided in studies by Butler (1978, 1986), Meatte (1990), and Plew (2008), for
24 southern Idaho, and Deaver and Deaver (1990), and Foor (1996) in southwestern Montana.

25 The most common type of historic cultural resource in the planning area relates to the
26 mining of gold, silver, lead, and copper during the latter part of the 19th century and the
27 early part of the 20th century. Such properties include mining camp remnants, ghost towns,
28 miner's cabins, mining shafts, adits, mills, smelters, and an assortment of other mining
29 related buildings, structures, and landscape features. Several comprehensive overviews of
30 historic metal mining in Idaho and Montana have been produced in recent years, and
31 provide the important context with which to evaluate such properties (McKay 2011;
32 Godfrey 2003; Warhank 1999; Herbort 1995a, 1995b). Other historic period sites include
33 transportation networks, trails, including the Oregon and California NHTs and associated
34 side trails (e.g., Goodale's and Hudspeth Cutoffs) and the Lewis and Clark NHT, notable
35 Lewis and Clark campsites, lumber mills, fur trapping shelters and cabins, homesteads,
36 historic cemeteries, irrigation ditches, cow/sheep camps, sheepherder cairns, stage stops and
37 trash dumps.

38 **3.16.3 Trends**

39 Federal lands will continue to be managed for the protection and preservation of cultural
40 resources pursuant to regulation and policy. More concerted government-to-government
41 consultation with tribes is occurring to address tribal resources and concerns. Prehistoric and
42 historic resources are nonrenewable and overtime have been diminished by unauthorized

1 collection, looting and cumulative project impacts. However, efforts have increased in public
2 education and outreach creating awareness about our nation's cultural heritage and tribal
3 interests. These efforts have improved public understanding and awareness, resulting in
4 increased preservation of cultural resources.

5 **3.17 Tribal Interests**

6 The federal government has a unique and distinctive relationship with federally recognized
7 Native American tribes as set forth in the Constitution of the US, treaties, statutes,
8 Executive Orders, judicial decisions, and agreements. This relationship is different from the
9 federal government's relationship with state and local governments or other entities. The US
10 government has a trust responsibility to federally recognized Native American tribes that
11 covers lands, resources, money, or other assets held by the federal government in trust and
12 the ability of those tribes to exercise their tribal rights. The US recognizes Native American
13 tribes as sovereign nations. The tribes maintain active interests in the planning area. Tribal
14 members use BLM-administered lands to gather plants or other native materials (e.g., stone
15 for flint-knapping), hunt animals, and fish.

16 Native American treaties are negotiated contracts made pursuant to the Constitution of the
17 US and are considered the "supreme law of the land." They take precedence over any
18 conflicting state laws because of the supremacy clause of the Constitution (Article 6, Clause
19 2). Treaty rights are not gifts or grants from the US, but are bargained for concessions.
20 These rights are grants-of-rights from the tribes rather than to the tribes. The reciprocal
21 obligations assumed by the federal government and Native American tribes constitute the
22 chief source of present-day federal Native American law.

23 The BLM, Forest Service, and other federal agencies have the responsibility to identify and
24 consider potential impacts of project alternatives identified for GRSG planning on Native
25 American trust resources, including fish, game, and plant resources, and on off-reservation,
26 treaty-reserved fishing, hunting, gathering, and similar rights of access and resource use on
27 BLM-administered lands. This also includes rights of access and use for ceremonial and
28 other traditional cultural practices. The BLM, as lead federal agency, also has the
29 responsibility to ensure that meaningful consultation and coordination concerning GRSG
30 planning is conducted on a government-to-government basis with federally recognized tribes
31 to consider tribal treaty rights and trust resources. BLM-administered lands retain social,
32 economic, and traditional value for tribal people, as well as contemporary and ongoing
33 spiritual and cultural uses. Through consultation with the tribes, the BLM is aware of their
34 treaty and trust obligations and the tribes' desire to capitalize on opportunities that maintain
35 or enhance resources critical to the exercise of treaty rights, traditional customs, subsistence,
36 and cultural uses of the land.

37 BLM and Forest Service consultation with Native American tribes, as it pertains to tribal
38 interests, treaty rights and trust responsibilities, is conducted in accordance with the
39 following direction:



- 1 • Executive Order No. 13175 – Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal
2 Governments, November 6, 2000
- 3 • Secretarial Order 3317 – Department of Interior Policy on Consultation with
4 Indian Tribes, December 1, 2011
- 5 • Bureau Manual Handbook H-8120-1 – Guidelines for Conducting Tribal
6 Consultation (Transmitted 12/03/04)
- 7 • The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (PL 89-665; 80 Stat.
8 915; 16 USC 470
- 9 • Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (PL 96-95; 93 Stat. 721; 16
10 USC 470aa et seq.) as amended (PL 100-555; PL 100-588)
- 11 • American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (PL 95-431; 92 Stat. 469; 42
12 USC 19960
- 13 • Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (PL 101-601;
14 104 Stat. 3048; 25 USC 3001)
- 15 • Executive Order No. 12898 – Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice
16 in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, February 11, 1994
- 17 • Executive Order No. 13007 – Indian Sacred Sites, May 24, 1996
- 18 • Executive Order No. 13084 – Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal
19 Governments, May 14, 1998
- 20 • Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal
21 Governments (Memorandum signed by President Clinton; April 29, 1994)
- 22 • Order No. 3175 – Departmental Responsibilities for Indian Trust Resources
23 (Section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 – 64 Stat. 1262; November 8,
24 1993)
- 25 • USDA Department Regulations 1340-007 and 1350-002
- 26 • Forest Service Manual Direction FSM 1500
- 27 • Forest Service Handbook Direction FSH 1509

28 The planning area is within the traditional and historical use area of the Blackfoot Tribe,
29 Chippewa Cree Tribe, Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes, Confederated Tribes of the
30 Colville Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, Crow Tribe, Eastern
31 Shoshone Tribe, Nez Perce Tribe, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and the Shoshone-Paiute
32 Tribes. These tribes lived, hunted, fished, gathered plant foods, buried their dead, and
33 conducted religious ceremonies on lands within the planning area.

34 During the 1850s and 1860s, the US negotiated treaties with some tribes in order to acquire
35 lands for homesteading. The treaties that apply to the project area include the Crow Treaty,
36 Fort Benton Treaty, Fort Bridger Treaty, Hell Gate Treaty, Nez Perce Treaty, and Walla

1 Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla Treaty. More information on these specific treaties is presented
2 below. No tribal treaties were afforded to the Chippewa Cree and the Confederated Tribes
3 of the Colville Indian Reservation. The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian
4 Reservation assert aboriginal rights to their traditional homelands; however, the Boise Valley
5 Treaty of 1864 and the Bruneau Valley Treaty of 1866 were never ratified. The Shoshone-
6 Paiute Tribes believe that title to these lands was not relinquished and they continue to claim
7 title, rights, and interests associated with these lands.

8 On May 7, 1868, the Crow Tribe and the US signed the Treaty with the Crows, 1868,
9 referred to as the Crow Treaty (15 Stat. 649). In the Crow Treaty, the tribes relinquished
10 ownership of thousands of acres of land to the US. The treaty also guaranteed a permanent
11 homeland for the Crow Tribe in southeastern Montana, which became known as the Crow
12 Reservation. Article 4 of the treaty also states the tribe's right to "hunt on the unoccupied
13 lands of the US so long as game may be found thereon."

14 On October 17, 1855, the Blackfeet and the US signed the Blackfeet Treaty of Fort Benton,
15 1855, referred to as the Fort Benton Treaty (11 Stat. 657). In the Fort Benton Treaty, a great
16 majority of the land was designated as common hunting ground for the Blackfeet and
17 neighboring tribes. In 1888, lands were set aside in north-central Montana for the Blackfeet
18 Indian Reservation.

19 On July 3, 1868, the Eastern Band Shoshone and Bannock Tribes and the US signed the
20 Treaty with the Eastern Band Shoshoni and Bannack, 1868, referred to as the Fort Bridger
21 Treaty (15 Stat. 673). In the Fort Bridger Treaty, the tribes relinquished ownership of
22 approximately 20 million acres to the US. The Eastern Band Shoshone were guaranteed a
23 permanent homeland in western Wyoming, which has become known as the Wind River
24 Indian Reservation. The Bannock and other bands of Shoshone were guaranteed a
25 permanent homeland as well which ended up being in southeast Idaho, known as the Fort
26 Hall Indian Reservation. Article 4 of the treaty also retains the tribes' rights to hunt, fish, and
27 gather natural resources (including timber), and provides other associative rights necessary to
28 effectuate these rights on the unoccupied lands of the US.

29 On July 16, 1855, the confederated tribes of the Flathead, Kootenay (sic), and the Upper
30 Pend d'Oreille Indians and the US signed the Treaty with the Flatheads, etc., 1855, referred
31 to as the Hell Gate Treaty (12 Stat. 975). The treaty guaranteed a permanent homeland for
32 the confederated tribes in northwestern Montana, which has become known as the Flathead
33 Reservation. Article 3 of the treaty also retains the tribes, "privilege of hunting, gathering
34 roots, and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed lands."

35 On June 11, 1855, the Nez Perce Tribe and the US signed the Treaty with the Nez Perces,
36 1855, referred to as the Nez Perce Treaty (12 Stat. 957). In the Nez Perce Treaty, the tribes
37 relinquished ownership of millions of acres of land to the US. The treaty also guaranteed a
38 permanent homeland for the Nez Perce Tribe in northern Idaho, which became known as
39 the Nez Perce Reservation. Article 3 of the treaty also asserts the tribe's right to "take fish at
40 all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the [Washington] Territory; and



1 of erecting temporary buildings for curing, together with the privilege of hunting, gathering
2 roots and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed land.”

3 On June 9, 1855, the Walla Wallas, Cayuses, and Umatilla tribes and the US signed the
4 Treaty with the Walla Walla, Cayuse, etc., 1855 (12 Stat. 945). In the treaty, the tribes
5 relinquished 6.4 million acres of land to the US. The treaty also guaranteed a permanent
6 homeland for the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatilla, and other tribes in northeastern Oregon,
7 which became known as the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Article
8 1 of the treaty also retained the tribes’ right to “hunt, gather roots and berries, and pasture
9 stock on unclaimed lands of the US.”

10 The BLM manages portions of these “unoccupied or unclaimed lands.” Members of the
11 tribes affected by this proposed action exercise their hunting, fishing, and gathering rights on
12 federal lands outside of the boundaries of their reservations. Currently, there is little specific
13 information available on the exact animal species hunted, plant species gathered, or locations
14 used by Native Americans exercising their treaty rights within the boundaries of the project
15 area.

16 As described in **Section 3.11.1**, lands are retained in federal ownership unless, as a result of
17 land use planning, it is determined that disposal of certain parcels will service in the national
18 interest. Land exchanges require site-specific NEPA, at which time tribes are consulted to
19 address their concerns and requests regarding specific parcels.

20 **3.18 Visual Resources**

21 Visual quality of western landscapes is an increasingly sensitive issue. Impacts on visual
22 resources are identified as a significant issue to address in RMPs, Forest Plans, and major
23 EISs such as the renewable energy and transmission programmatic environmental impact
24 statements. The general public’s increasing awareness of the vertical scale, footprint,
25 character and visible prominence associated with utility scale renewable energy and
26 transmission line development has increasing the need for Visual Resource Management
27 (VRM).

28 **3.18.1 Conditions on BLM-Administered Lands**

29 The BLM manages scenic values using the VRM program. VRM policy was initially launched
30 in 1976 in response to both NEPA requirements placed on federal land management, and
31 FLPMA requirements for scenery resource inventory and management. The BLM developed
32 the current VRM policy manual (M-8400) and handbooks (H-8410-1, H-8431-1) in the mid-
33 1980s to guide the field offices through an objective and systematic program for managing
34 scenery resources.

35 VRM requires that the BLM field offices complete a visual resource inventory of the lands
36 under their management control. The visual resource inventory is a systematic process for
37 determining the visual values on the BLM-administered lands. The inventory process has
38 three parts: scenic quality evaluation, sensitivity level analysis and delineation of distance
39 zones. Based on the combinations of the three, BLM-administered lands can then be

1 categorized as Class I (most valued and highest quality of scenery) down to Class IV (areas
2 of low scenic quality and sensitivity at most or all distance zones). These inventory classes
3 represent the existing visual resources.

4 VRM provides a way to inventory and classify visual resources, describe characteristic
5 landscapes, determine contrasts from proposed actions, and potential mitigation from
6 impacts on visual resources.

7 BLM Handbook 8410 describes the three basic landscape characteristics used to indicate
8 visual resources in VRM: 1) scenic quality; 2) sensitivity levels; and 3) distance zones. Scenic
9 quality is a measure of the visual appeal of a tract of land. Areas can be sub-divided into
10 Scenic Quality Rating Units of similar visual character on the basis of like physiographic
11 characteristics, similar visual patterns, texture, color, and variety; and areas which have
12 similar impacts from man-made modifications. The size of the Scenic Quality Rating Units
13 may vary from several thousand acres to 100 or less, depending on landscape feature
14 similarities, and the desired inventory detail. Seven key factors determine the scenic quality
15 of a unit: landform, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural
16 modifications. Resource specialists consider these factors when ranking units for scenic
17 quality (A = high, B = medium, C = low).

18 Visual sensitivity is a measure of public concern for scenic quality. BLM-administered lands
19 are assigned high, medium, or low sensitivity levels by analyzing various indicators of public
20 concern, such as: type of user, amount of use, public interest, adjacent land uses, and special
21 areas.

22 Sensitivity level rankings are not available for the planning area.

23 Landscapes can be divided into three distance zones based on relative visibility from travel
24 routes or observation points. They are foreground-middleground, background, and seldom
25 seen. The foreground-middleground zone includes areas seen from highways, rivers, or other
26 viewing locations that are less than five miles away. The background zone is generally
27 between 5 and 15 miles away. The seldom-seen zone includes areas usually hidden from
28 view.

29 During the resource management planning process, the BLM determines how the visual
30 landscape will be managed in the future. The VRM decisions that are made in the planning
31 process result in areas being assigned a VRM class. VRM classes determine how much
32 change will be allowed in the landscape. VRM Class I areas are managed to preserve the
33 existing character of the landscape and allow for limited management activity. Class II allows
34 for low levels of landscape change that do not attract attention of the casual observer. Class
35 III allows for moderate changes to the landscape that may attract attention but are not
36 dominant and Class IV areas allow for high levels of landscape change.

37 The BLM uses a VRM contrast rating system that addresses form, line, color and texture of
38 the landscape to determine if proposed projects are in compliance with the designated visual
39 resource management class.



1 These management classes are separate from the visual resource inventory classes and guide
2 management irrespective of the underlying visual resource (i.e., areas that have an inventory
3 Class II could be designated and managed as a VRM Class IV to allow for major changes in
4 the landscape).

5 In the past, especially in older management framework plans, BLM field offices would often
6 adopt the VRM inventory classes as the management class (**Table 3-53**, BLM Visual
7 Resource Management Class Acres). In some plans, the BLM did not make any decisions
8 regarding the VRM classes. In such cases, the VRM inventory class has generally been used
9 as the VRM class. A majority of the BLM-administered lands within the planning area do not
10 have a current visual resource inventory.

Table 3-53
BLM Visual Resource Management Class Acres
(approximate for offices with designated VRM classes)

VRM Class	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
Acres	510,924	2,058,432	3,983,572	2,052,936

Source: BLM GIS 2013

3.18.2 Conditions on National Forest System Lands

13 Forest Service Manual 2380.3 requires the agency to “inventory, evaluate, manage, and,
14 where necessary, restore scenery as a fully integrated part of the ecosystems of National
15 Forest System lands through the land and resource management and planning process.”
16 Scenery must be treated equally with other resources. The Forest Service developed a visual
17 management system to provide a mechanism for inventory and analysis of landscape
18 resources and the effects of land management activities on those resources.

19 The Forest Service established the Visual Management System in 1974 to inventory,
20 evaluate, and manage scenic resources. The Visual Management System is described in
21 Agriculture Handbook No. 462, National Forest Landscape Management. Using an
22 established physiographic character type as a frame of reference, the Visual Management
23 System determines the inherent scenic quality based on the different degrees of landscape
24 variety within an area.

25 Inherent scenic quality is a measure of the natural landscape’s scenic beauty based on
26 attributes, such as landform, vegetation, water features, and rock formations. The basic
27 assumption of the Visual Management System is that all landscapes have some inherent
28 value, but those with the most variety and diversity have the greatest potential for “high
29 scenic value.” Three variety classes, designated A, B, and C, represent inherent scenic quality.

30 Sensitivity levels are identified in the Visual Management System and are defined as the
31 measure of people’s concern for the scenic quality of the landscape. Basically, all viewed
32 landscape is rated for a level of sensitivity. Sensitivity levels are overlaid with distance zones
33 to identify all the viewed and unseen landscape within a given area. The Visual Management
34 System defines distance zones—that is, the distance from which a landscape is viewed—as

1 foreground, middleground, and background. Distance zones are important in evaluating how
2 change is perceived in the landscape because the closer the features in the landscape are to
3 the viewer, the more pronounced they appear and the more detail is observed.

4 Visual quality objectives are determined in the Visual Management System by combining the
5 sensitivity levels and scenic quality. Visual quality objectives are assigned to the landscape to
6 describe the degree of acceptable alteration of the natural landscape. The Visual quality
7 objectives classifications are Preservation, Retention, Partial Retention, Modification, and
8 Maximum Modification. Preservation allows for ecological changes only, while Maximum
9 Modification allows for landscape changes that may dominate the natural landscape
10 character.

11 ***Scenery Management System***

12 The Visual Management System process has been updated as the Scenery Management
13 System, which is being incorporated into respective Forest Management Plans. The Scenery
14 Management System is described in *Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery
15 Management* (Forest Service 1995). Adoption of the Scenery Management System is to
16 occur as each National Forest revises its LUP. For National Forests not currently
17 undergoing the forest-plan revision process, or for those requiring extensive time for
18 revision, application of the Scenery Management System will occur at the subforest or
19 project level.

20 In general, the Scenery Management System differs from the Visual Management System in
21 that it is integrated with ecosystem management and addresses landscape character,
22 constituent preferences, scenic integrity, and landscape visibility as key aesthetic
23 considerations. Landscape character describes the visual patterns of form, line, color,
24 texture, dominance, scale, and diversity of elements in the landscape and the cultural
25 attributes that make the landscape identifiable and give it a “sense of place.” Constituent
26 preferences convey the aesthetic experience of forest visitors, communities, and tourists and
27 the significance of scenic quality to these user groups.

28 The Scenery Management System entails identifying the landscape character, visual
29 sensitivity, and scenic integrity. The Scenery Management System provides an overall
30 framework for the orderly inventory, analysis, and management of scenery. It is a tool for
31 integrating the benefits, values, desires, and preferences regarding aesthetics and scenery for
32 all levels of land management planning. The Scenery Management System also considers
33 Concern Levels, which are a categorization of the importance of scenic resources to forest
34 visitors.

35 Three concepts of the Scenery Management System are of key importance: (1) Scenic
36 Attractiveness, (2) Landscape Character, and (3) Scenic Integrity. These concepts and
37 landscape character are defined below:

38 Scenic Attractiveness is the primary indicator of the scenic importance of a landscape based
39 on human perceptions of the intrinsic beauty of landforms, rock outcrops and forms,
40 waterforms, vegetation patterns, and cultural features. It reflects varying visual perception



1 attributes of variety, unity, vividness, intactness, coherence, uniqueness, harmony, balance,
2 and pattern. The frame of reference for scenic attractiveness (generally at the section scale) is
3 landscape character.

4 Three levels of scenic attractiveness are identified during the scenery inventory process: (A)
5 Distinctive, (B) Common or Typical, and (C) Undistinguished (FSM 2380, Landscape
6 Management).

7 Landscape character is a combination of physical, biological, and cultural images that gives
8 an area its visual and cultural identity and helps to define a sense of place. Landscape
9 character provides a frame of reference from which to determine scenic attractiveness and to
10 measure scenic integrity (FSM 2380, Landscape Management).

11 Scenic Integrity Objectives define the degrees of deviation from the landscape character that
12 occur at any given time by using the process described in Agriculture Handbook 701,
13 Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management (FSM 2380, Landscape
14 Management). When discussing Scenic Integrity Objectives, the degree of alteration is
15 measured in terms of visual contrast with the surrounding natural landscape. The objectives
16 of each Scenic Integrity Objectives classification are included below:

- 17 • Very High – Management activities, except for very low visual-impact recreation
18 facilities, are prohibited. Allows for ecological changes only. The existing
19 landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level.
- 20 • High – Management activities are not visually evident to the casual observer. The
21 landscape character appears intact. Deviations may be present but must repeat
22 the form, line, color, texture, and pattern common to the landscape character so
23 completely and at such scale that they are not evident. Changes in the qualities of
24 size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.
- 25 • Moderate – Management activities remain visually subordinate to the
26 characteristic landscape being viewed. Activities may repeat form, line, color, or
27 texture common to the characteristic landscape but may not change in their
28 qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc.
- 29 • Low – Management activities begin to visually dominate the original
30 characteristic landscape. However, activities of vegetative and landform alteration
31 must borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture so
32 completely and at such a scale that its visual characteristics are those of natural
33 occurrences within the surrounding area or character type. Structures must
34 remain visually subordinate to the proposed composition.
- 35 • Very Low – Management activities of vegetative and landform alterations may
36 dominate the characteristic landscape. While alterations may not borrow from
37 attributes such as size, shape, edge effect, and pattern of natural openings,
38 vegetative type changes, or architectural styles within or outside the landscape
39 being viewed, they must be shaped and blended with the natural terrain so that